

## Canadian Reptile Show

**I'm on the reptile road again, to the Canadian Reptile Breeders' Expo.**

September 21, 2009

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The Indian River Reptile Zoo in Petersborough, Ontario, Canada, boasts an impressive collection of herps. This alligator is one of the zoo's featured attractions. They also have saltwater crocs. When you're reading this blog on Monday, August 21, the Canadian Reptile Breeders' Expo will be over. But right now, while I'm writing, I'm one day away from flying out to Toronto to attend it. Such is the time warp in the publishing world. It gets really weird sometimes with the magazine. Naturally we have to work on REPTILES magazine months before the cover month that is printed on each issue. For instance, right now we're about to ship the December issue to the printer, and today's September 17. This sort of thing really contributes to the sense that the years are whizzing by at an alarming rate (and believe me, the older you get the more alarming it is).

The Canadian Reptile Breeders' Expo seems poised to be a terrific expo. A perusal of the vendor list at the expo's website reveals 113 vendors as of today. That's a great number, especially for an inaugural event. There is also an interesting selection of talks scheduled, as well.

I'm looking forward to meeting some of the Canadian reptile breeders and seeing the reptiles they have for sale. I will admit to a small amount of trepidation, however, when looking at the vendor list and wondering about some of the people I may encounter. Here I'm speaking mostly of the vendor listed only as "Scary Guys." I'll have to be sure to stop by their table and see if they live up to their name -- or maybe I'll be able to determine that from a safe distance.

It's interesting to see a bunch of new reptile vendors on a Canadian list such as this. I've been going to U.S. shows for awhile now, and while I by no means know every vendor at every show, there are familiar names on most vendor lists for most shows I attend. For the Canadian expo there are only a few vendor names I immediately recognize. There are Exo Terra, Zoo Med and BHB Enterprises, all well-known fixtures at U.S. reptile shows. Brian Barczyk from BHB is also scheduled to give a talk at the Canadian expo. There is also the Indian River Reptile Zoo and The Urban Reptile, both facilities I visited the last time I was in Toronto on reptile business.

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Craig Stewart from The Urban Reptile, next to one of his gecko breeding racks. While visiting Craig in 2006 I got a chance for an up-close inspection of this particularly attractive panther chameleon. Back in 2007 the International Herpetological Symposium was held in Toronto, and Bry Loyst, the curator at the Indian River Reptile Zoo, was the IHS program coordinator that year. Included in the symposium schedule was a trip out to the zoo in Petersborough, Ontario. That was a fun trip. Not only did attendees get to see some cool reptiles at a first-class facility, but we were fed, too. Hungry herpers are always grateful to be fed, of course.

That same trip I met Craig Stewart from The Urban Reptile. Craig gave the REPTILES crew (me, Sandy Quinn and my managing editor at the time, Kara Sutton-Jones) a tour of his impressive breeding facility, where he raises leopard geckos, fat-tails, crested, green tree pythons, bearded dragons and other species. I remember a particularly large and vibrant panther chameleon, just one of the many animals he showed off to us. Right now Craig's doing something interesting in selling "Breeder Bundles," which are groups of lizards sold together to people who want to kick off their own breeding projects. The lizards are grouped according to morph type (snow, tangerine tornado, sunglow, etc.), or you can get a mixed group in what he calls the "Morph Maker." That's an interesting way to sell lizards to people who want to try raising their own.

REPTILES is hosting a vendor party in Toronto this Saturday night, which always provides a good opportunity to visit with people who are often too busy to chat during expo hours. Here's hoping that's the case with the Canadian Reptile Breeders' Expo -- I hope everyone, vendors and attendees both, are kept busy buying and selling plenty of herps and reptile products this weekend in Toronto (or I guess I should say this past weekend, since you're reading this on Monday)!

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