

The Herp Gazette

HOUSE OF REPTILES

11507 S.W. Pacific Highway
Tigard, Oregon

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H of R teams up with Murrayhill Vet Hospital

In January, we made the decision to team up with the Murrayhill Veterinary Hospital in order to provide our customers with the most outstanding array of services available to herp owners in the entire Pacific Northwest.

The Murrayhill Veterinary Hospital has been providing veterinary services at their Beaverton location since 1991. They have a very good reputation and they've achieved the highest level of accreditation that is available from the American Animal Hospital Association. In the past year they have added the

services of an additional veterinarian who has extensive experience with exotic animals. That vet, Dr. Gabriella Flacke, is happy to be seeing our customers. Dr. Flacke has 13 years of experience in the treatment of reptiles and is loving the opportunity to do even more of it by seeing the customers we refer to her. Dr. Flacke also comes to our store for a couple hours each month to help us inspect our animals and provide any treatments for those that may need it.

The biggest benefit of this relationship for our customers is the fact that people who purchase a reptile or amphibian from **House of Reptiles** will receive a certificate for a free half hour comprehensive exam for their new pet at the Murrayhill clinic in Beaverton. There is no time limit regarding the use of the certificate, and it can be saved for use at a later time if desired.

Staff Updates:

Since our last newsletter, the staff at **House of Reptiles** continue to be busy...

Marshall is preparing for his graduation from high school and his venture into the world of college at PCC next fall. He's also talking about moving out of his parent's house this summer and living with a friend. Big steps!

Paul completed several sessions with a physical therapist in the hopes of getting some healing to occur with his persistent foot problem that keeps him hobbling around the store. So far, the verdict is...better, but not well yet. He, too is

hoping to move into a place of his own this summer.

Kim continues to work part-time at the karate school next door and for us. She is especially helpful with the presentations that we increasingly do. Other than that, taking care of her two daughters keeps her quite busy.

Tim has seen a couple movies lately! Woohoo! He's also involved in some research with friend Chris Rombough regarding the rare Madagascan three-banded, two-toed skink

that are at the store until the middle of April. Tim and wife, Shawn, might actually get to take a couple days of vacation in June.

Current and former volunteers include Robbie Brink, Kayley Broyles, Alison Burros, Ben Chase, Haylee Cummings, Ricky Dunitz, Seth Ellison, Tawnya Fulton, Konner Krikava, Kelsey Lissman, Nick Lund, Will Lund, Summer and Cole Pearson, Hadley Rentz, Jessica Sampson, Cara Sandels, Luke Smukalla and Kenton.

Quarterly Care Sheet: Vietnamese Mossy Frog

(*Thelederma coritcale*)

GENERAL DESCRIPTION: In the wild Vietnamese Mossy Frogs are found in the northern regions of Vietnam in flooded caves and deep niches near mountain streams. Adults of both sexes are roughly the same size and can reach an SVL (snout to vent length) of up to three and a half inches. Adult males can be distinguished from females by the presence of breeding calluses at the base of the inside finger of both front legs. Their common name is derived from the mossy appearance for which they are known. They have a glossy green, brown and black background coloration with occasional red and purple spots. Their skin is also camouflaged by an assortment of bumps, spines and tubercles that further contribute to their mossy, lichen-like appearance.

“These frogs can take up to a year to metamorphose, which contributes to them being a bit more expensive than some other frog species.”

CAPTIVE CARE: Maintaining Vietnamese Mossy Frogs requires well-ventilated, escape-proof cages. Aquariums with tight-fitting screen lids make good enclosures not only because they are easy to clean, but because they also make for good visibility inside. Generally speaking, the larger the enclosure the better. Daytime temperatures of 75 to 85F, and nighttime lows to 68F are optimal. If necessary, the daytime temperatures can be achieved by using a low-wattage heat bulb. To maintain desired humidity levels, it is important to mist the enclosure daily. These frogs need multiple hiding places in order to thrive and feel safe. Logs, cork bark, flat smooth rocks, moss, and sturdy leafed plants can be used as cage decorations. The substrate for their habitat can be cypress mulch, orchid bark, a commercially made soil/moss combination (this is what we use) or a premium potting soil (lacking perlite) along with a layer of moss to help maintain moisture. Vietnamese Mossy Frogs also require a water dish deep enough to allow them a nightly soak as they stay hydrated by absorbing water through their skin. Since they may defecate in their water dish, it will require daily cleaning. They can also be kept in a tank that is set up as a semi-aquatic enclosure, where land and water portions of the tank are separated by a plexiglass divider. In this type of setup, the water should be filtered to keep it as clean as possible. Adequate space, a source of fresh water, cleanliness, and lots of hiding areas are all your terrarium needs to have in order for Vietnamese Mossy Frogs to thrive. Their dietary requirements may be met with any (or all) of the following: appropriately sized crickets, mealworms, grasshoppers, waxworms and earthworms. Adult frogs can be fed every two to three days; younger frogs should be fed three times per week or every other day. In order to avoid metabolic bone disease, all foods should be dusted with a good vitamin D3/calcium powder as directed by the manufacturer (we use and recommend Miner-All).

