
LITERATURE

This column will give information about new literature, publications, books etc. Tips concerning new literature are welcome, and should be sent to: Jan Cor Jacobs, Tesselschadestraat 6, 3521 XV Utrecht, The Netherlands.

The captive care and breeding of *Thamnophis elegans terrestris*; Roger Butler. The Herpetile, 1985, Vol. 10 (2): 34-38.

The author gives a short description of the snake and its area of distribution. Then he gives some information on keeping this snake in captivity, though he does not give any information about the terrarium, the temperature, the humidity or intensity of light. The diet is varied as much as possible and the following items have been taken: minnows, whitebait, sprats, day-old chicken legs, soaked or dry trout pellets, lance fish, dog and cat foods and on one occasion an unfortunate Slow worm (*Anguis fragilis*). They will also take ten-day-old to half grown mice and rat pups. In nature, they also will take salamanders, frogs, toads, tadpoles, lizards, snakes, small mammals and birds. The first time the author bred this snake in captivity, the male ate all healthy young snakes. That is why the author advises removal of the male after mating. On 22 July 1984 a birth again took place. Two of the seven youngsters were deformed. The sexing of new-born garter snakes may be problematical. Even though the female showed no interest in her offspring the new-born snakes were immediately transferred to plastic ice-cream boxes, in order to avoid a repeat of the fate of their predecessors. After the first slough they were offered small minnows and earthworms. The earth-

worms were investigated, but not taken. Because the author did not wish to risk thiamine deficiency fish was not offered again and within a week all of the snakes were eating earthworms.

Husbandry and Breeding of the Honduran Milk Snake (*Lampropeltis triangulum hondurensis*) at Twycross Zoo; C.J. Howard. *The Herpetile*, 1985, Vol. 10 (3): 81-84.

The snakes were housed in a terrarium of 120x70x110 cm. This terrarium was covered with a clear perspex ceiling, so that daylight could enter freely. During the summer the temperature by day was about 29-30°C, and during the winter the night temperature did not drop below 15°C. Artificial lighting was provided by a single "cool white" fluorescent tube mounted outside the vivarium above the perspex. This was controlled to give a winter photoperiod of eight hours light and sixteen hours dark and a summer photoperiod of twelve hours light and twelve hours dark. The snakes were fed on mice. One dead mouse per month was injected with 0.5 ml of the multivitamin preparation 'Abidec' before it was offered. On 20 June 1982 dried semen was discovered on the gravel. Later in the day the snakes were found to be copulating. On 22 June 1982 semen was discovered and a further mating was witnessed. The weather during these days was warm and thundery with several outbreaks of heavy rain. On 31 July and 1 August single infertile eggs were laid. On 2 August five eggs were laid. The eggs were incubated at temperatures of 25-28°C. After about one week it became clear that only one egg was fertile. This egg hatched after fifty days. On 19 June 1983 again six eggs were laid. On 15 August the first young snake hatched. Finally five of the six eggs hat-

ched. The youngsters were housed separately in small plastic terraria of 30x20x20 cm. The substrate was newspaper. The youngsters were fed on pink mice.

The Jalisco Milk Snake (*Lampropeltis triangulum arcifera*); D. Blatchford. *The Herpetile*, 1985, Vol. 10 (3): 85-88.

The snakes were housed in a terrarium of 40x40x30 cm. During the summer the temperature by day was 35°C and at night 22°C. From the end of December 1983 until 2 February 1984 the light was extinguished. During this period the ambient temperature fell to about 10°C. In February the light burned for eight hours per day and in the ensuing weeks was progressively increased until by mid-April the daylength was 15.5 hours. On 10 May prolonged copulation was seen. The female sloughed on 21 June and laid five eggs nine days later in a plastic box provided for the purpose. These were incubated at a temperature of 28°C. One egg was not fertile. On 30 August the eggs began to hatch. In a neighbouring cage three *Lampropeltis triangulum sinaloae* were kept. These snakes did not mate, though the female was willing. The author suggests that the male of *Lampropeltis triangulum arcifera* was dominating so strongly, that snakes in his neighbourhood became impotent.