LITERATURE

This column will give information about new literature, publications, books etc. Tips concerning new literature are welcome, and should be sent to: Jan Cor Jacobs, Tesselschadestraat 6, 3521 XV Utrecht, The Netherlands.

Erfolgreiche Haltung eines *Bungarus fasciatus*; Klaus Dieter Schulz & Harry Slegers. Sauria (Berlin-W.), 1985, Vol. 7 (2).

Both authors describe how they treat *Bungarus fasciatus*, the yellow krait, in the terrarium. One specimen, which was caught in Malaysia and measured about 1.60 m., was initially kept in a terrarium of 70x40x40 cm. Usually the snake was hidden in a hiding-place, which was in fact a small box, and did not show up before dark. The snake did not behave aggressively and never tried to bite. It only ate alive snakes, especially *Elaphe* and *Thamnophis*. *Boiga dendrophila* was refused. A *Chrysopelea ornata*, once bitten by the Bungarus, was motionless within 4 seconds. After three months a dead *Spalerosophis diadema* was eaten, and from that time on the krait accepted other dead snakes. In 1984 the krait was placed in a more spacious terrarium which measured 150x80x60 cm. The floor was covered with moist or even very moist forest-bark. By day the temperature measured 25-27°C, at night 19-20°C. In this terrarium the snake for the first time accepted food other than snakes. One day a mouse, which had been killed by an *Echis carinatus*, was offered and immediately accepted. One week later another mouse, which was refused

by the *Echis*, was accepted willingly. From that time on the krait got three mice every ten days. These mice however were not fully grown-up, because adult mice are just too big. In nature *Bungarus* does only eat snakes, and the authors presume that because of this specialism the physique of *Bungarus* is not adjusted to mice.

Die hinterasiatischen Kletternattern der Gattung *Elaphe*. Teil 1: *Elaphe rufodorsata*; Klaus Dieter Schulz. Sauria (Berlin-W.), 1985, Vol. 7 (2): 21-25.

The author begins his article by noticing that a lot of Asian snakes of the genus *Elaphe* die prematurely in captivity. Partly this is due to the long transport to Europe or other parts of the world. Further it is due to a lack of care by Asian dealers. According to the author there is still another reason: animals which are imported via Hong-Kong might sometimes lack their gall-bladder. Chinese superstition considers the gall-bladder of snakes to be a sexually stimulation drug for men. It won't be surprising that snakes without a gall-bladder don't live long. Another important death cause are parasites. To get rid of worms the author recommends "Rintal" (Bayer). Though the prescribed dose is 50 mg/kg body weight, the author advises to use 0,5 ml/100 g. If the excrement shows traces of lungworms of the genus *Rhabdias* one can use "Citarin" (also a product of Bayer) in a dose of 50 mg/kg. After this introduction the author gives a description of *Elaphe rufodorsata*. On first sight this snake looks very much alike *Elaphe dione* and *Elaphe bimaculata*. *Elaphe rufodorsata* differs from these two snakes by the eye position. The eyes are placed more upward than is usual by *Elaphe*. In this respect *Elaphe rufodorsata* looks like

snakes of the genus *Natrix*.
The way of life is also very similar with *Natrix*. In China and Korea *Elaphe rufodorsata* lives in marshland and in grass-land near rivers and lakes. As food it eats frogs, fish and small rodents. In Korea the snakes hibernate from November till the end of April. Their length is about 60-80 cm. They can easily be kept in a terrarium, which does not have to be very large. They can be kept at temperatures between 24-30°C in a relatively dry terrarium. A water tank should be placed in it. The snakes which were kept by the author ate a half-grown mouse every 3-4 weeks; fish was not accepted. The hibernation took place at a temperature of 15°C and lasted three months. One day after the hibernation the copulation took place. After 109 days 16 young snakes were born. *Elaphe rufodorsata* is the only ovoviviparous snake within the genus *Elaphe*.

Die hinterasiatischen Kletternattern der Gattung *Elaphe*. Teil 2: *Elaphe climacophora*: Klaus Dieter Schulz. Sauria (Berlin-W.), 1985, Vol 7 (3): 7-8.

