

LITERATURE

This column will give information about new literature, publications, books, etc.

Tips concerning new literature are welcome, and should be sent to Ed Prüst, Voorstraat 61, 3512 AK Utrecht, The Netherlands.

Liasis albertisii - ein seltener Terrariengast;
L. Trutnau. Herpetofauna (Ludwigsburg), 1984, Vol. 6 (28): 17-21.

The author keeps a few of these snakes in different terraria (175x120x142 cm, 130x73x80 cm, 70x70x80 cm). The temperature varies from 28-32°C during the day and 24-26°C during the night. From November to February the temperature decreases 1-3°C. The relative humidity is 70-90%. The terraria are fitted with a water-trough, a branch and a few hiding places. The lighting is on for ten hours a day and comes from 100 Watt parabolic lamps and 40 Watt neon-lights. Floor heating provides a little heat (33-35°C). The floor is covered with a mixture of sand and peat. Every two or three weeks dead or live mice, rats and chicks are offered.

Digestion is completed in three to six days. Something unusual is noted. Sometimes hair or feathers, teeth and nails are regurgitated as a small ball, covered with mucous/slime, by perfectly healthy individuals. It seems to be related with an interaction between individual and prey. Some animals regurgitated after eating a big rat, others after eating fowl, still others never regurgitate.

Copulation is stimulated by keeping the male in a terrarium in which the temperature drops to 20°C during the night for a few weeks. Often

reintroduction is quickly followed by copulation.

The eggs have to be incubated at 27.5-28°C and at 100% relative humidity. Of 17 eggs incubated at 28-30°C in a plastic box filled with damp vermiculite, four hatched after 72-74 days. The rest of them had died fully developed inside the egg. After their first sloughing they readily feed on young mice.

Anspruchsvolle Schönheit - Anforderungen von *Elaeophis situla* an Lebensraum und Terrarium; H. Sigg. Herpetofauna (Ludwigsburg), 1984, Vol. 6 (29): 11-20.

First the author notes the distribution and habitat of this species and lists the different colour variations known. Secondly, he discusses the problems of wide-spread capture and trading of this species. As a result of the appalling circumstances in which wildcaught animals are kept before arriving at the "eager to buy" animal lovers, the author insists on the necessity of keeping the animals in quarantine for quite a long period. Small, sterile terraria (40x20x25 cm) with newspaper on the floor, a large water dish and a flower pot as a hiding place will do. The temperatures vary with the season being 22-26°C during the day and 18-22°C at night. If the temperature rises above 28°C the animals feel uncomfortable and start bathing to cool down. In order to avoid food refusal it is essential that the animals are disturbed as little as possible. Force feeding should only be used when the animals life is in danger. Almost all wildcaught animals will suffer from parasites, and most will have lung-worms (nematodes) which can be directly contagious to any cagemates. Panacur (fenbenda-

sole) seems to be ineffective, the author using Citarin and Citarin L from Bayer with good results. It can be injected which causes less disturbance.

It should be stressed that the animals, before hibernation, have to be absolutely parasite-free and that the last medication should be given at least a few months before.

In order to avoid stress, the author advises the animals to be kept in pairs only. He describes two different terraria, in both of which he has bred successfully.

The first one is 85x45x80 cm, made of chipboard and aluminium plate, fitted with two 20 Watt neonlights, one third of the floor is covered with sand and rocks, there is a floor heating, a spacious watertrough, climbing branches and several hiding places. The second one is 80x40x45 cm made of glass and tin plate and fitted with one 20 Watt neonlight. The floor is covered with a mixture of peat and soil. The fittings are as in number one. The important similarities with both terraria are: ample ventilation, a spacious watertrough, various hiding places, neonlights which replace the daylight spectrum and, installed in a cool spot in the terrarium, a flower pot which contains a *Ficus repens* (=pumilla) and serves as a place to cool down and to deposit eggs.

At the end of September most animals cease eating. Lighting is decreased to six hours within three weeks and at the end of October switched off completely. Hibernation temperatures vary between 10-15°C (The author has lost five snakes when hibernating them between 5-10°C).

Fresh water and peace are necessary.

When hibernation has ended, at the end of March, the snakes are placed in their terraria which will be without lighting for another fortnight.

After which lighting is slowly adjusted to that outside. About one month after hibernation has ended, copulations begin. A few weeks before the laying of the eggs the female ceases to feed and ten to fourteen days before the egg-laying she will shed her skin. At the start of July the eggs are deposited usually in or around the flower pot. The eggs are incubated at 25-28°C, 90-100 % relative humidity. It takes 64-73 days. When the new-born snakes have sloughed they will feed on pink mice. The young which do not hibernate for the first two years of their lives, should be kept in individual terraria.