

MULTIPLE-NIPPLE MICE FOR A STUBBORN BALL PYTHON

*Ton Snippe, Bittervoornstraat 13,
7559 BN Hengelo, The Netherlands*

At the 'Snake Day' in October 1997 I bought a young ball python. The seller did not know whether the animal fed or not, he kept them in groups, to which he just threw in a couple of mice.

I decided to take a risk and bought the snake which looked quite healthy. After quarantine and a settling period of a month I tried to feed it. Initially I presented it with a 2 week old mouse, but this was not even interesting enough for it to look at. Some days later I got bitten when teasing it with a fuzzy rat. Similarly presented pinkies were also rejected.

After 6 months and just before force-feeding, I offered the snake a pinkie multiple-nipple mouse, a present from my brother. The next morning I was stunned in surprise. The mouse

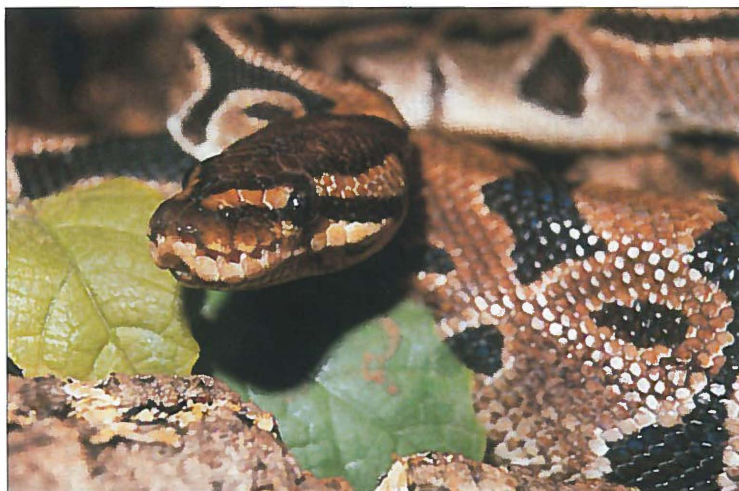
had disappeared and the snake was bathing in its water bowl. This was his first meal in at least 6 months, I was careful not to overfeed him. Two days later he was offered 2 pinkie multiple-nipple mice and he accepted them both.

Finally now, he eats. Sometimes irregularly and sometimes he regurgitates, but he eats. Why multiple-nipple mice are accepted and normal mice or rats not, I do not know. Maybe it's the combination of smell and calmness of these animals.

LITERATURE

Ross, R.A. and Marcez, A. *The reproductive husbandry of Pythons and Boas.*

Even, E. *The 'multi-mammate mouse' as an ideal prey for Lampropeltis pyromelana.* *Litteratura Serpentina* 15 (1): 22



Python regius

Translated by
Henriëtte Bakker

Corrections by
Lawrence Smith

