
IN SPIITE OF EVERYTHING BREEDING WITH *PYTHON*
REGIUS

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PURCHASE, VIVARIUM AND FEEDING

I purchased the male in September 1986 . It was a fully grown animal weighed about 1300 g. who soon started eating but modestly. In December same year I bought the female who weighed about as much as the male. But as she was much longer she was pretty thin. The female refused to eat and after two months it showed she had mouth-rot. This was probably due to damaging while being imported. After treating the wounds with peroxyde (3%), acid-water and Chloramphenicol (5%) the mouth cleared and the snake shedded her skin. She started eating after 4,5 months. After which she ate well and on a regular basis. The animals are kept separate but under the same conditions. A good hidingplace is absolutely necessary. Both vivariums measure 100x50x50 (lxwxh). By using a heating-cable in the bottom of the vivarium one side is about 30°C and the other about 24°C. At night the heating is switched off, so during summer the temperature drops to about 20°C and in winter to about 18°C.

STIMULUS

In May of 1987 I raised the day-temperature by 4°C and kept this up until June. In July I lowered the temperature to normal standards and at the same time started to sprinkle water over the snakes up to the beginning of August.

MATING AND EGG-LAYING

On the 7th of August I introduced the female for the first time to the male. On the first day the female appeared upset and wasn't interested in the male at all. On the other hand the male immediately nosed her with great interest. The next three days I often found the snakes entwined together, which they sometimes kept up for 7 hours. After one week I separated the snakes. Up to March of 1988 I kept on introducing and separating the snakes, but I never saw a clear copulation. I separated them permanently in March. In September the female started to increase in weight and ate more than usual. At the beginning of the pregnancy she weighed 1640 g. and when I weighed her for the last time in March her weight was 2050 g. I injected the dead mice I offered her regularly with vitamins and amrepcal. As an egg-laying site I offered the female a flower-pot with a hole in the side. This flower-pot was placed in a dish of the same material. These two parts were placed in a flat plastic dish which could be filled with water. The female returned to this hiding-place more and more often than to the one she had been using before. After filling the stone dish 2/3 with peat and 1/3 with moss (sphagnum) she moved into the flower-pot per-

manently, leaving it seldom.

On the 6th of June she laid five eggs in the flower-pot. The first few days she was restless and left the eggs every so often to warm herself, but always returned after about half an hour. I adjusted the temperature to about 31°C, but at night it dropped to about 29°C, on hot days it could very rarely increase up to about 34°C. The humidity was between 50 and 80% which was obtained by sprinkling water every day. When I tried to increase the humidity the newspapers on the bottom of the vivarium started to mold, but if I increased the ventilation the temperature dropped too much. So it was either one or the other and I choose for a lower humidity. After the first week that the eggs had been laid I didn't see the female leave them anymore. Some of the eggs started to show wrinkles, but the temperature inside the flower-pot started to get more stable every day.

HATCHING

After 55 days I saw the first nose appear out of an egg. The other eggs were hard to see because the female was laying on top of them. I waited one more day after which I removed the flower-pot from the dish. Four eggs proved to be cut and I decided to remove the female from the eggs, after which I replaced the flower-pot. The next morning after 36 hours one snake had hatched completely and the other three were still in their eggs. After another 24 hours these three had left their eggs too and the fifth egg was opened. This snake left its egg the next day. The snakes weighed between 82 and 94 g. at birth and all shed their skins ten days later. Two weeks after hatching four of the five



Foto 1. *Python regius*. Foto: P. Klein-Kiskamp.



Foto 2. *Python regius*, broedend / breeding. Foto: P. Klein-Kiskamp.

snakes ate a baby-mouse independently, the fifth snake started to eat on its own after three weeks.

POST SCRIPT

During this period all sorts of things have happened. My biggest support John v.d. Pols passed away. During the pregnancy I moved houses and the first day after the laying of the eggs a renovation on my house started by which the complete front of the house was removed and just before I went on a short holiday the bay-snakes hatched.

I hope this article will stimulate more people to breed with *Python regius* despite the thought that it can be very difficult to breed these snakes. I get great satisfaction out of the fact that two snakes, who were caught in the wild, produced offspring.

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Translation: René van Marle



Foto 3. *Python regius*, uitkomend ei / hatching egg. Foto: P. Klein-Kiskamp.



Foto 4. Nakweek / Hatchling *Python regius*. Foto: P. Klein-Kiskamp.