Volume 1 Number 4 15 April 1991

VaraNews

VaraNews is published by ©Varanix, the Varanid Information eXchange, dedicated to the responsible captive care of monitor lizards through education and the open exchange of all information pertaining to Varanidae.

General Info

Finally, VaraNews has reached your doorstep. And why was it so late?

a. The Post Office lost it
b. California slid into the ocean
c. "Fido the water monitor" ate the master copy
d. Computer problems & irresponsible "computerology" (not backing up the data)

If you believe a., b. or c., thank you for the kind gesture. But alas, d. is the answer and my "personal computing" habits are to blame. Essentially, all of the newsletter had to be rekeyed and reformatted (except this pitiful excuse you have just finished reading). Nuff said. (This does not change the publication schedule; VaraNews 1(5) is still due out early June.)

Membership Report

What follows is a brief summary of the current Varanix membership and how it got there. As mentioned in VaraNews 1(3):3, this issue was sent only those who had informed Varanix of their desire to continue receiving it, either through paid membership or some type of exchange agreement (for example, one member offered to provide German -> English translations of articles).

Below is a breakdown of where Varanix membership stands as of the beginning of April 1991:

177 individuals have received VaraNews 1(3). Of the total, 34 account for recent introductory, or first-time, mailings, primarily to Africa and Europe.

67 individuals continue to receive it (57 USA, 10 foreign)
- 55 are paid memberships
- 12 are exchange-type agreements

(3 individuals indicated that "checks would soon be in the mail"; this issue was mailed on good faith)

100 organizations (herp societies, zoos, ...) have received either VaraNews Number 0 or VaraNews 1(3)
- 15 herp societies are participating in newsletter exchange programs (11 US, 4 foreign)

There are several inquiries about Varanix each month, most people having been told of Varanix by current members. Introductory mailings will continue; I have a list of about 150 individuals/societies who have not been introduced to Varanix, at least not directly through VaraNews. These mailings will proceed 20 to 30 at a time; the recent postal increases really jumped up the overseas rate, where most new mailings are targeted.

Extra copies will continue to be printed and mailed to those of you wishing to distribute copies.

Moving Forward

As mentioned in the previous issue, other means of covering expenses are in the works. The next issue of VaraNews will have an offer for coffee cups and T-shirts with the Varanix logo. In part, the revenue is destined to make up the balance in covering basic production/mailing costs of the newsletter. More importantly, several of the projects that have generated interest will require funding, specifically the Monitor Rescue and the Deutsch -> English translation projects discussed in the following pages.

What type of information would you like to see in this newsletter? A section on disease prevention, recognition and control, perhaps? A discussion on the monitor family itself, including ancestral origins? A "My Most Memorable Monitor" column? Well, I would.

Do not hesitate to offer you involvement in a project for fear of overcommitting yourself. Participation can be as simple as jotting down and sending in a few paragraphs on a topic with which you are familiar. If you would like to present:
- an article
- a series of articles
- a regular column

on any topic, please feel free to contact me. Better still, write it and send it in.

My experience primarily stems from the research, captive maintenance and observation of *V. niloticus*. I also spend a good deal of time on habitat design & construction. Thus, chances are there won't be any

other topics authored by me in the near future. Could result in a monotonous menu of articles, no? (Next issue, Mark Bayless provides a discussion of what our animals go through to reach our doorstep.)

On the graphic side, if you have any photos or sketches you would like to see in print, send them in. Your conditions of publication will be honored.

Ain't It Just So!

Thanks go to Prof. Dr. H.-G. Horn of the German herpetological society DGHT (publisher of Salamandra) for offering the following anecdote as a description of how many people view the legislative issue.

> *"This a story about four people named Everybody, Somebody, Anybody and Nobody. There was an important job to be done and Everybody was sure that Somebody would do it. Anybody could have done it, but Nobody did it. Somebody got angry about it, because it was Everybody's job. Everybody thought Anybody could do it, but Nobody realized that Everybody wouldn't do it. It ended up that Everybody blamed Somebody when Nobody did what Anybody could have."*

What it boils down to is that many herpetologists, and animal keepers in general, believe that others will do the job or that legislative acts will not encroach upon their interests. Wrong! Considering the rate of worldwide habitat destruction, I'm sure many of us believe that some animals only hope of survival is in the hands of private individuals and zoos. This, however, does not seem to be the mainstream point of view among non-herpetologists; in fact, it appears to be somewhat the contrary.

