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SOCIETY NEWS

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SOME ADVICE CONCERNING THE SNAKE DAY

All kinds of snakes are for sale on the annual Snake Day. For those who want to buy new animals, the Snake Day is a real paradise. But the quantity of species for sale could make one greedy; for certain kinds of snakes it might be the only opportunity to buy them. One never knows, perhaps there will be no other opportunity to buy them.

However, the real snake keeper realizes that he should not buy animals which he cannot take care of. Impulsive buying is the shortest way to trouble. Buying snakes for which there is no terrarium available brings not only trouble to the keeper, but also damages the health of the snake itself. That is why the European Snake Society wants to emphasize to buy only snakes for which a terrarium is prepared. In case one would like to buy animals which were not planned, it might be wise to ask the seller to stock them in order to get them another time. Perhaps it is even possible to have them sent to your home address as soon as a proper terrarium is prepared.

If you intend to buy new snakes, it is always better to buy young offspring. Snakes born in captivity are less sensitive to diseases and parasites and get used to their new home more easily.

However, anyone who buys animals on the Snake Day should also observe a quarantine. Newly acquired snakes should always be kept in quarantine during 3-6 months. During this period the animals should be kept solitary. In this way the owner can check the snakes for possible diseases. To avoid infection of the snake collection, it is necessary to use separate forceps and other materials and to wash your hands before handling other snakes.

Snake keepers who like to sell or exchange animals should treat their animals as well as possible and pack the animals in a proper way. Venomous snakes should be individually packed in transparent boxes. Under no circumstances is it allowed to let them out of their box, not even if the species is not dangerous to humans!

Non-venomous snakes may be handled outside their boxes or sacks, but in order to minimize stress they should be handled as little as possible.

For prey animals like mice and rats the rules are the same as the rules for handling snakes: stress should be kept to a minimum and animals should be provided with sufficient water and food and be given enough space.

All this may sound a bit preachy, but in order to make this year's Snake Day as much a success as last year's, it is necessary to observe these simple rules.

On behalf of the European Snake Society
Jan-Cor Jacobs, secretary