ADDITIONAL NOTES: Males produce a range of vocalizations that probably serve a variety of different purposes. These frogs can take up to a year to metamorphose, which contributes to them being a bit more expensive than some other frog species. Generally speaking, frogs should not be considered handling animals. If handling is necessary for some reason, hands should always be washed both before handling and afterwards. When frightened, these frogs will curl up into a ball and play dead. Their longevity in captivity is unknown.

Native Herp Spotlight: Pacific Giant Salamander (*Dicamptodon tenebrosus*)

The Pacific Giant Salamander can be found from southwestern British Columbia to northern California. They range in elevation from near sea level to near 6000 feet at Upper Bigelow Lake in Josephine County, Oregon. They frequently inhabit cool, moist coniferous forests near cold, spring-fed streams and lakes. Adults in the terrestrial form are not frequently seen as they spend much of the year, when they are not breeding, below the surface in burrows or under layers of debris. When found, they are quite capable of inflicting a painful bite in defense.

This is the largest salamander in Oregon and Washington. Adults can

reach total lengths of up to 13 inches. Neotenic larvae (larvae that never metamorphose into the adult form – an oddity that happens fairly frequently in Pacific Giant Salamanders) can reach lengths of up to 14 inches. Larval forms are gray-brown, with a lightly colored underside. Their external gills are small and bushy. Metamorphosed salamanders are typically brown or gray, with lateral mottling that is a copper-color.

Because of their strong jaws and relatively large size, they can eat a wide variety of prey items – from snails, slugs, worms and a large variety of insects to other amphibians, snakes, lizards and even small

mammals like mice and shrews.

Each breeding season, females lay between 75 and 100 eggs in well-concealed chambers in cold-water streams and lakes. Females stay with the eggs to guard them throughout their entire development.

This is one of the few species of salamander that is able to vocalize. When stressed, they are able to produce a low-pitched growl or yelp.

“Pet” Peeves: Herp Keeping Under Attack Again!

There are two bills being proposed in Washington D.C. that would dramatically alter the face of herp keeping in the United States.

The Nonnative Wildlife Invasion Prevention Act, **H.R. 669**, introduced by Del. Madeleine Bordallo (D-Guam) would totally revamp how nonnative animal species are regulated under the Lacey Act. Species not appearing on an “Approved List” could not be imported into the United States; therefore, all unapproved nonnative species could not be moved interstate. In addition, trade in all such unlisted species would

come to a halt – possession would be limited and all breeding would cease. Unless those species are included on the approved list import, export, transport, and breeding would be prohibited. Exceptions would be limited and many reptiles currently sold as pets would not be available to pet owners across the nation. This bill would most probably put many companies and stores out of business.

The other bill, **S. 373**, introduced by Senator Bill Nelson (D-Florida) would add “constrictor snake of the species python genera” to the Lacey Act.

The bill is derived from the possible environmental impact on endangered species that feral populations of Burmese pythons are having in the Everglades region of south Florida. However, the effect of **S. 373** would be to ban EVERY species of python (e.g., ball python), even without a scientific risk assessment being done. The bill also ignores an ongoing risk analysis being conducted by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. That analysis seeks to determine which, if any, species of pythons, boas and Eunectes (anacondas) warrant listing as injurious wildlife under the Lacey Act. That

analysis would provide a scientific basis for any listings and would provide for a public comment period, unlike the proposed legislation that would circumvent the public rule-making process.

Now is the time to contact your congressmen and senators to encourage them to vote against these bills!

For more info, go to <http://pijac.org/i4a/pages/index.cfm?pageid=504>.

International Herp News

Although Darwin missed it in his original exploration of the Galapagos Islands, a rare pink and black iguana lives there. Park rangers first noticed the species a couple decades ago, but the first official scientific documentation of it only occurred in January of this year. It is considered to be "critically endangered". It's amazing that even in a

place as studied as the Galapagos Islands, new species are still being discovered.

