
REPRODUCTION OF *AGKISTRODON BILINEATUS*
BILINEATUS.

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TERRARIUM CONDITIONS

In 1987 I bought two juvenile snakes, which were born on 30 June 1987, from a captive breeding of Michele Furiani (Furiani, 1989).

They kept separately in two plastic containers of 30x20x15 cm (lxwxh). The decoration of these containers consisted of paper as substrate, a small drinking bowl with fresh water and a hiding place. Both containers were placed on the top of a terrarium, over the heating.

After about six months, when their length had become some 60 cm, I moved both snakes to a terrarium I had specially prepared for them. It measures 100x60x40 cm (lxwxh) and has a double bottom between which the snakes can hide themselves.

The lighting is provided by a neon GRO LUX 30 Watt, that remains on for twelve hours per day. Above it there is a reflecting surface that guarantees an intensity of reflected light of 1000 lux. In a corner of the terrarium there is an Elstein heater hidden by a net to protect the animals from burning. Below it there is a little basin. When the heating is on the water evaporates through which the relative humidity of the air reaches 50-80%.

The temperatures are 25-28°C during the day and 18-22°C during the night. The substrate of the terrarium consists of leaves, which

are cleaned of insects etc. by means of a vapona strip.

HIBERNATION

Because of the temperature in the room I turned off the heater on November 1st, 1988: during the day the temperature was not more than 22°C and not less than 17°C. The neon tube inside the terrarium was on for 12 hours per day, but it did not influence the terrarium temperature. At these temperatures the snakes do not leave their hiding places.

After a week I removed them from the terrarium and kept them in an empty plastic container in the cellar, where the temperature varied from 12-18°C and the relative humidity of the air was 60-80%. The whole period of hibernation lasted two and a half months.

REPRODUCTION

On 20 January 1989 I brought the snakes from the cellar to their terrarium again. The male started courtship on 21 January and on 25 January I observed the first copulation, which lasted 1 hour and 35 minutes. I saw another copulation on 25 February.

During the first three months of gestation the female remained below the heater, where the temperature was 28-30°C. The male during the daytime was always hiding being active during the night. During pregnancy the female accepted food as normal.

On 16 July 1989, at 8 o'clock in the evening, the female started to give birth to 14 young which weighed 8-13 g each. After 8



Foto 1: *Agkistrodon bilineatus bilineatus*, copulating. Foto G. Macchiavelli.



Foto 2: *Agkistrodon bilineatus bilineatus*, hatchlings. Foto G. Macchiavelli.

days the young sloughed for the first time and ate their first mice.

REFERENCES

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