

# RADIANT REPTILES CANADA

QUALITY THAT SPEAKS FOR ITSELF



"Livewire" explores his DIY drink tray playground.

Swapping up decor is a great way to provide physical and mental enrichment!



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## UPDATES

Season's greetings from us at Radiant Reptiles Canada! We hope everyone has been staying safe and warm. There has not been a lot going on reptile, wise. Although, I have already started dreaming about eggs. >.<' Here is to eagerly waiting for breeding season.

Since our last newsletter focused on reptiles as gifts, we figured now would be a good time to cover the topic of furnishing reptile enclosures. As always, if you know of something we missed please let us know. We would be happy to add it to our website version of this article. :)

If you have friends or family who would enjoy our newsletters, please pass along our sign-up link:

[www.radiantreptilescanada.com/newsletter](http://www.radiantreptilescanada.com/newsletter)



HAPPY HOLIDAYS

## PICKING REPTILE DECOR

We all love spoiling our animals. Decor can be a great way to cater to our animals' natural behaviours. Whether it is digging, hiding, climbing or exploring. Decor can also provide mental stimulation and entertainment for both you and your pet. There are many options to furnish your animals' enclosure, some are more expensive, while others can be wildcrafted or a matter of reusing household materials.

### Store-bought decor

Nowadays there is a wide variety of reptile décor to choose from. Sadly, a lot of commercial decor that may look appealing or cool is not suitable or safe for your pet. Remember, just because there is a picture of a reptile on the packaging, does not mean that it is a safe item for that species or even any reptile. Sadly, many pet companies only care about your money. It can help to appraise items from your reptile's perspective, instead of falling for gimmicks aimed at humans. It is important to fully inspect every piece of cage decor before adding it to your reptile's enclosure. Here are some main points to keep in mind.

**Function** Is the item good for hiding, climbing, exploring? Etc.

**Cleaning** Will the item withstand long-term cleaning? Will it be easy to clean with no tiny holes to collect bacteria? Is dishwasher safe?

**Risk** Is there even a small chance the animal can become caught on, stuck in, tip over, eat, or poke an eye on the object?



## A list of things to avoid

(These apply to the wildcrafting and reuse sections as well)



**Avoid** any kind of object with sharp or overly rough edges. A surprising amount of store-bought reptile decor has points that could cause eye damage or sharp/rough surfaces that may cause other types of injury. Rub your fingers over every part of the object. If it seems like a potential risk, don't use it.

**Avoid** items that have small porous holes that can collect and hide poop/urates/bacteria, which may be hard to clean. Whether it is glass or plastic these objects can become a breeding ground for bacteria.

**Avoid** decor that has hollowed center/s that your pet may be able to lodge itself into, and/or become hard to get out in case of emergency. Avoid decor with small pieces that could break off and/or be eaten.

**Avoid** top-heavy décor that may fall and harm the animal. Avoid decor that contains narrow V shapes as a tail can become wedged. (I sadly had this happen once with an Iguana, who became scared, and dropped his tail.)



**Avoid** decor that can't withstand extensive cleaning practices. Such as silk plants. (You may also want your items to be dishwasher safe.)

**Avoid** over-crowding your reptiles' enclosure with items that serve no purpose. Seriously, they don't need 10 plastic Dino figures in there.

**Avoid** decor that may be used to climb too high and fall, or a way to reach dangerous items like a basking light, which could result in broken bulbs, and/or burns, or escapes.

**Avoid** too large of hides. Most reptiles prefer to feel secure in smaller hiding spaces. Just make sure the opening is at least twice the width of your animal.

**Avoid** decor with holes smaller than twice the width of your reptile. Often snakes and other reptiles double themselves when entering or exiting a hiding space. A helpful rule of thumb is to make sure everything in their cage containing holes have the openings be at least double the width of the animal. This includes, shed boxes, lay bins, and regular hides.



## Wildcrafting

Always research what leaves, plants, etc. are non-toxic and safe to use in your reptile's enclosure. Be sure to collect from areas that are not close to roads, or in places that may have been chemically sprayed.

Please be mindful of how you take from nature. Find items that are not being used by wildlife, and or are still growing. Look for wood, leaves, etc. dropped naturally on the ground. Do not take too much from one area. 😊 Be sure to choose items that do not have small holes that your animal could become stuck in, or appear to have funguses or eggs growing on them. Also it may be illegal to wildcraft from certain areas, so do some research prior.

**Leaves** Leaf litter can make for fantastic additions to enclosures, as it provides mental stimulation, allows for hiding, exploring, and moisture regulation. If you are doing a naturalistic set-up, it can also be food for your custodian bug friends!

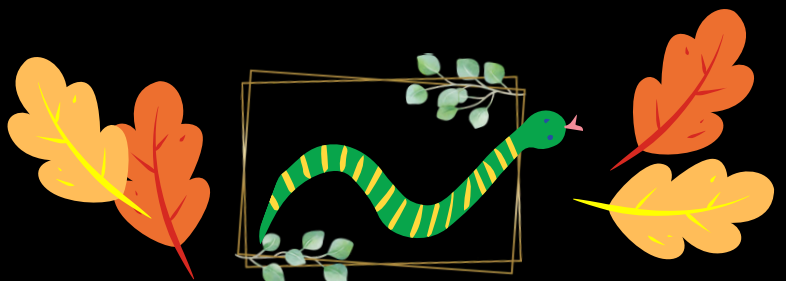


**Leaf Prep.** Wash the leaves gently with warm water, soak them in a dilution of 10 % peroxide (not bleach as bleach will not kill parasites like *Cryptosporidium*) let them sit fully submerged in the mixture for 20 minutes. Rinse well, next choose one of the following methods.

