

June 2009 Editor's Note

There's always news afoot in the reptile realm.

By Russ Case

One of the things I've learned while working on this magazine is that there is never any shortage of news within the reptile world.

Our news column, "News From the Reptile Realm," is on page 16. Every month Eric Syverson, REPTILES' associate editor, gathers an intriguing assortment of news items covering many different areas of the reptile world.

In comparison, procuring news items for one of the other magazines in which I'm involved, Aquarium Fish International, can sometimes be akin to pulling some especially stubborn teeth. Fish news really needs to be excavated. Although there's often news, usually bad, about the state of the Earth's oceans, getting a lot of worthwhile monthly news about tropical fishkeeping can sometimes be a bit tough.

Not so with reptiles. It seems there are often new herp species being discovered, research conducted, conservation concerns raised — the news about reptiles and amphibians just keeps coming.

Of course, some of the news can be infuriating. As of this writing, once again efforts are underway to curtail the keeping of reptiles, especially snakes in the genus Python. You can read about the latest batch of introduced bills and what people are doing about them in this issue's news column.

Your blood may boil, but there's something important to remember before you begin shooting off poison-pen letters to the politicians involved. The Pet Industry Joint Advisory Council, a strong advocate for the rights of reptile owners, always urges hobbyists not to blow their stacks and launch into a tirade of ranting. It's important to keep a level head and act in a calm, professional manner when responding to this kind of news. The herp hobby's creditability is at stake. Send letters, but stay cool and be diplomatic. You'll usually get better results that way.