Elaphe climacophora is one of the largest Japanese snakes. It can achieve a length of 2 m. but usually it measures about 150-160 cm.
We hardly know anything about its mode of live in nature. Only rodents appear on the menu, although juveniles eat lizards and insects. According to the author the snake is not difficult to keep. The only problem is their eating schedule: sometimes they eat a lot, and suddenly they stop eating and will fast for a long time. As for food, one can offer mice and rats. *Elaphe climacophora* has already been bred in captivity. The animals hibernated from November till March at temperatures between 18-20°C. After this hiber-

nation period they mated. The eggs hatched after about 60-65 days at a temperature of 27°C. The young snakes refused in the first instance to eat voluntarily, but a little trick is very helpful: if the young snakes feel threatened, they will open their mouths widely. If one then places a nacked baby mouse in the snakes mouth, it will eat its "prey" on the condition that it is left alone for a little while.

Eine Ubersicht uber die Gattung *Chrysopelea* und die Haltung und Fortpflanzung von *Chrysopelea ornata ornatissima*; Friedrich Golder. Sauria (Berling-W), 1985, Vol. 7 (3): 23-28.

First of all the author gives a description and survey of the genus *Chrysopelea*. After this he tells how he kept his *Chrysopelea ornata ornatissima*. The snakes were kept in a terrarium of 80x50x90 cm (lxbxh). The temperature was about 26-28°C, at night it dropped by about 3 or 4 degrees. The humidity was by day about 75%, at night 100%. In the beginning the snakes were very agressive and their bites were rather painful. After a month however they became more confident. They were fed with half grown mice. Sometimes they got some wall lizards. The poison of these snakes appeared to be not very effective: their prey was mostly swallowed while still living. In his article the author goes into the so called ability of *Chrysopelea ornata ornatissima* to "fly". As a matter of fact one can not call it flying or even hovering. What some call flying is in reality jumping. This snake can jump enormously and very effectively. In a sideward jump a distance of 160 cm was bridged. In 1967 the author bred this snake in captivity. The mating however was not observed. Three females laid respectively 14, 9 and 8 eggs, which were

hatched at temperatures of 25-26°C. The eggs hatched after 70-92 days. The young snakes had to be force fed with fish.

Die hinterasiatischen Kletternattern der Gattung *Elaphe*. Teil 3: *Elaphe schrenckii*; Klaus Dieter Schulz. Sauria (Berlin-W.), 1985, Vol. 7 (4): 3-6.

After a short description of the snake and the area of distribution, the author tells how he takes care of his four snakes. The terrarium measures 110x60x70 cm and receives 8-12 hours light each day, according to the season. The temperature is about 24-28°C by day, at night it drops to 20°C. The floor is covered with a mixture of gravel and peat. Peat is very fit to absorb the rather fluid excrements of *Elaphe schrenckii*. As for feeding, *Elaphe schrenckii* gives no problems. It eats eagerly and prefers small preys, like baby mice and birds. Eggs are also beloved food. *Elaphe schrenckii* is not a skilful hunter: grown up mice are seldom caught at the first attempt. Most of the time the snakes snap wildly around and will often bite in the sand once or twice. The author supposes that this snake, which is very tranquil and which never tries to bite, is specialized in plundering bird nests. From the middle of November till the middle of February the authors keeps his animals in hibernation at temperatures between 10-15°C. The temperature should not drop below 10°C, because in that case the snakes will quickly catch a cold. After the hibernation period the author keeps the sexes seperated for one month. If then the sexes are brought together, the mating will take place immediately. 6 Till 8 weeks after the mating 10 to 15 eggs are laid. After about 50 days the eggs will hatch. After the first sloughing the

young snakes eat baby mice willingly.

Zur Ökologie der nachtaktiven Katzennatter *Telescopus fallax syriacus* (Boettiger 1889); Hans Esterbauer. Sauria (Berlin-W.), 1985, Vol. 7 (4): 23-28.

In contrast with *Telescopus fallax fallax*, which lives in the northern parts, *Telescopus fallax syriacus* lives in the south of Syria. Its biotope consists of dry, stony landscapes and thin woodland. In southwest Syria the mating season of this 65 cm long snake starts in the beginning of May. It lays 6-8 eggs; the juveniles are 13-18 cm long. *Telescopus fallax syriacus* eats mainly rodents, lizards, ground breeding birds and their eggs. The poison of this opisto-glyph snake is very effective on its prey and under certain conditions it also can be dangerous to man.