BREEDING RESULTS

Have you bred snakes? If so, please ask the Secretary or one of the English Editors to send you a form on which you can fill in the data of your breeding results. Unsuccessful attempts are also important.
The result of your efforts will be printed in one of the future publications, to help other members with their breeding attempts.

Python molurus bivittatus.

Seven Burmese Pythons are kept in a terrarium measuring 5x2x2 m (lxwxh). In the terrarium are two, diagonally placed, tree-trunks and a platform measuring 170x100 cm. Light is produced by two 60 W bulbs and one 30 W fluorescent lamp. An electric oil-filled radiator with a thermostat produces an air temperature of 31 to 33°C on one side of the terrarium, the opposite side being 6 to 8°C cooler. No artificial light-cycle is used, the terrarium being placed near a window where the pythons are likely to be influenced by the Dutch daylight-cycle. Copulation(s) took place in january 1982. The female chose the platform to brood her eggs on which she did from 16 april 1982. Unfortunately the other pythons preferred this warmer spot as well and nestled themselves on top of the brooding female. This resulted in the female loosening her coils around the eggs such that they became visible. A plastic crate was placed upside-down over the female and screwed tightly to the platform, some 25 cm from the nearest wall. One or two times a day the female was sprinkled with water through holes in the crate. A few days before the young were due to hatch, one of the other pythons forced itself between the

crate and the wall. This resulted in the crate being ripped off and falling, with the female and her brood, to the floor. Some eggs broke from the cluster and rolled to one side. From then on the eggs were incubated artificially. They were placed in two plastic boxes covered with a glass-plate. Snippets of paper were put around the eggs to help maintain a high level of humidity. Besides being sprayed once a day with luke warm water condensation from the glass-plate fell on the eggs. The air temperature was kept at 32°C. Three days later, on 5 june 1982, the first cracks were discovered in some of the eggs. The following day some young were extending their heads from the eggs, drawing back immediately on being approached. Ten days after the eggs had been taken from the mother the last young had hatched. The result was: 20 young from 26 eggs, one egg was infertile and five eggs contained fully developed but dead young, with partly consumed yolk-mass. The young weighed between 100 and 120 grams. It was not until after their first shedding, at three weeks, that the young started to feed themselves, force-feeding being unnecessary. Some of the young ate three mice at a time, which equalled 75% of their bodyweight.

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