



## HELPFUL HINTS TO CARE FOR YOUR NEW REPTILE

Congratulations on the purchase of your new reptile. Following are a few hints to help you care for your new reptile. If, after reading these hints, you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact Jerry for advice and help.



**HOUSING:** A terrarium is what your reptile should be housed in. The size and shape of the terrarium is dependent upon your reptile's size environmental needs as well as the space you have available. A terrarium should be moisture and heat resistant, draught and escape proof, with good lighting.

**Outfitting:** Newspaper and reptile carpet are the cleaner option for covering the floor than sand and shredded bark. Sand and shredded bark may look decorative but is extremely hard to clean. Your reptile will also require the security of a shelter. Rocks, basking limbs, plants and logs can be useful in making a shelter and for decoration. If you use live plants in pots make sure the plant can tolerate the heat and light.

**Environment:** It is important to find out the correct temperature and lighting requirements for your particular reptile. Check with Jerry.

**Heating:** A thermal gradient is the best type of heating in your terrarium, i.e. warmer at one end and cooler at the other. Two thermometers should be placed in the terrarium. (one at each end). Do not use hot rocks as they can burn your reptile.

**Lighting:**

A full spectrum fluorescent lamp will provide a sunlight replacement for those reptiles that need it. This lamp may not provide enough heat without a separate heating source. Natural sunlight is the best type of full spectrum lighting.

**FEEDING:**

Consult a specific care sheet for your type of reptile in respect of feeding. However, each animal is primarily one of three types:

**Herbivore:** A plant eater. Herbivores need large amounts and a good variety of food. There are some specially designed diets for some reptiles, or feed fresh food with vitamin and mineral supplements. Parsley, dandelion leaves, lettuce, cress and fresh fruit are some foods that can be fed to your herbivore reptile.

**Carnivore:** A meat or protein eater. These are mainly snakes which love rats, mice and pinkies (baby mice). Lizards often eat insects and invertebrates. Crickets and mealworms are great food sources for lizards.

**Omnivores:** Eat both plant and meat or protein.

**CLEANING:**

Reptiles are very susceptible to microorganisms and parasites when kept in captivity. You **MUST** clean their water and food bowls every day. The terrarium should be cleaned once a week. Bleach or an alcohol based cleaner is better than phenol cleaners (such as Pine-O-Clean). Thoroughly rinse with fresh water after disinfecting. Any new cage decorations like logs, rocks or sand should be sterilised with bleach. Paint the ends of logs with varnish to prevent parasite infestations. You should check your reptile daily and get to know normal versus abnormal activity. Don't let your reptile get cold, check the temperature daily.

*Check with your local wildlife agency or council as to what permits are required for owning a reptile.*

**KEEP YOUR REPTILE WELL FED, CLEAN AND COMFORTABLE  
AND YOU WILL HAVE A HAPPY, HEALTHY AND FIT REPTILE**