

# A NOMALIE BY EUNECTUS NOTAEUS OFFSPRING



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## INTRODUCTION

I have kept a few specimens of the Yellow Anaconda (*Eunectes notaeus*), since 1985. Back in the

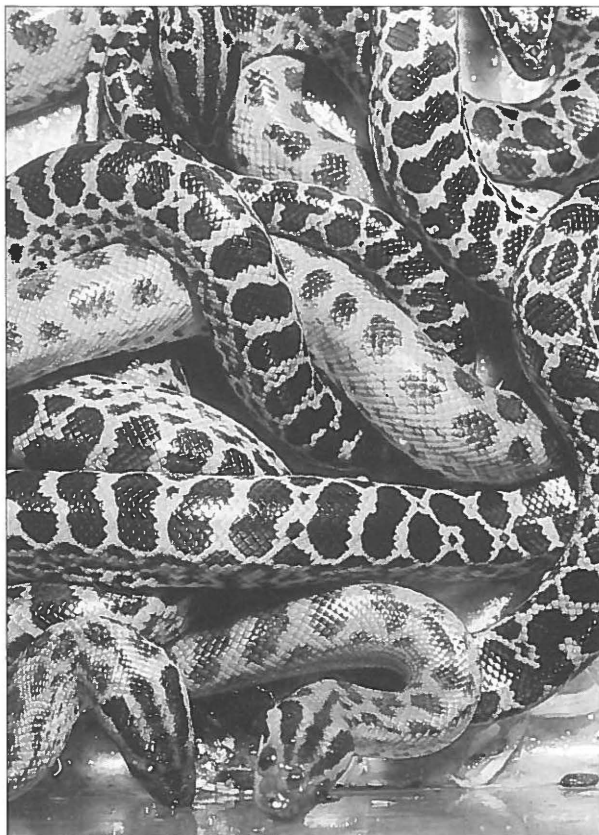
seventies I tried to keep *Eunectes notaeus* as well as the Green Anaconda (*Eunectes murinus*). These attempts turned out to be a disaster: Without exception all of these wild caught snakes refused to feed. When I had the opportunity to buy some captive offspring from the Dutch Rotterdam Zoo "Blijdorp" I didn't hesitate for a second.

## BEHAVIOUR

These animals were aggressive, but they did at least eat. The aggression reduced quickly. I was not able to touch them but it was possible to approach them cautiously, to within a few centimetres. The snakes grew slowly but surely. After about five or six years, when they were adults, their behaviour became quieter and were easier to handle. They eat about almost everything; dead rats, rabbits, chicken and pigeons.

I keep my snakes fairly cool, with a daytime temperature of 28 degrees C. and a night-time temperature of 22 degrees C.. Within the terrarium there is a large plastic crate of water, in which the snakes regular stay for a few days. The snakes are not as aquatic as I thought them to be.

In December 1993 I saw them mate for weeks, which resulted in a first litter of nine living young, one dead young and three unfertilised eggs. The female was about 2,5 metres in length. The long gestation did cost her a lot of weight but one day after the birth of



*Eunectes notaeus*. Photo by Walter Getreuer

her young she ate a lot. She had not eaten for eight months. The young were beautiful to look at and were less aggressive when compared with their parents when they were just born.

### DIFFERENT YOUNG

Six of the nine young were identical to their parents, only much more brightly coloured. The other three young were completely different to look at. These animals were yellow ochre with

round, black single marks. They looked a lot like the Green Anaconda (*Eunectes murinus*).

When they grew older their colour turned from yellow ochre to olive-green, which made them look even more like the Green Anaconda. I wondered if this was a case of hybridisation or maybe retrogressive mutation. The people at Rotterdam Zoo were surprised; their offspring had never shown these differences in colouring even though they have had several litters by several females.



*Different young of Eunectes notaeus. Photo by Walter Getreuer*





**EVEN MORE DIFFERENT YOUNG:**

On the sixth of January 1998 another litter of Yellow Anaconda offspring was born in my house. As well as the normal coloured young there were again two juveniles with the same difference in their colouring. These juveniles are doing well. Within a week they sloughed and ate a dead two week old mouse. After a month some of the juveniles began to eat dead adult mice. The question remains unanswered

as to where the anomaly comes from. Both Rotterdam Zoo and Walter Getreuer (owner of Serpo Reptile House in Delft, the Netherlands) think these snakes are hybrids. It could be a backsliding into something that happened generations ago in Mother Nature or in an American Zoo were the great grandparents of my animals came from.

Translated into English by *Gijs van Aken*  
Corrections by *Mark Wootten*



*Different young of Eunectus notaeus ca. 3 years. Foto by Walter Getreuer*