Nah, you say! Read on, I say!

It Is/Could Be the Law Revisited

VaraNews 1(3):2-3, *It Is/Could Be the Law*, presented a viewpoint on how legislation concerning the captive maintenance of reptiles is seldom designed to be pro-herpetologist. It was hoped that this article would spur some discussion on the topic, though very little has been heard to date.

If the discussion at least caused a spark of concern, what follows should add kindling to fire. A letter dated 18 January, 1991 from the American Federation of Herpetoculturists to its members contained the following:

> *In La Mesa, a suburb of the city of San Diego, a law was PASSED recently, which prohibits the keeping of all reptiles and amphibians without first applying for and receiving a permit from the Department of Animal Control. Further, it allows no more than TWO exotic animals in one residence. Virtually all*

VaraNews is the newsletter of Varanix, the Varanid Information eXchange. Varanix was founded to promote responsible care of varanids in captivity through education and the open exchange of information.

A primary function of the eXchange is to build a collective knowledge base that will serve to improve our understanding of the family Varanidae. The goal of these efforts is improve their chances of survival, both in captivity and in the wild.

Editorial submissions:

May be written, typed or in electronic form (preferred). Both PC and Mac diskettes are acceptable, in ASCII, MS Word, WordPerfect or RTF format.
Please indicate any special conditions of publication, such as withholding mention of name/organization or giving credit to a person or publication.

Back Issues:

To receive the issues listed below, send 50¢ per copy

- Number 0. Vol1 Num1, Vol1 Num2, Vol1 Num3

Inquiries and Membership:

One-year membership in Varanix costs:

- $10 US/year (USA)
- $12 US/year (foreign)

Members receive VaraNews bi-monthly. VaraNews is free to zoos upon request and to herp societies wishing to participate in a newsletter exchange program.

Address all inquiries & memberships to:

Greg Naclerio
Varanix
8726D S. Sepulveda Bl. #243
Los Angeles, CA 90045
USA

Telephone: (213) 768-8669

Messages may also be left via computer & modem on:

- Herpetology Online Network - (215) 464-3562
  (Herp-Net is a US-based electronic forum which can be accessed at any modem speed. The caller pays only for the phone call.)
- CompuServe - send mail to user ID: 71320,721
  Specify "monitor" as the keyword or subject

Editorial Review Board: Frank Braun

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pet owners and hobbyists including herpetoculturists were unaware of the law until it had already been passed.

How can you prevent such a horrible thing from happening in your community or state? Ask to have your name placed on the mailing list to receive any wild animal- or herp-related agendas generated by your city council, board of supervisors, Fish and Game commission or any other local or state committee or department which has jurisdiction over reptiles and amphibians.

Most governmental bodies are required to publish this list of upcoming topics before making changes in existing laws or when adopting a new law. By contacting the city clerk, or the office of the state legislator who chairs the relevant committee, and requesting to be placed on their mailing list to receive such notices, you will be in a better position to "nip in the bud" or to exert influence, on any legislation potentially harmful to our herpetocultural interests.

I suggest one or two people from your herp society acquire these agendas and act as watchdogs over your city council, one or two others over your Fish and Game or similar departments, and so forth. **Don't let happen to you what happened in La Mesa. Get that agenda — then get involved!**
(Editor's note: The emphasis is mine.)

Enclosed is an application for the AFH. If you can do nothing else for the AFH at this time, please take this application, give it to a friend, and ask them to join. Now is the time to come together so we can defend ourselves not only against "bad laws", but also to take the offensive by proposing new legislation which protects and enhances herpetoculture.

