

SWALLOW AQUATICS CARESHEET **KING AND MILK SNAKES**

Lampropeltis spp

Origin

These two types of snake come from the United States of America, mainly California and Mexico.

Size

Hatchlings begin at around 9-14 inches in length and can reach around 2 foot within 12 months. They can reach up to 5 foot in 5 years.

Diet

The main diet for king/milk snakes is mice. The size of your snake dictates the size of the mouse it will require. Pinks/fluffs for hatchlings and adult mice and small rats are ideal for adult snakes. These snakes only need to be fed every 7-10 days. They will usually miss a feed when shredding skin every 6-12 weeks.

Heating

You will need a heat mat and thermostat and a 40-watt reflector spot light with a wire mesh guard so the snake cannot burn itself. We recommend you heat the snake from underneath.

Lighting

A UV light is always a good idea although it is not a necessity. If you use one we suggest Reptisun 2.0 U.V.B. the lights should be on for 8-14 hours per day and switched off at night.

Housing

To house an adult milk/king snake for the duration of its life a vivarium 36 x 15 x 18/48 x 15 x 18 (inches) would be sufficient. Hatchlings should be kept in a large pen pal or large vented container and kept in a heated vivarium. Never mix any of these snakes together as they are cannibalistic and will eat each other, hence why they are called King snakes.

Thermometers

A thermometer should be placed at the hot end and cool end of the vivarium so that you may keep a check on temperatures.

Substrates

Substrates can consist of newspaper, brown paper, wood Chipping's and astro turf. Whichever substrate you use make it is dry and relatively dust free. Change it on a regular basis to prevent disease.

Water should be changed daily and should be in a container which is large enough for the snake to bath in.

Temperature

At the cool end of the vivarium there should be no heating, the temperature should be around 76-78°f and the hot end should be around 86-88°f. at night you should allow the temperature to drop but if your snake is suffering from respiratory infections it is advised to leave temperature on full. (86-88°f)

The majority of these snakes hibernate in the wild so it is not uncommon for adults to slow down during the winter months, if you wish to hibernate them stop feeding for 2-3 months. Keep them at a temperature of 8-10°c during this period. When you decide

to wake them heat up the vivarium to normal temperature and provide plenty of drinking water and food A.S.A.P.

Life span

It is not uncommon for these snakes to live up to 15-20 years if taken care of properly.