

BOOKREVIEW

A - Z of snakekeeping, by Chris Mattison. 143 pgs with 137 photo's. Publisher: Merehurst Ltd, Ferry House 51-57, Lacy Road Putney, London SW11PR, 1991. ISBN 1853910732.

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Mattison's book, written in understandable English, is a 'must' for the new snake-keeper or -lover and at the same time an extremely interesting and well illustrated book for the more experienced herpetologist. The writer has aimed the book at these people who want to start or have just started keeping snakes.

As the title indicates, a broad range of themes is treated; I give examples: Procuring, The laying of the eggs and the hatching of them, Sex analysis, Breeding, Ovoviviparous snakes, Air humidity, Illumination, Habitat, Building of terraria, Heating, Food, Mouse and rat breeding, Stress, Sloughing, Diseases, The noting of data.

The book has an index with Latin and common names and also a bibliography of herpetological magazines that appear all over the world. It is nice to see that *Litteratura Serpentina* is mentioned.

Further worth-mentioning is the fact that all the photo's have been taken by the author himself. The benefit of this is that we do not see for the umpteenth time the same photos, but are assured of unique photomaterial. We do not have to doubt the qualities of Chris Mattison as a photographer; see his nominations for the Wild Life Photographer of the Year.

The author treats many snakespecies with a short description in the knowledge that, for a more extensive treatment of way of life there are other books available.

Summing up I can state that the intension - to create a general handbook with beautiful illustrations - is completely successfull. It is at a price you can afford: I payed f 60,40 (£ 14.95) for it.

Translation: Fons Sleijpen.