Let me emphasize that it is critical action be taken *prior* to enactment of legislation rather than after passage. Personal experience in coming up on the short end of a somewhat bizarre "legal battle" (including a suicidal lawyer, who was unfortunately on *my* side) over a condominium parking stall taught me one thing (at least): Regardless of how it got there, once a decision has been recorded it's difficult to overturn without a great deal of time and expense, which can easily amount to much more than it's worth.

In the same letter, the AFH also offered a legislative packet designed to save AFH members time when researching legislation. (The focus appears to be on the keeping of large constrictors.) I've requested the information.

AFH publishes ***The Vivarium***, a bi-monthly publication dealing strictly with herps. The magazine has grown to 40 pages, covers a wide range of topics and is well-written; the color photographs are excellent. Annual dues to the AFH are $26 US (which gets you the magazine for a year).

For information or subscriptions, write to:
AFH, P.O. Box 1131, Lakeside, CA 92040.

That's a report on what some others are doing...

A previous request was made for readers to share their knowledge of local legislation governing the keeping of herps. The purpose is to build a geographical reference cataloguing legislation which affects herpetoculturists. The results will also be shared with other herp societies and organizations so interested.

If nothing else, the information would aid herpetologists on the move. One of the first things I confront when deciding where to move is what the law says about the animals I choose to care for. (For now, La Mesa residents don't have to worry about me improving their neighborhood!)

Projects

This section will discuss the projects which have been suggested by the readership. If you are looking for ways to help Varanix grow and prosper, this section is for you.

Monitor Rescue Revisited

In VaraNews 1(3):5, your thoughts were solicited on how an adoption program for homeless monitors might be established. Wanda Olson took the time to respond. Her write up is an excellent start on a charter for such a program. She raises some important issues that need to be addressed before putting such a program into operation. (Wanda already has experience in this area, as she is involved in a reptile rescue in her area. She has also volunteered to be a Monitor Rescue contact and foster home in her area.)

Monitor Rescue & Adoption Proposal

1. Form a network of Monitor Rescue contacts and foster homes. Interested participants in this program must be ABLE to temporarily feed and care for monitors.
2. Publish the list of foster home contacts. This list could include all foster homes or it could contain one central person who would call on the foster homes.
3. Publicize the Monitor Rescue program. Inform zoos, humane societies, animal control, veterinarians, pet shops, etc.
4. Maintain a list of potential adoptors. When notice of an animal is received, the adoptors can be contacted and arrangements can be made in a timely manner.
5. Maintain a central listing of all animals awaiting adoption.
6. Animals should go to the first suitable home to avoid any notion of favoritism.

7. Charge an adoption fee to help cover costs of food, medical care, etc.
8. Request donations to a Monitor Rescue Fund to help volunteers offset the cost of providing temporary care, which could get costly and burdensome.
9. Issue an adoption contract to be signed by the adoptor relieving Varanix of all responsibility.
10. Provide the adoptor with a species-specific care sheet and a sheet containing the animal's history and other pertinent information.
11. When possible, a Monitor Rescue representative should check out the potential adoptor's housing setup, or even help with the setup.
12. The foster homes feed and care for the monitors until a permanent home is found. Permanent homes can be found by:
    a) word of mouth
    b) advertising "for adoption" in herp society newsletters and other herp-related publications
    c) direct contact with potential adoptors.
13. When an animal is received, as detailed a record as possible should be made of the animal, including size, weight, sex and general health.
14. Shipping costs will be the responsibility of the adoptor, paid in full before shipment.

Other points worth considering are:

It may not be wise to publicize residence addresses. This is especially true in areas where there might be restrictions on keeping monitors. And how can such a program be administered in an area where monitors may not be legally kept?

It should also be stressed that the purpose of this program is to find a home for these animals and not provide a wholesale channel for the reptile trade. In fact, a signed document stating the animal is not being acquired for sale/trade could be required (though it would probably be legally unenforceable).

"Suitable home" needs definition. If the adoptee's future residence cannot be visited by the Monitor Rescue contact, how can we be assured all is in order? Perhaps we could request a photo of the future "home", for what that would be worth.

How much should the adoptor's proximity to the animal's present location play in selecting a home?

Your thoughts and comments on this project are solicited. You are also welcomed to apply for any of the above or notify Varanix of any varanids looking for a home.

