# 13-Year-Old Brazilian Rainbow Boa Gives Birth to 14 Offspring Through Parthenogenesis



A 13-year-old Brazilian Rainbow Boa named Ronaldo, residing at the City of Portsmouth College in the UK, has given birth to 14 offspring without any contact with male snakes for at least nine years. Initially believed to be male, Ronaldo was discovered to be female when the birth occurred. This rare event, facilitated through parthenogenesis, marks only the third known instance of a captive Brazilian Rainbow Boa reproducing asexually.

Parthenogenesis, a form of asexual reproduction, involves a female's egg fusing with another cell, known as a polar body, instead of sperm. Although not fully understood why this occurs, the phenomenon has been observed in various species, including some reptiles, birds, and fish.

The birth was initially noticed by a student during a routine vivarium check at the college, much to the surprise of Pete Quinlan, an animal care technician, who has been looking after Ronaldo for the past nine years. The baby snakes are currently being cared for at the college and will eventually be rehomed.

In a related incident, a stingray named Charlotte at the North Carolina Aquarium died after reportedly becoming pregnant via parthenogenesis, raising ongoing scientific curiosity about this rare reproductive method.