

BREEDING RESULTS

Have you bred snakes? If so, please ask the Secretary or one of the English Editors to send you a form on which you can fill in the data of your breeding results. Unsuccessful attempts are also important.

The result of your efforts will be printed in one of the future publications, to help other members with their breeding attempts.

Thamnophis sirtalis parietalis

The snakes were wild caught, and have been in my possession since 1981. They are housed in a sterile terrarium of 95x40x65 cm (l_xw_xh) with newspaper on the floor, some branches, stones and a watercontainer. Temperature during the day varies between 25-30°C (below the lamp), the night temperature is about 18°C.

Without any special stimulus, on 27 July 1984 copulations took place. After 75 days (on 10 October 1984) 27 young snakes were born, measuring about 18 cm.

The babies sloughed on the same day and started to feed after seven days on earth worms.

Early in 1984 the same female had a miscarriage. After copulation on 2 January 1984 on 28 March 1984 (after 83 days) two full grown dead babies were born. The death of the snakes may have been caused by an injection of Ripercol, which the female was given on 23 March 1984 because she had eggs of nematodes in her faeces.

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Elaphe obsoleta quadrivittata

The animals are housed in a terrarium of 70x40x90 cm (lxwxh) with a day temperature of about 24°C and a night temperature of 15-18°C. The parents are captive bred and 2½ years old.

The male was lost for some time (he escaped because the terrarium was not properly closed).

Immediately after he was re-introduced to the female on 3 and 5 June 1984 copulations were observed. The female did not eat at all during pregnancy. She sloughed on 5 July 1984, after which I raised the temperature in the terrarium to 27°C by day and 20°C at night.

On 27 July 1984 eleven eggs were laid, which were incubated at 28-29°C. Just after laying the female ate three mice.

About one month later three eggs showed yellow spots, on 3 September 1984 they were clearly expanding.

On 16 September 1984 the first egg hatched, and over the next four days the remaining ten eggs all hatched. The length of the babies averaged 27 cm. One of them has a hump on the back, the rest are without deformities. The first shedding of the skin was on 26 September 1984, and on 1 October 1984 they fed for the first time. Force feeding was not needed for any of the young.

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Thamnophis sirtalis floridana

Both the parents are about six years old. They are kept in a terrarium of 80x40x40 cm (lxwxh). The day temperature is 26°C, the night temperature is 19°C. No stimulus was needed to induce copulation. The date of mating was 16 June 1982. The female refused food for two weeks before the birth of the

young snakes on 22 July 1982. Thirty-nine babies were born; three of these were stillborn. Their length was about 18 cm. They shed their skins for the first time on 28 July 1982. Force-feeding was not needed; they started to feed on guppies immediately after birth.

I have bred before under similar circumstances with the same species, but not with the same individuals.

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Natrix yumensis (2x)

The snakes are housed in a terrarium with a day-temperature of 27-30°C in summer and 15-18°C in winter. The night temperature is 18-20°C in summer and 10-14°C in winter. The accomodation is shared with an *Iguana iguana*. The age of the parents is unknown. The male measures 70 cm and the female 65 cm.

On 18 April 1984 copulations were observed. The female refused food for the last two weeks of pregnancy. On 1 September 1984, sixteen young snakes were born, weighing 2½ to 3 g and measuring 15-18 cm. On the second day after birth, most of the babies fed freely on fish (guppies, barbs and danios) and earthworms. Four little snakes ate on the fourth day; later on four of them were force-fed. One of them died whilst regurgitating a guppy. Date of copulation in 1985 is unknown and there was no refusal of food. On 11 July 1985, fourteen hatchlings were born, weighing 1½ to 2½ g and measuring 14-17 cm. First shedding of the skins were on 20 July 1985. On 11 July 1985, the babies fed freely on guppies.

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Elaphe obsoleta deckerti - Deckert's Rat Snake.

