
NEWS NOTES

Child's Remains Partially Consumed by Monitor Lizard

The remains of a two year old child were discovered after having been partially consumed by a monitor lizard, presumably an Asian water monitor (*Varanus salvator macromaculatus*). The boy disappeared near Segaliud Forest Reserve outside of Sandakan, Sabah, Malaysia. The cause of death has yet to be determined.

Source: *The Star/Asia News Network*, 17 November 2012

Water Monitors Investigated by Secret Service as 'Potential Threat'

U.S. Secret Service agents preparing for the arrival of President Barack Obama at the Government House of Thailand initially identified the resident water monitors (*Varanus salvator macromaculatus*) as a potential threat to the President's visit. The investigation appears to

have been prompted by confusion between the large but typically harmless water monitors and the related Komodo dragon (*Varanus komodoensis*) which has seldom been known to injure humans. Thai officials later corrected the agency's confusion and informed them that the large animals pose no threat.

Source: *Mail Online*, 17 November 2012

Komodo Dragon Bites Woman on Rinca

A Komodo dragon (*Varanus komodoensis*) bit an elderly woman on Rinca as she was tending to her livestock. The woman sustained lacerations to her leg and was taken to the Labuan Bajo community health clinic for treatment. Officials are currently monitoring her condition. No word was given on exactly what might have prompted the attack, though the close proximity of livestock is likely to have been a factor. (*Editor's note*: Sources had stated that Komodo dragon 'antivenom' was flown in from Bali for the victim's treatment. Despite recent revelations that the bite of *V. komodoensis* may have venomous properties, no antivenom currently exists



Varanus albigularis. Kruger NP, South Africa. Photographed by René Rossouw.



Varanus rosenbergi deceased on road with shingleback skink (*Tiliqua rugosa*). Near Waychinicup NP, Western Australia. Photographed by **Julia M. Ruckh**.

and the sources were most likely referring to antibiotic treatment.)

Source: *The Jakarta Post*, 13 October 2012

Vietnamese Authorities Seize Monitor Lizards

Customs officers in central Ha Tinh Province, Vietnam have seized ten large live water monitors (*Varanus salvator*) that were in the process of being smuggled. The animals were being transported in individual sacks by an unknown individual on a motorbike. After a chase, the individual fled the scene leaving the animals by the roadside. Authorities are working to determine the animal's exact origin and have noted that the necessary steps have been taken to release them back into the wild.

Source: *Tuoi Tre News*, 7 September 2012

Construction Work Partially Implicated in Komodo Dragons Living Outside Protected Areas on Flores

The East Nusa Tenggara (NTT) Natural Resource Conservation Center (BBKSDA) has estimated that at least 40 Komodo dragons (*Varanus komodoensis*) are living outside of protected areas in West Manggarai Regency. Reports include animals from as far as Nampar Sempang village in East Manggarai, including a young male that was captured by officials and relocated to a protected area. The animal had suffered injuries from an unknown source and was treated with antibiotics. Dragons living in the vicinity of Tompong Beach near Pota in the Sambi Rampas district of Flores have relocated due to road construction taking place. It is believed that the use of explosives has caused the animals to flee. Arsyad, a dragon caretaker, stated that

eight large animals and numerous smaller individuals were normally found on the beach but have since relocated. The BBKSDA is dispatching teams to locate stray dragons. In addition, the agency is conducting surveys in the areas of Wolo Tadho, Riung and Ontoloe Island with the goal of aiding dragon conservation outside of national parks.

Source: *The Jakarta Post*, 28 August 2012; 2 September 2012

Sri Lanka Receives its First Komodo Dragons

The Dehiwala Zoo in Colombo, Sri Lanka has received a pair of Komodo dragons (*Varanus komodoensis*), the first of its species to be displayed in Sri Lanka, from Prague Zoo, Czech Republic. The dragons were part of a larger exchange program between the zoos, with the Dehiwala Zoo also receiving a pair of Przewalski horses and a pair of river hippopotamuses in exchange for a pair of Sri Lankan elephants.

Source: <http://www.sundaytimes.lk>, 28 October 2012

New E-Books on Australian Monitor Lizards

Two self-published e-books on Australian monitor lizards have just been released by author Gunther Schmida. A third volume which will deal with Australia's larger monitor species is currently in preparation.

The Australian Goanna Pictorial features 100 pages of high quality photographs covering almost all species, including many color variants of the highly variable species. All images were taken in the wild or in appropriate captive surroundings. Text has been kept to a minimum. This pictorial guide can be used as a quick computer reference to the Australian species, and individual pages can be printed to A4 size with excellent results.

