
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, Tessel-schadestraat 6, 3521 VX Utrecht, The Netherlands.

The Speckled Kingsnake: *Lampropeltis getulus holbrooki*; Kevin Hingley. The Herpetile, Vol. 11 (4): 140-141.

A female of 90 cm was housed in a terrarium of 75x45x45 cm. The male was housed in a plant propagator of 35x20 cm. Newspaper was used as a substrate and the only furnishings were sections of cork bark supplied as hide boxes. One thing that became apparent was their apparent predilection for a humid environment. Both specimens overturned their water bowls with amazing regularity and a subadult male in a friend's collection has also made a habit of this practice. A temperature of 28°C was maintained during the day, falling to 25°C at night. The male was showing signs of weight loss and on 11 July 1986 it was suspected that internal parasites were to blame. Two days later the animal was given a small mouse to which the recommended dose of 'Rid Worm' had been applied. The mouse was regurgitated two days later so a second dose of 'Rid Worm', was given orally. A week later another small mouse was offered to the male. He was discovered, several hours later, lying on his back with his mouth quite open - quite dead. The mouse had been partially swallowed and then regurgitated. The female fed throughout her gestation (the author does not give any information

on mating etc.!). On 24 June she laid twelve eggs, which were incubated at a mean temperature of 30°C in damp peat. One egg failed, the other hatched after 48-51 days.

Snakes of the *Homalopsinae* (Serpentes: *Colubridae*) from the Southern Trans-Fly, Papua New Guinea; Mark T. O'Shea. The Herpetile, 1986, Vol. 11 (4): 155- 163.

The author gives a short description of the snakes, the area of distribution and the way of life. The colubrid sub-family Homalopsinae is confined to the Oriental and Australian zoogeographical regions and it contains some ten genera, most of which are monotypic. There are approximately twenty species of these mildly venomous, rear-fanged colubrids which have adapted to live in tropical freshwater or saline habitats. The author found the following species in the Southern Trans-Fly: *Enhydris polylepsis*, *Fordonia leucobalia* and *Myron richardsoni*. *Fordonia leucobalia* exhibited an extremely wide range of colour morphs.

Die hinterasiatischen Kletternattern der Gattung *Elaphe*. Teil 6: *Elaphe hodgsoni* (Gunther, 1860); Klaus Dieter Schulz. Sauria (Berlin-W.), 1986, Vol. 8 (3): 29-30.

Elaphe hodgsoni looks very much like *Elaphe longissima*, the Aesculapian snake. Up to now little is known about *Elaphe hodgsoni*. The snake lives in the Himalayas and has never been found below an altitude of 1500 meters. In West-Germany only one individual is kept in captivity. Dr. Gruber keeps his snake in a unheated dry terrarium which is placed near a window. The 180 cm long snake

is fed with mice. From the end of October until April it refuses all offered food, which is probably due to the low temperatures in the terrarium.

Die hinterasiatischen Kletternattern der Gattung *Elaphe*. Teil 7: *Elaphe radiata* (Schlegel, 1837); Klaus Dieter Schulz. Sauria (Berlin-W.), 1986, Vol. 8 (4): 3-6.

Elaphe radiata is found over a wide area of distribution and has therefore many varieties in colour and pattern. Because many imported animals suffer from parasites and infectious diseases one seldom sees this snake in terrariums. However, if one is lucky enough to buy a healthy individual, this snake will hardly give any problems. Because it is a rather large and shy snake the terrarium should be spacious. The floor can be covered with peat or some other smooth material to give the snakes the opportunity to burrow. The humidity should be over 80%. Great fluctuations of temperature have to be avoided. So far no one has successfully bred this snake. In 1983. Schmidt succeeded in hatching one young out of 9 eggs, but this juvenile had an eye aberration and died after 10 months. The author had the luck to buy in Thailand two pregnant females which laid on the 5th of April 1986 respectively 9 and 11 eggs. The eggs were hatched at a day temperature of 25-30°C and a night temperature of 22°C. The humidity was 95%. Only 3 eggs stayed in good condition. On the 30th of June 1986 one egg hatched, the other two contained fully developed young snakes which died inside the egg. The author supposes that the fluctuations of the temperature during the incubation period caused the failure.

The only youngster however is still healthy. In the beginning it had to be force fed, later on it ate dead nest mice of its own accord.

Hybridisation between the Corn snake (*Elaphe guttata*) and the Texas Rat snake (*Elaphe obsoleta lindheimeri*); Chris Morris. The Herptile, 1987, Vol. 12 (2): 45-46.

In 1985 the author chose not hibernate his snakes and housed his entire collection, consisting of one female Corn snake, one female Orange rat snake (*Elaphe obsoleta rosalleni*), a pair of Texas rat snakes and one male Royal python, in a vivarium measuring 1.3 x 1.5 m. In early June the female Corn snake started to court the other snakes. And successfully; the male Texas rat snake started mating with her. In previous years the Texas rat snake had never shown any interest in the female Texas rat snake. After mating with the Corn snake he was suddenly also interested in his own female. The author believes that the matings were prompted by the overcrowding. On 27 July the Corn snake laid 10 eggs, which all hatched between 25 and 27 September.

Notes on the breeding of Death adders (*Acanthophis antarcticus*); Raymond T. Hoser. The Herptile, 1987, Vol. 12 (2): 56-61.

The author bred Death adders for some years. Death adders usually give birth in the late summer (end of January till the end of february) after a gestation period of six to nine months. Most females pro-

duce young every second year, whilst some produce annually. Copulation takes place at any time of the year, but not all pairings are successful in fertilising the females. The sex ratio of the offspring is approximately 1:1; the colour red is the dominant gene (grey is the only other possible colour and it is recessive).

More about pelvic spurs in Australian snakes and Pygopodids; Raymond T. Hoser. *The Herptile*, 1987, Vol. 12 (2): 65-66.

Two male Green pythons (*Chondropython viridis*) were found to have unusually long pelvic spurs, measuring approximately 2-3 cm in length. The author had never noticed such large spurs in any variety of species of pythons, nor had he ever found references on it in literature. Protruding pelvic spurs would be an obvious hindrance to locomotion in most legless reptiles. The author suggests that these snakes have less need for unhindered movement than other species of python.