Note to herp societies and other related organizations: If you would like to work with Varanix on the Monitor Rescue program, or simply want to make use of the service, drop a line or give a call. Your "For Sale" and "Wanted" notices are also welcome for publication in the Ads/Notices section.

Translation in English, bitte

VaraNews 1(3):8 offered you the *wunderbar* opportunity to participate in a translation project of German articles/publications. Paul Gritis of PA has been sending in translations he has done and promised he will continue to do so on an as-time-allows basis. (Paul also sells herpetology books; see the Ads/Notices section for his address.)

There's been a display of enthusiasm to get this project underway. The Varanix member who offered to provide a photocopy of *Die Familie der Warane* (Mertens) has been contacted. I also have at least 35 articles in German; the list of authors includes R. Mertens, H.G. Horn, G. Visser and W. Böhme. All told, this amounts to at least 400 pages to be dealt with. I will soon be posting notices at the local colleges for *bon marché* (inexpensive) translators.

Accompanying the next issue of VaraNews will be the list of German publications on the "translated" and "to be translated" list. It is hoped that you will contact Varanix if you know of, and can provide, existing translations to avoid unnecessary effort and expense.

And now we come to the issue of financing this endeavor. The timeframe for completing the project will be directly proportional to the funds available. Even at $5 per page, we're talking close to $2000, wot! In response to last issue's request for fund-raising ideas, one new member suggested that people could send in $X dollars to 'reserve' Y number of pages of a given work.

You are invited to share your ideas on funding this, or any other, project.

If you have any articles in French which require translation into English, send a copy and I will get a translation back to you as time allows.

Q & A

This is where the questions (and answers) in your letters will be posted for response by the readership. Attempts to respond on an individual basis will be made for questions of an urgent nature.

Best efforts will be made to validate the responses. If you question the validity of a response, speak up. What works in one case may not work in another.

Questions: Provide as much background information as possible. For example, if an animal's behavior has you concerned, describe it's living conditions, diet, approximate age, size, and weight.

Answers: Please make a valiant effort to insure the accuracy of your information.

In the previous issue, there was a question/answer about a reader's *V. exanthematicus* who had caught colds and he had used Ornacyn-Plus, a bird medicine, to remedy the problem. This method was a cause for concern for one member, who called to stress the importance of visiting a qualified veterinarian when

encountering health problems. Colds can be serious and quickly lead to the death of a reptile.

As stated in the small print below this section's heading, Q&A exists for you to ask questions AND respond to those for which you have an answer. This section is designed to be your communication tool to the rest of the varanophiles out there. The most efficient use of this section would have a number of experienced people acting in the capacity of "Answer Hominid" (as mentioned in a previous issue) who could field questions, either directly or via Varanix, and provide responses at the same time the question appears. Otherwise, there is at the very least a two month lag if the question alone is posed awaiting comment from the readership.

Again, allow me to stress the point that the intent is to require as little of anyone's time as possible. If you would like to consider participating but hesitate to "overcommit" yourself, fear not. You do what your time, experience and desire allow.

UV or not UV — Is That the Question?

This question on the use of black light UV bulbs is up for grabs. I have seen as many *pro* discussions as *cons* on this topic, and am still unsure. The CHS Care in Captivity sheets (discussed on page 6) include a paragraph in the Basic Husbandry Techniques section indicating that several zoos have used UV lights successfully.

The discussion acknowledges that very little research has been done on "the minimum required dose and the maximum safe dose of UV light ", with Vita-lites (Duro-Test Corp, Fairfield, NJ) being the most widely light used for reptiles in captivity. The reader is informed that black light "has been implicated in retinal damage from looking directly at the bulbs".

If you can shed some light on the subject, please do so. (I couldn't pass up such an obvious cliché!)

Publications

This is where books, magazines, newsletter articles, etc. of interest to Varanix members will be discussed. Many people are looking for a source of good literature about varanids. If you know of any good publications, send in the title, author, publisher and publication date/issue. Comments on its focus and usefullness are most welcome.