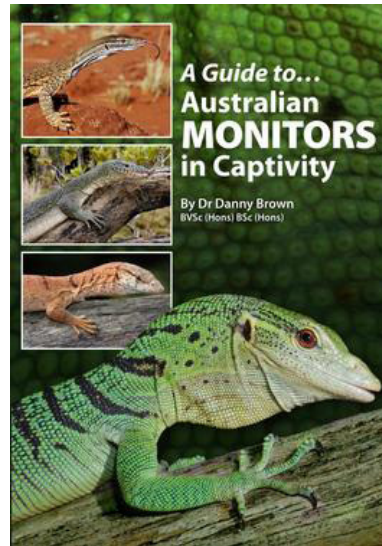
The Goannas of Australia – 2 is a 106 page reference book which provides essential information and quality

photographs of Australia's smaller monitor species including their common and scientific names, author and year of their descriptions, type localities, and maximum sizes. An up-to-date distribution map with reference points, habitat photographs, and additional biological information are also provided for each species.

Both volumes are aimed at the general Australian public, especially 10 to 14 year olds, as well as monitor lizard enthusiasts worldwide, and are currently available for preview and purchase through the website www.guntherschmida.com.au

New Book on Monitor Lizard Husbandry

A new book authored by Danny Brown on the captive maintenance of monitor lizards entitled "A Guide to Australian Monitors in Captivity" has just been released by Reptile Publications. According to the publisher:



"This full colour, 264 page book provides detailed information on all aspects of captive husbandry relating to the most commonly kept species of Australian monitor species including large terrestrial and

arboreal monitors, rock monitors, small terrestrial monitors, small and medium arboreal monitors and water Monitors.

The book is littered with full colour images showing all aspects of sexing, housing, breeding and general appearance of the species within each chapter using over 400 images from some of Australia's finest reptile photographers, most unique to this book series..."

Source: <http://reptilepublications.com>, 20 December 2012



Varanus bengalensis. Yala NP, Sri Lanka. Photographed by Pedro Ferreira do Amaral.

New Monitor Lizard Magazine

A new German language magazine entitled *Monitor Lizards* (ISSN: 2195-4380) has just been released in November 2012 by the group Waranwelt. The magazine is a non-profit venture which aims to spread information



about the keeping and breeding of varanid lizards in captivity, and each issue will focus on a different subject.

The premier issue has been dedicated to *Varanus macraei*, and features articles discussing its climate and ecology, and feeding, and breeding in captivity. Although

there are no specific release dates for the magazine, two or three issues are planned annually. Issue number two will be released in February 2013 and will focus on *V. acanthurus*.

Additional information and ordering details can be found at <http://waranwelt.de>

Komodo Dragons Hatch at Barcelona Zoo

On 20 November 2012, Barcelona Zoo became the second facility in Spain to have successfully reproduced Komodo dragons (*Varanus komodoensis*). A total of 16 eggs were produced by a female that is on loan from the Prague Zoo, Czech Republic and a male originating from Reptilandia, Gran Canaria, Spain. As of 5 December 2012, all but two eggs have hatched.

Source: <http://www.larazon.es>, 21 November 2012; <http://zoobarcelona.cat/en/news-and-press>, 5 December 2012

Surveillance Cameras Discover Komodo Dragons on Ontoloe Island

In collaboration with the Komodo Survival Program (KSP), surveys recently conducted by the Center for Natural Resources and Conservation of East Nusa Tenggara (NTTBKSDA) have identified at least six

to eight Komodo dragons (*Varanus komodoensis*) on Ontoloe Island, located off the northern coast of Flores, Indonesia.

In this study, nine camera traps were set up on Ontoloe and monitored between 28 September - 2 October 2012. Seven cameras captured dragons. According to the photographs, the dragons appeared in good physical condition, with thick and robust tail bases.

With these results, the NTTBBKSDA will look to the possibility of promoting Ontoloe as a site for ecotourism, and security patrols in the region have been tightened to monitor activity that could affect the habitat of these animals. Annual surveys of the dragons on Ontoloe are planned.

Source: <http://www.mongabay.co.id>, 22 November 2012

Brutal Attacks on Wildlife in Kimberly Region

The Freshwater Fish Group and Indigenous rangers operating in the Fitzroy River area of the Kimberly Region, Northern Territory, Australia, have recently noted an increase in illegal attacks on local wildlife including crocodiles, sawfish, and monitor lizards. In one case, an arrow was shot through the neck of a large yellow spotted monitor lizard *Varanus panoptes panoptes*. The group says it will report these recent incidents to the relevant authorities.

Source: <http://www.abc.net.au>, 30 October 2012



Varanus rudicollis. Gunung Leuser NP, Sumatra. Photographed by **Arthur Anker**.