New Zealand's chilly climate might not be celebrated by all, but for frogs it's the secret to long life. 'In frog terms, it's very comfortable here and it helps them to live longer,' says researcher Ben Bell, revealing that

the country is home to the oldest living wild frog. The tiny Maud Island frog, a threatened amphibian, has reached the grand age of 37, the oldest recorded age of any frog out of captivity. 'That makes him a geriatric in frog terms, not that you'd know to look at him,' says Prof Bell.

National/Pacific Northwest Herp News

2009 is the 25th anniversary of the Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles. There are events and celebrations planned all over the U.S. during the coming year. In some ways, the TMNT contributed to the popularity of reptiles as pets and so we owe them a debt of gratitude. To find out more about events planned for the

year, access their website at www.tmnt25.com.

This year's annual Joint Meeting of Ichthyologists and Herpetologists will be held in Portland, July 22nd through 29th, 2009. For any of you who have a scientific interest in these kinds of animals, this will be a rare opportunity to hear some nationally known speakers and rub

elbows with researchers and scientists who are conducting some fascinating research regarding these animals.

"This year's annual Joint Meeting of Ichthyologists and Herpetologists will be held in Portland, July 22nd through 29th, 2009."

House of Reptiles Store News

Through customer and staff donations (\$252.20) and the contribution of the store (\$747.80), we were able to donate a whopping \$1000.00 to the Amphibian Ark for 2008. That's pretty impressive, if we do say so ourselves. Those of you who helped make that a reality by dropping your coins and bills into the donation bin should give yourselves a big pat on the back! Thank you. We also started our annual donation of \$500 to the Doernbecher Children's Hospital here in Portland. Contributing to those organizations makes us feel good and extends the reach of our efforts.

The alligator we rescued a few months ago is leaving for Florida within the next couple weeks. It's outgrown our enclosure and will lead a much better life in a gator park there.

Our venomous display animal for April will be our IndoChinese Spitting Cobra. We know you'll want to come check him out – he's a real beauty!

Our first New Caledonian Giant Gecko egg hatched in January. The baby gecko is just as cute as a lizard can be! This has been a several-year-long project and it's been gratifying having it come

to fruition. Since then we've hatched two more out and have two eggs incubating.

We will try again later this spring to arrange another Saturday herp hunt. Our attempt last year was interrupted by record-setting heat. If you are interested in joining us on a day trip to hunt for some native herps, ask us about it the next time you're in the store and we'll keep you updated.

We are currently looking for a Manager trainee. If you think you might be qualified, talk to Tim about it. Be forewarned, we have high expectations!

"Our venomous display animal for April will be our IndoChinese spitting cobra?"

Customer & Pet Profile – The Case Family: Irene, Steve and Andrew

Our customer and pet profile for this quarter is the Case family.

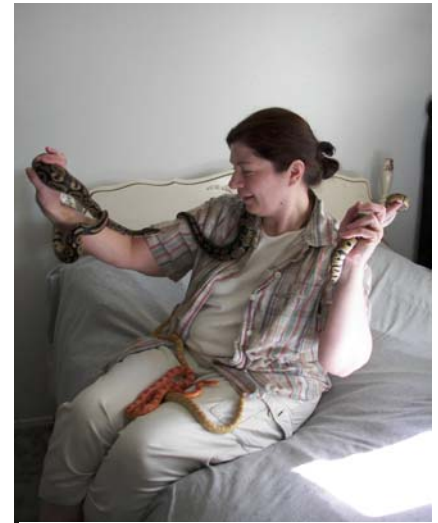
Irene, Steve and Andrew have owned reptiles for the past 18 years. The first one was a Columbian black and white tegu named “Speedy” that was purchased for their oldest son and kept for 10 years until he died of old age. Keeping Speedy was such a positive experience that it sparked the family’s interest in more reptiles. In Ohio, where they lived then, the pet store mostly offered frogs which is why their first herps were various frog species. Enjoying these kinds of pets that were less common/more exotic, they continued to expand their collection. Over the following years until now, they’ve kept a lemon frog, an African clawed frog, some other unnamed frogs, a veiled chameleon, two bearded dragons, three ball pythons, two corn snakes, an Asian water dragon, and a horned frog. Many of those animals are still alive and still in their care.

Originally, Steve and Andrew were afraid of the snakes and would do anything to avoid them. Over time they

became less afraid of them and are now big fans of their slithery pets.

