

PSEUDOMONAS.

By: Peter Gomes, Kikkenstein 8, 1104 AA Amsterdam,
The Netherlands.

In December 1987 I made contact with a snake keeper who wanted to let his female *Boa constrictor* copulate with my male Boa. As service in return I would get a male and female *Morelia argus variegata* from him. Ofcourse we would have quarantined our animals and they should not be ill. On 5 January 1988 the animals came into my possession. They looked healthy. The two *Morelia argus variegata* were placed in separate terraria and the female Boa was placed with my male Boa. The last mentioned immediately showed copulation behaviour, but I have never been able to observe a real copulation. However, after about one week, it appeared that the room in which I keep my snakes, as well as the terraria themselves were heavily infected with blood lice. These uninvited guests appeared to be coming from the *Morelia argus variegata*. Immediately I cleaned everything with Dettol, something that I do regularly, and after this I sprayed with Neguvon. This operation appeared to be an efficient answer to the blood lice problem. In the meantime, other problems occurred with my Boa's. The female, which I had kept for three months with her partner, had not been eating during this period. She hardly crawled through the terrarium and spent all the time, lying fully extended. Also my male had eaten nothing during this period of three months, but for him this was no problem. One day, after the female *Boa constrictor* was returned to her owner, I offered my male *Boa constrictor* a rat. He constricted it, but he let go off it rather quickly. On the place where he had bitten his prey, a moist spot was visible, but I thought this was

the normal mucus secreted prior to the eating of prey. One week later mucus came out of his nose and mouth. And alas I diagnosed that same day the same symptoms in the following of my other animals: 8 *Boa constrictors*, 4 *Epicrates cenchria*, 2 *Liasis childreni* and 2 *Liasis mackloti*. My *Corallus caninus* appeared not to be infected. I made an appointment with Prof. Zwart in Utrecht. He diagnosed from cultures, that the infection was caused by *Pseudomonas*. Prof. Zwart advised me to give my animals Linco spectin for a period of ten days. The medicine should be injected into the abdominal cavity, in a dosage of 1 ml/kg snake. Further he advised me to put HCl (1 normal) in the drinking water and to give the snakes Vitamin B-complex. In spite of this treatment, 3 *Epicrates cenchria* and 2 *Liasis childreni* died very soon after this. During this treatment against *Pseudomonas*, I also gave my animals medicines against amoebas and flagellates, because I had heard that the female *Boa constrictor*, which had been my guest for three months, had died from a flagellate infection. After a comparatively short time my male *Boa constrictor* died. He was very emaciated and dehydrated. This dehydration was easily visible round the eye-sockets which were very sunken in. He had also stomatitis ulcerosa. All my other animals started eating again after some time, except my *Epicrates cenchria*, which only got healthy again after I had given him Bisolvon two times. During the treatment of the ill snakes, my *Corallus caninus* appeared not to be susceptible to the diseases, so it was not necessary to administer medicine to him too. I suspect that he kept out of harm's way of the problems because this snake drinks very little and the contamination with *Pseudomonas* was probably transferred by the water or by the blood lice. The period of illness and problems was very unpleasant, naturally for the animals, but certainly also for me. It is not pleasant to see your animals succes-

sively die. Therefore I want to advise everyone who places his animals at the disposal for breeding results to think this over very carefully and to take full quarantine measures. Lastly I want to thank everyone who helped me with the above mentioned problems.