**Baking** spread out the leaves on baking sheets with your oven pre-heated for 140F/60C. Cook the leaves for 5-30 minutes. Some people want their leaves drier and brittle, while other's want them still pliable. #Note the longer you cook them the more brittle they will become.) Once they have reached the cooking level you intend. Let fully dry on a paper towel before placing in your reptiles' enclosure so they do not mould.

**Boiling** Place fully rinsed leaves in a pot of water, be sure that they are fully submerged. Boil for 5-10 minutes. Let fully dry on a paper towel before placing in your reptiles' enclosure so they do not mould.

**Microwave** You can add a damp paper towel under and over the leaves in a bowl, cover the bowl with an upside-down bowl and then microwave for 2-3 minutes. Let fully dry on a paper towel before placing in your reptiles' enclosure so they do not mould.



### **Small Wood Pieces**

Pick pieces of wood that do not have sharp points or rough edges as they may injure your reptile. Also, be sure that the wood does not have any holes in it that are small enough for your animal to become stuck. If they have holes, be sure that they are at least double the width of your animal.

**Wood prep.** Use a gentle cleaner such as liquid dawn dish soap to do the initial scrub, rinse, spray liberally with 10% peroxide. Let sit for a minimum of 20 minutes. Rinse again. Preheat your oven to 250 F/121 C. Bake the items for two hours, check on them every 10 minutes to make sure nothing is burning. Once complete, remove the items and allow them to fully cool before putting them into your reptile's enclosure.

**Rocks** Who doesn't like finding neat rocks on a walk? Much like other items mentioned already, you want to choose rocks that will be safe for your pet. Avoid ones with tiny holes where bacteria and parasites may hide. Avoid sharp/pointy edges, ones that might fall over and harm your animal and taking from areas where the wildlife is using them.

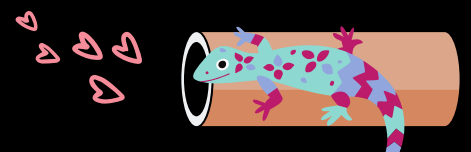
**Rock Prep.** Scrub your found rocks first with dawn dish soap, rinse, and follow up with liberally spraying a dilution of 10% peroxide. (Bleach is not enough). Let items sit for 20 minutes. Rinse well, if you have a dishwasher, you can put them in on the deep pot setting. Let cool and dry before placing in your reptile's enclosure. If you do not have a dishwasher, you can boil the rocks for 5-10 minutes. Let cool and dry before placing in your reptile's enclosure.

**Recycled Decor** You don't need to spend loads of money to provide your animal with mental and physical nourishment. Below are some recycled DIY items.

**Toilet paper tubes** and **paper rolls** make for excellent hides and climbing structures.

**Boxes** that are clean and fragrance-free can make for cozy homes. They can be easy to craft, and cut down to size.

**Cardboard Drink trays** We like to cut cardboard drink trays 4 ways so they can be used as upside-down huts. Just fold back all of the corners so no holes are too tight to get stuck in. (See front pg. picture)





## AVAILABILITY UPDATE

[WWW.RADIANTREPTILESCANADA.COM](http://WWW.RADIANTREPTILESCANADA.COM) > AVAILABLE WESTERN HOGNOSES

**Winter Holds** If there is a hognose on our availabilities page that you just have to have, but shipping is not available due to the cold weather - you can place a non-refundable down deposit of half of the total animal's sale price + a \$30 housing/feeding fee to hold the animal until we can ship in spring 2022.

**Weaning** Yep, we still have stubborn babies being weaned. They will either be ready for pick-up in Cranbrook, BC, this winter, or to be shipped in spring 2022. (Depending on how long they take.) We will keep you updated.

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**Shipping** Shipping available Spring 2022 as soon as weather permits.

**Holds** Half of the animal's sale price is required for a non-refundable down deposit.

**Payment plans** We are happy to work with you to set up a payment plan.

**Discounts** Discounts for those purchasing multiple animals, and to repeat clients.

## NEWSLETTER PROMOTION

We are continuing our last promotion of save **\$30** on any available male Western Hognoses we currently have available. [www.radiantreptilesCanada.com/available-western-hognoses](http://www.radiantreptilesCanada.com/available-western-hognoses)

This promotion runs until January 15th, 2022.

Want to take advantage of this offer but require shipping? No worries. We are happy to hold animals until it is safe to ship in Spring 2022. Message us today to learn more about it.

Email us at [RadiantReptilesCanada@gmail.com](mailto:RadiantReptilesCanada@gmail.com) with the code "**#WinterSale**." Just List the animal/s you are interested in and we will go from there! :)



As always, we encourage questions and suggestions. If you have an idea for a future newsletter topic please email us at [RadiantReptilesCanada@gmail.com](mailto:RadiantReptilesCanada@gmail.com)