Book Offer

Varanix member Mike Fost of the Atlanta Zoo can make arrangements for a group purchase of the 2 well-known books by Walter Auffenberg:

	offer price	list price
- *The Behavioral Ecology of the Komodo Monitor* (1981)	$36	$52
- *Gray's Monitor Lizard* (1988)	$29	$40

The price includes postage. The offer requires a minimum total order of 35 copies and must be placed before the end of May. Send your check to:

Mike Fost
6609 Treehills Pkwy.
Stone Mountain, GA 30088-3033

The target date for placing the order is mid-May. Mike will not cash your check until he has enough orders to satisfy the requirements. If you have any questions, you may contact Mike at (404) 987-3933.

Let Varanix know of any discount deals you come across, whether it be books, supplies, or what.

New Books from SSAR

The Society for the Study of Amphibians and Reptiles has a couple of new books going to press. The English translation of ***The Snakes of Iran*** by Mahmoud Latifi, Director of the Department of Herpetology & Antivenom Studies at the Razi Institute in Tehran, contains sections on general biology, snake venoms, and snake bite and its medical treatment. The 164-page volume contains information on size, diet, reproduction, habitat and distribution for the 60 species of Iranian snakes. Price to non-members (of SSAR) is $22, which includes shipping within the USA.

Herpetofauna of Iraq, Kuwait and the Arabian Gulf Region by Alan E. Leviton, Steven C. Anderson, Sherman A. Minton and Kraig Adler ($28 to non-members of SSAR, $23 to members if paid before June 1991) is intended as an introduction to the identification of the amphibians and reptiles of this central part of the Middle East. The book (approx. 175 pages) contains an annotated checklist of 144 species and subspecies, with citation of the original description for each taxon, a brief diagnosis and a statement of the animals' distribution. There is also an illustrated identification key to all genera, species and subspecies. This book also presents a discussion of venomous snakes, including medical procedures for snake bite along with a table of recommended antivenoms with a list of sources.

I am told the book also contains a couple of photos of *Varanus yemensis* (juvenile & adult)

Varanus prasinus

Tropical Fish Hobbyist magazine continues with its section on herpetology. The April 1991 issue contains a 5-page article by Robert Sprackland entitled ***The Emerald Monitor Lizard, Varanus prasinus***. The article provides a well-rounded summary of *V. prasinus* as man knows it. The author offers a description of the animal's natural habitat as well as personal accounts and observations of the emerald monitor, including discussion of captive maintenance and reproduction.

Photocopies

The next newsletter will include a list of articles and publications in my possession, most of which have been sent in by a handful of Varanix members. One question that must be resolved is how to go about administrating the process of making copies available to you. The current thinking is to charge $.50 per page for the first 2 pages, and $.25 per page for each page thereafter. The goal is to cover the cost of photocopying and provide funds for the projects discussed elsewhere in this newsletter. What are your thoughts on the pricing? (Another consideration is that a large volume of copying will have to be done at a copy center.)

It appears to be a widespread practice to offer such a service for a nominal charge where there is no real profit involved. The question still remains whether or not it is "proper". If you can offer some insight into the subject, please contact me. (When possible, I have requested permission from the authors to reprint articles and no one has refused as yet.)

Some articles are *n*th generation photocopies which are barely legible. In order for them to be made available, it would be best if they were rekeyed. If you can rekey the articles, let me know how many pages you would like to tackle (see page 2 for preferred data formats).

All of these publications will also be catalogued on computer, the purpose of which is to build an "intelligent" system which can quickly provide cross-referenced materials when seeking information. If you have experience in this area and would like to participate, please contact me (my coordinates are on page 2).

Chicago Herpetological Society Revisited... and then some

In VaraNews 1(3):4, we discussed the possibility of making copies available of the CHS Care in Captivity manual. CHS has kindly given Varanix permission to do so. This is an unselfish gesture of on the part of CHS. It would have been quite understandable if they had refused on the basis that they might be losing a potential member.

"Before You Choose Your Pet" (1 page) discusses the general responsibilities that must be considered before acquiring any animal. This would be most beneficial to someone not already keeping animals, though it also goes a good job of addressing some questions you may not have thought of. "Before You Choose Your Pet" would be good to have on hand to give someone considering a purchase.