The humans in the Case family aren’t the only ones who are fond of their herps. The family cat, “Noelalani”, is quite fond of the water dragon and will sit and stare at it for hours. The family suspects that it might be a forbidden love.

If you or your child would like to be featured in our “Customer & Pet Profile” in future editions of *The Herp Gazette*, bring or send in a photo of that person with their pet(s), as well as a little biographical information about them. If you’d prefer, you can let one of the **House of Reptiles** staff interview you and we’ll put the bio together for you and then let you review it before it goes to print.



Irene with some of her snakes.



Noelani and the water dragon.

Know Your Herp Laws

We are often asked about the laws in our area that affect reptile and amphibian ownership. There are different federal, state, county and city laws that may apply. Federal laws prohibit keeping any animals that are protected by the Endangered Species Act. Those laws and related topics can be found at: <http://www.fws.gov/endangered/>.

It is also a violation of federal law to sell any turtle that is less than four inches long, unless it is sold for scientific or educational purposes only.

The list of animals that are prohibited, non-controlled, controlled, and protected at the state level in Oregon can be found at: <http://www.dfw.state.or.us/OARs/56.pdf>.

Each county and city can also have its own regulations and statutes. For instance, Multnomah County’s rules are in their “Dangerous or Exotic Animal” section and those rules prohibit any venomous or poisonous reptile, as well as any reptile of the order Crocodylia (crocodiles, alligators and caimans), or any snake of the family Pythonidae or Boinae

capable of obtaining eight feet or more in length.

Those rules can be found at: <http://www.co.multnomah.or.us/dbcs/pets/guide.shtml>.

Portland’s rules mirror Multnomah County’s rules and Beaverton’s rules prohibit the keeping of crocodilians.



House of Reptiles

Purpose Statement:

To offer healthy animals, quality products, accurate information and on-going customer support in a friendly, clean environment.

We strive to be the Best in the Northwest!

ADDRESS:

11507 S.W. Pacific Highway
Tigard, OR 97223

PHONE:

(503) 722-1992

STORE HOURS:

Monday thru Friday:
10am to 7pm
Saturday:
10am to 6pm
Sunday:
Noon to 5pm

E-MAIL:

info@house-of-reptiles.com

The Herp Gazette is published on a quarterly basis, each January, April, July, and October.

We're on the Web!

See us at:

www.house-of-reptiles.com

New Product Spotlight: Zoo Med's Reptile Lamp Stand

Brand new products that are designed for reptiles don't come out all that often. Consequently, we will occasionally be presenting products that we like but that are not necessarily new. This is one of those times.

The Zoo Med Reptile Lamp Stand is a very useful product and one that you can see in use all over our store. The lamp

stand comes in two different sizes, one that will adjust to a height of 12 inches and a larger one that will adjust to a height of 36 inches. The lamp stand safely secures a fixture for a light/heat bulb and makes it so that you can adjust it up or down, and in or out. That way, precise control of basking temperatures and/or UV-B outputs can be achieved. The "foot" of the lamp stand

goes underneath the terrarium so the stand can't be knocked over. The stability of the stand helps to ensure that fixtures and bulbs are not bumped, which could cause burns and/or shorten the life of the bulb. All in all, this is a great product. That's why we use so many of them!

Tim's Herp Challenge for the Quarter

Last quarter we asked if you could tell us the one state in the continental United States that you CANNOT find a Common Garter Snake in. Other than Hawaii, which is not in the continental U.S., the only other state that you won't find wild Common Garters in is...Arizona. It's apparently just too hot and dry there for that particular species of

About Our Organization...

House of Reptiles is owned and operated by Tim Criswell, who has over 20 years of experience in keeping and breeding reptiles and

garter. Who knew?

This month we are talking about the Pacific Giant Salamander. One of the most interesting facts about it is its ability NOT to metamorphose into an adult form. This is called "neotony" and is one of the many fascinating exceptions to the rules of nature. But neotony does not only occur in the Pacific

Giant Salamander. It also occurs in another relatively large amphibian. This one is not uncommon in captivity but is nearly extinct in the wild. It has been studied for it's amazing ability to regenerate lost or damaged limbs and has even been sent into space. Its name is derived from an Aztec god. Any ideas?

amphibians. Assisting Tim are his wife, Shawn, employees Marshall Brooks, Paul Hoffman, and Kim Hamblin, and a few volunteers who are

mentioned above in the "Meet The Staff" section.

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