



Video transcript

Python feeding

The small Australian group of pythons including Children's Pythons, Stimson's Pythons and Spotted Python in a wide variety of prey items in the wild. They'll eat skinks, various other lizards, geckos, small mammals, even small birds but in captivity we usually restrict them to a diet of mice. Typically, they can get all their nutritional needs from mice alone. It's a whole bodied animal so you get all the goodness from like from Vitamin A in the liver right through to the bones, the calcium and so forth. So, we usually feed them on a diet of frozen mice. The reason we use frozen mice over live mice is varied. A couple of reasons why we use frozen, and when I say frozen I mean frozen, fully thawed out and warmed before feeding the snake. And the reason for that it has to be thawed out properly and no frozen components in the mouse. We feed them frozen rather than pre killed rather than live because firstly a live mouse can potentially bite the snake back. And if a snake bites the mouse mid-way down the body the mouse can turn around and bite the snake potentially through the eye or something like that. Secondly, it's deemed unethical to feed a live vertebrate animal like a mouse to a live other animal like a snake particularly it won't feed on it straight away. And the third reason is also parasites. A live mouse can potentially be carrying parasites and after freezing, particularly after four to six weeks any of those parasites are well and truly killed. So, there's a few reasons, beneficial reasons why frozen is better than live. And also typically all types of snakes will eat a pre killed mouse. So, it is quite easy to do and it is quite easy to have a pack of six or ten or twenty of these sitting in your freezer and a year's worth or six months' worth of mice ready to go. Now, when choosing the right type, the right size of mice or rats for your snakes it's important to consider the size of the snake. As a young Children's Python or Spotted or Stimson's Python they'll typically feed on pinky mice. So, that mice that are within their first week of life. So, small pink mice. As the snake gradually gets bigger the mouse will get bigger. So, then they'll be fed fuzzy mice which is a little bit bigger. Typically, you'll feed it a mouse that just leaves a bit of a bulge in the snake's belly. They will be able to get their head around something much larger than themselves. Snakes are well adapted to being able to stretch their head around the animal they're eating. So, it doesn't have to be by no means smaller than the head of the snake but usually you feed it something that's going to leave a little bit of a bulge in its belly, a slight bulge after it's finished consuming that animal. Once you've finished feeding your snake it's important to always to make sure there's adequate heating for your snake especially after feeding. A snake will need to elevate its body temperature particularly into the low thirties even up to thirty five degrees Celsius to be able to effectively and quickly digest that meal. So, it typically seeks out a warm spot in the enclosure, sit there, warm themselves right up and that will help digestion kick started and it will speed up the digestive processes. So, it's typically what a snake will do after the feeding. So, it's important to make sure there is a warm spot available. After feeding typically a snake will also have a good drink of water. With water although feeding your snake you don't have to feed them too frequently. A snake can eat a meal like this once a week to once a fortnight. They don't need to be fed daily like a mammal their metabolism's a lot slower and activities a lot slower but they do need fresh water every day. So, it's important to make sure there's always a bowl of fresh water in the enclosure because they do drink every day or every couple of days. Feeding on the other hand doesn't have to be as frequent. If a snake is kept adequately warm all year round they can be fed all year round and usually one mouse like this a week is sufficient. For a large snake, adult snake one mouse like this fortnight can be sufficient because you don't want the snake to become too obese either.