"Basic Husbandry Techniques (13 pages) addresses the four general areas of captive husbandry: environment, nutrition, sanitation and knowledge. One nice thing about all of the CHS publications is their pages are packed with information, and this is no exception.

If interested, please send a note indicating which you would like, the number of copies and 50¢ for the first 2 pages and 25¢ for each additional page to cover copying and postage.

There is much more to the CHS manual, including care sheets and lists of veterinarians, book dealers, suppliers, and publications. It wouldn't be in anybody's interest to offer copies of the entire manual. The new Care in Captivity manual is 88-pages long. Pay for copying 68-pages and you've spent the $17.50 CHS membership fee!

Book Search

If you look on the bottom right hand side of page 2, you will notice mention of the Herpetology Online Network (Herp-Net). This electronic bulletin board service (BBS) covers all herp-related topics and is designed for interactive communication between *computerized* herpetoculturists. With a computer and modem, you may call up and browse the message base, ask questions and search the listing of herp societies. "Discussions" take the form of message threads where everyone is invited to join in.

Herp-Net is responsive and easy to use. You are guided by menus at each step of the way. And the philosophy is that no question is stupid, whether it relates to your reptiles or how to use the bulletin board itself. Sysop (system operator) Mark Miller is willing and able to field your questions and comments. "Joining" is a matter of calling and entering your name in the member directory. You pay only for the phone calls. "Open" 24 hours, you may call Herp-Net when the rates are lowest in your area.

One service offered by Herp-Net is the book search service, which can even help you locate out-of-print reptile or amphibian books. And how worketh the service?

You provide as much information as possible about the book: title, author, year of publication, hardcover/softcover and how many you want. Your request is added to a list that is distributed to 235 bookdealers worldwide. There is no charge for this service and you are under no obligation to make the purchase even if a book is located. When a title has been located, you will receive a postcard reporting on its condition and price. If you want the book, you must respond with payment within 5 days. If you don't want the book, you do nothing.

Your titles will remain on the search list for up to one year, though you are welcome to resubmit them each

year. As stated in Mark's description of the service: "Our search service is free and without obligation to purchase. You have nothing to lose, and you don't have to search through 100 used book catalogs!"

You may submit your list via Herp-Net or by mail to: Mark Miller, P.O. Box 52261, Philadelphia PA 19115. If you are writing Varanix anyway and include your list, I will forward it to Herp-Net.

Public Relations

Education. Education. Education. The need for education of the masses cannot be overstressed. As first impressions are the most important, we've got to get in some positive public relation on behalf of our varanids (and other reptiles) before the *other guys and gals* have their say! Anyone who has done a public show & tell with their varanid knows how rewarding it is to see people walk away with a positive attitude. Though, when someone is fascinated to the point of saying, "I'm going to get one", it is time to point out the responsibilities involved and stress the need for some research prior to purchase.

When in the public eye, it is important to realize that something one herpetovaranist might say to another could easily be misinterpreted by the uninitiated. For example, someone asks in reference to your water monitor, "How big does she get?". Your graphic, some-would-say-twisted response might be, "Big enough to eat your house cat". *Scratch* one cat lover from your list of supporters! (I know.)

All frivolity aside, responses must take a more guarded tone. It would be a good idea to have a list of guidelines for public appearances. This would include:

- a general introduction about preparation and what to expect
- a list of things requiring special attention
- a list of the most common questions and responses
- What Not to Do
- What to Do

At the same time, let's impress the impressionable future herpetovaranists in the right way with some literature written specifically for them. A basic primer, complete with illustrations, would suit the bill.

If you would like to participate in putting together a small PR pamphlet and/or a primer for the younger set, let me know. Naturally, your may respond by sending in the material.

What's the Word

VaraNews will report on any items of interest gleaned from other society newsletters. Send in copies of articles, newspaper columns, etc. which might be of interest to other readers. And please indicate the publication and issue date and whether or not the article may be reprinted verbatim.

