

## April 2009 Editor's Note

**Don't forget the other cool green lizard.**

*By Russ Case*

Check out those cute baby water dragons on the cover. How could anyone resist? If you like lizards, I would recommend water dragons to anybody. The green iguana often steals the limelight when it comes to cool green lizards, but the water dragon may be the better choice for many people. For one thing, they don't get anywhere near as big as an adult green iguana.

I love green iguanas. My own, Yombo, was a semiregular guest star in REPTILES years ago. Alas, Yombo is currently buried in my backyard right next to Max, my green-cheeked conure (I like birds, too). Long a favorite with beginner reptilekeepers, green iguanas relegated the number-one-pet-lizard crown to bearded dragons once people realized that iguanas needed special care due to their large size and possible aggression issues. But bearded dragons (or leopard geckos, another huge fave) aren't green, and there's much appeal in green lizards.

Say hello to the green, or Asian, water dragon (*Physignathus cocincinus*), arguably the most popular green lizard pet after the common anole, which was covered in last month's issue (there is another water dragon, the Australian species *P. lesueurii*, but it's more expensive and not as prevalent in the hobby). I remember a water dragon I once had that had a snub nose. Some water dragons spend a lot of time rubbing their noses against terrarium glass. Fortunately there's a way to get them to stop. If they can't see through the glass, they may stop trying to get through it, so attaching cardboard or other material around the outside bottom of their enclosures can help get them to stop this behavior.

The green water dragon is the spotlight species in this month's "The Breeder's Notebook." You'll learn the basics of keeping the lizards, but beyond that you'll get Michael Spears' tips for breeding them. Michael has been breeding these guys for years, so he knows a thing or two about how to achieve breeding success with water dragons.

Also featured in this issue are California kingsnakes, eastern newts, aquatic turtle enclosures and more!