



BHS POLICY ON REPTILES AND AMPHIBIANS IN CAPTIVITY, PET TRADE AND LEGISLATION

1) KEEPING REPTILES AND AMPHIBIANS IN CAPTIVITY

The BHS recognises that keeping and caring for reptiles and amphibians in captivity can be fulfilling and educational. Accordingly the Society's functions include the improvement of welfare, husbandry and understanding of reptiles and amphibians in captivity. To this end BHS policy is as follows:

- a) Anyone keeping reptiles and amphibians has a duty of care to seek to achieve the highest standards of health and welfare for their animals.
- b) The BHS discourages members from keeping species with limited prospects of surviving in captivity for at least as long as they would in the wild. The BHS will prepare and update regularly a list of such species. This list can be circulated to dealers, with the intention of discouraging trade in such species.
- c) The BHS encourages members to opt for captive bred specimens whenever possible. In the event that specimens are obtained from the wild, members should observe any requirement for collection permits, export and import licences, health certificates, etc. and, as representatives of the Society, should act in a responsible, considerate and courteous manner towards other interested parties.
- d) Every effort should be made to breed rare and endangered species, which are held in captivity by members, to supply legitimate demand, and thus diminish the abstraction of the same species from wild populations.
- e) Members are encouraged to make appropriate use of animals in their care for educational, conservation or non-invasive herpetological research purposes.

2) TRADE IN REPTILES AND AMPHIBIANS AND THEIR DERIVATIVES

The BHS is not a trading organisation. In matters of trade, the role of the BHS is one of concerned observer and advocate of best practise and principles. The BHS is opposed to irresponsible trade in reptiles and amphibians, or their derivatives, taken from the wild, but recognises that there is legitimate demand for certain species and derivatives. The Society accepts trade which is legal, sustainable, humane, and in accordance with the World Conservation Strategy, which seeks to find ways to yield more sustainable livelihood opportunities out of biodiversity for the poor that lead to the practical long term conservation of species and habitat. The BHS therefore recommends that trade should focus on captive-bred stock and/or specimens obtained from the wild as part of such a sustainable yield. The Society will oppose illegal and inhumane practises wherever they are found.



3) LEGISLATION

A Working Group, drawn from the sub-committees of the Society, will formulate advice to government and other official bodies on behalf of the Society. Before imparting such advice, the Working Group will liaise with the BHS Chairman, who may refer matters to Council for further consideration or revision.

With regard to CITES, the general policy of the BHS is that if a species of reptile or amphibian is proposed to be upgraded to CITES Appendix I, it should remain CITES Appendix II with zero export quota unless there is scientific evidence to support otherwise.

4) SOME SELECTED CAPTIVE-BRED SPECIES MOST SUITABLE AS PETS

The following list of species is not intended to be comprehensive; experienced and knowledgeable members successfully keep and breed many more. However these species are all commercially captive bred in large numbers, make suitable pets for the average competent person or beginner herpetologist, and are generally available in the UK pet trade. They are listed in the order in which they are most easy to keep, the easiest being at the top of the list.

Corn Snakes
King Snakes
Milk Snakes
Leopard Geckos
Stinkpot and Mud Turtles
Royal Pythons
White's Tree Frogs
Horned Frogs
Fire Salamanders
African Fat-Tailed Geckos
Crested Geckos
Bearded Dragons
Mediterranean Tortoise species
Veiled or Yemeni Chameleons

Last update : Council Meeting of 16th January 2010