The animals are kept in a terrarium measuring 70x70x100 cm (lxwxh). During summer the day-time temperature is 26-28°C, falling to 22-24°C at night. The corresponding winter temperatures are two or three degrees lower, although an enforced winter cooling period of two to three months was applied to both parent snakes.

The snakes themselves are both first generation captive bred specimens and were four years old when they mated. The male measured 110 cm, the female 95 cm. Copulation was noticed in April and May 1985, and five eggs were laid on 10 June 1985. The female continued to feed throughout pregnancy. The eggs were incubated at 28°C. Three proved infertile, one juvenile failed to hatch but the remaining egg hatched on 8 September 1985. This hatchling weighed approximately 10 g and was 18 cm long. It sloughed for the first time twelve days after hatching and thereafter fed freely on pink mice.

This is the first time that the author has bred this subspecies of snake.

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Pituophis melanoleucus catenifer - Pacific Gopher Snake.

The animals (male 100 cm, female 110 cm) are housed together in a terrarium measuring 80x70x70 cm (lxwxh). The summer day-time temperature is 26-28°C, falling to 22-24°C overnight. During winter the temperature is decreased to 25-26°C by day, falling to 20-22°C at night. The snakes are given a winter cooling period of two months duration. Both snakes are believed to be wild caught, the male is thought to be about four years old, the female perhaps two years older. Copulation was ob-

served during April 1985, and seven eggs were laid on 30 June 1985. The eggs were incubated at 28°C, but sadly only one egg hatched (on 28 August 1985). This youngster weighed 34 g and was 42 cm long. The remaining six eggs were infertile. The hatching sloughed for the first time five days after hatching and thereafter fed voluntarily. The same parent snakes also copulated and produced eggs in 1984, when they were maintained under the same conditions

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Pituophis melanoleucus affinis - Sonora Gopher Snake.

The animals (male 95 cm, female 100 cm) are kept in a terrarium measuring 120x70x80 cm (lxwxh). The summer day-time temperature is 26-28°C, falling to 25-26°C at night. Winter temperatures are lower - 22-24°C by day, 20-22°C at night. The snakes are subjected to a winter cooling period of two months. The male (four and a half years old) was observed copulating with the five-year old female during May 1985. Four eggs were laid on 9 July 1985. These were incubated at 28°C. Hatching was spread over four days, commencing on 12 September 1985. All four eggs produced viable young, weighing 42-48 g and measuring 44-46 cm. These young shed within seven or eight days of hatching and fed normally on baby mice.

This was the author's first experience of breeding this species.

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Pituophis melanoleucus annectans. - San Diego Gopher Snake.

A pair of this subspecies are maintained in a terrarium measuring 80x70x70 cm. The snakes four year old male, six year old female measure 85 cm and 95 cm respectively.

Summer temperatures are 26-28°C by day, falling to 22-24°C by night. During winter these temperatures are 25-26°C by day, 20-22°C by night. A hibernation period of two months duration is also enforced.

Copulation was observed in April 1985, and four eggs were laid on 8 June 1985. These were incubated at 28°C. Two eggs proved infertile, the remaining two hatched successfully on 1 and 2 August respectively. The young weighed 26 g and 39 g and were approximately 38 cm long. The first sloughs occurred seven and nine days respectively after hatching, following which both young snakes fed voluntarily.

This is the first occasion on which the author has bred this particular subspecies of Gopher snake.

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Elaphe helena.

A nine-year old female and a six-year old male are kept in separate terraria measuring 130x70x90 cm. Day temperature varies between 25°C and 27°C, night temperature 22°C.

The snakes were put together and copulation was observed on 25 February 1984, after which the snakes were separated. Eight eggs were laid 27 April 1984, the female having refused food for two weeks prior to laying. The eggs were incubated at 28°C. Four young, weighing 7.5 g and measuring about 29 cm, hatched on 2 July 1984. All young sloughed after five to fifteen days and freely fed on baby mice. It is of interest that with no

further copulations (the snakes being kept separate) the female laid another four eggs on 20 August 1984, of which one hatched 30 October 1984 (*Amphigonia retardata*).

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