Méli–mélo

This section is where you will find the various and sundry, including your amusing stories, quips and anecdotes.

Power Lunch

Harry Andrews of the Madras Crocodile Bank in India describes the diet fed to their *V. salvator*.

> *At the Croc Bank we get close to 4000 croc eggs per year with the annual rate of increase being 1500-2000 eggs per year. Each egg is candled carefully to determine the fertile and infertile eggs, which apart from saving incubation space, helps preserve the "good" eggs from rotting away if kept along with the infertile eggs. The infertile eggs are saved, and a portion of them fed every other day to the* salvators *at the rate of 3 eggs per adult [1.3 - 2 m (51 - 78 in) in length] from February to June, which is crocodile breeding season.*
>
> *As the very young* salvators *are unable to swallow whole croc eggs, we do a bit of "baby sitting" like breaking the eggs and leaving them in the enclosure to be lapped up. This way the* salvators *get their fair share of protein in the diet. The other daily food supplements are fish, molecrabs and rats, trapped by local tribals. Our animals seem to grow very well and fast on this diet. We also feed them infertile turtle eggs which are not preserved or kept for scientific use.*
>
> *Back here at the Croc Bank we refer to this process as "recycling of valuable calcium and protein", a conservation strategy we have had to adopt, considering the constraints in raising 5000 crocodiles. Likewise we would encourage other reptile breeders to cash in on using their surplus infertile reptile eggs as part of another's feed.*

If only we all had the "problem" of surplus eggs! Many thanks to Mr. Andrews for taking the time in between feedings to describe the Croc Bank's "recycling" program.

And now that we have seen the postal system works from as far away as India, how about giving it a try from closer quarters by sending in your tips, tricks, anecdotes, ...

This is a test

Quotables

On pages 22-23 of the Mar/Apr 1991 issue of ***Buzzworm, The Environmental Journal,*** there is an article entitled *Adventures in the Skin Trade* in which Peter Brazaitis, curator of the New York Zoological Society's Central Park Zoo, provides a few interesting quotables, such as: "Only a reptile needs a reptile skin".

In a discussion on the differences between crocodiles and alligators, Mr. Brazaitis comments on the temperamental differences: "If it chases you, it's a crocodile; if it sits and looks at you, it's an alligator". Author Paul Raeburn adds that this method requires a volunteer.

Note that the topic of the article is by no means humorous; it discusses the illegal skin trade of crocodilians.

Huevos bengalensis Revisited

In VaraNews 1(2):5, we mentioned the Reptile Breeding Foundation's first clutch of Bengal monitor eggs. The RBF newsletter, Scales & Tales 5(1), reports that they were infertile, but that the staff is still hopeful for the future.

Ads / Notices

Reasonable-length line ads are free and should relate to the intended audience of this newsletter. Display ads will be discussed when the readership base has been established. Varanix is not responsible for the quality of merchandise advertised and reserves the right to refuse any ad deemed inappropriate.

Consumers are invited to inform Varanix of their satisfaction or dissatisfaction with a product/service. Your comments will remain confidential and on record.

BOOKS: Herpetology Books - For a free list, write to: Paul Gritis, 1731 W. Market #12, Bethlehem, PA 18018 (215) 867-9723 (evenings & weekends)

FOR SALE: Many species available. Call or write for current list. East Bay Vivarium, 1827 5th St., Berkeley, CA 94710. Phone 415-841-1400.

FOR SALE: The following species were available mid-April. 1.0 *V. dumerili*, 1.0 *V. prasinus*, 1.1 *V. timorensis*, 4 hatchling *V. niloticus*. Others varanids generally available. Contact Tom at (602) 941-2014, M-F 10 -7, Sat 10 -5 Pacific time.

WANTED: Graphic artists to discuss illustration projects. Contact Greg Naclerio, address on page 2.

WANTED: 2 Guaranteed female V. e. exanthematicus, in the 2 - 3 ft TL range. Contact Mark Bayless (415) 527-3744.

Varanix
8726D S. Sepulveda Bl. #243
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LOS ANGELES CA 900
APR 26
PM
1991

Flower
USA

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