

EMERALD TREE BOA

updated March 2017



Range	Amazon Basin (Peru and Ecuador), east through Brazil and Bolivia to the Guianas
Habitat	Trees and bushes adjacent to water, swamps and marshes in rain forests
Diet (wild)	Birds
Diet (captivity)	Dead rodents
Description	Length: 6½ feet. Coloring is a brilliant green with whitish to yellowish bands providing excellent camouflage in trees or shrubs while resting or hunting. The body is compressed laterally so that the snake can press close to the tree limbs. The tail is prehensile, grasping the branches in the resting position. The fore teeth are long and the jaw powerful.
Lifespan	
Reproduction	Females are ovoviviparous: young develop in eggs the female retains inside her body. Emerald tree boas can have very large clutches typically number between 1–8. Gestation is about 7 months. Newborns can be born green, brick red, orange, yellow, or a combination of the colors (known as juvenile polychromatism). By four months, green flecks begin to appear until the emerald green of the adult emerges.
Behavior	Due to their laterally compressed body plan, emerald tree boas are not very agile on the ground and are primarily arboreal. When in a resting position, the tail is attached to the branch and the body coils around the tail with equal portions draped across the branch on either side of the tail. Long, powerful front teeth enable these boas to grasp birds and small rodents by snapping at them and holding on. As with other boas, emerald tree boas prefer habitat with abundant vegetation.
Our animals	1 female. Arrived at PPZ in 2005
Cool stuff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conventional wisdom held that pythons, anacondas, and boas suffocate their prey. Actually, these predators cut off their victims' blood supply to their major organs. When a boa tightens its powerful body around its prey, the snake cuts off its victim's circulation, causing the prey to pass out within a matter of seconds (most animals can actually survive a relatively long time without breathing.) Once blood flow ceases, organs with high metabolic rates, such as the brain, liver, and heart, begin to immediately shut down (doctors call this ischemia). Death follows within seconds. • Emerald tree boas are nervous and likely to bite if handled. • All species of <i>Corallus</i> have well-developed thermoreceptors (heat sensors) between the scales around the mouth which aid in locating prey and aiming its strike. These heat-sensitive pits are critical for locating prey at night. • The only known predators of emerald tree boas are Guianan crested eagles.

Phylum
ChordataClass
ReptiliaOrder
SquamataFamily
BoidaeGenus
*Corallus*species
C. caninus