



ANIMAL ANTICS

Note for Pet Owners:

Pet Patrol 365 provides this information for educational purposes only. You should seek the advice of your veterinarian if your pet is ill as only they can correctly advise on the diagnosis and the recommended treatment for your pet.

DO REPTILES MAKE GOOD PETS?



Recent news articles report a rise in the interest of keeping reptiles and amphibians as pets since the popular new BBC series presented by David Attenborough, *Life in Cold Blood*. Reptiles and amphibians are fascinating creatures, with an awesome diversity of strategies for adapting to their environment. Consequently they have exacting care requirements too, and buying them as pets on a whim can result in possible suffering and eventual catastrophe for owner and pet alike.

Source: The Blue Cross February 2008

Reptiles make rewarding pets but they do require a high level of commitment and many people embark on ownership without realising how expensive or difficult they can be to care for properly. When you are a beginner, the right choice of reptile can make a huge difference between success and enjoyment or frustration and heartache. Sadly, many of the reptile species offered in pet stores are actually completely unsuitable for the inexperienced reptile keeper and to make matters worse, new owners are often sent on their way with incomplete or even incorrect information, often resulting in great suffering and even death for the reptile.

Research is the key to any aspect of reptile ownership and husbandry and this applies also to the choice of species. Don't just go on looks or the novelty factor. Many species have such specialised dietary or environmental requirements that they are too much of a challenge for beginners. There are enough species that make good pets for beginners to offer a wide variety of choice. Remember, though, that ALL reptiles require a significant commitment of effort and investment in proper equipment from the start, even if they are considered low maintenance.

Points to Consider:

- Should you have a reptile as a pet?
- Have you done your research? (read books, talk to reptile specialists, join a reptile club or on-line forum)
- Are you prepared to buy and regularly replace equipment such as lights and heaters?
- Do you have a local specialist vet knowledgeable in reptile health?
- Who will be responsible for the welfare of your pet whilst you go on holiday?

Finally, use great care in your decision to adopt a reptile as a pet and always be diligent in their feeding, housing, and other requirements. A well cared for reptile can be a friend for years to come.

ARTICLE BY PET PATROL 365

01342 851333 / 07974 728967

www.petpatrol365.co.uk

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