



## HEATING A SERPENT



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We were lucky this year, for the first time we had two eggs from our Hognose snakes. It was not expected at all, but we had been hoping. When we looked into the incubator, two weeks before we expected them to hatch, we were astonished. We saw two Hognose babies, lying there in the cup, they had already shed their skin. So they had been there for a couple of days. When we looked at the tail lengths and used the parents for an example, we thought we had a male and a female.

Like many people who are fans of this species, we know that it's a lot of work to get these little ones eating. We had heard that it is almost impossible to force feed them. But with bated breath we tried to feed them baby-mice, we heard they loved it. We put two mice in a cup with water to let them defrost. When we offered them, they refused to eat.

Then Johan came up with the idea to try tadpoles because in nature Hognose snakes are toad eaters. Behind the house we have a pool where frogs and also tadpoles live in the spring. After catching two tadpoles, we offered them. Number one grabbed it

immediately and a few minutes later number two did the same. This time we gave them baby-mice, directly afterwards and they ate these also. It's a pity that we didn't do it in this way with the first snake because when we offered a mouse normally it didn't work. This all happened when we offered food for the first time.

One week later we tried again but we knew that the time for tadpoles stopped soon and that we had to look for something else before the time was up. In the meanwhile we thought about it. Water takes the smell of what's in it, so Johan came up with the idea to offer a mouse, which had been in the pool water. When the mouse was offered, the snake went crazy, he ate the mouse at once. The other one wasn't hungry, so we put that one back in her cage.

A few days later we woke it up and offered the same thing, in the same way. Now the snake accepted her prey at once and asked for more. Now you can see that Hognose snakes like wet mice, only if you give them the smell of their natural food, transferred by water or natural prey. We are open to other idea's and wish everybody a lot of success with their hobby.

*Translated by Jacoline Braas  
Corrections by Mark Wootten*