

## **Isle of Wight Reptilium Animal Collection Plan**

Reviewed 04/2023

### **Purpose**

The purpose of this document is to guide what species we house within the animal collection now and in the future and how we will acquire and dispose of livestock. We will use this document to guide the transition of the collection and improve it as it naturally evolves. This plan will be subject to review annually.

### **What this document says in plain english**

Our animal collection plan states we will only house reptiles, amphibians or invertebrates, they must be of species that fall within our themed zones of Desert, Rainforest and Nocturnal, must be a species that by way of their size and nature we are able to provide the highest standards of welfare for them within the enclosures we have, must be species that provide education opportunities to the public, cannot be animals that are classified as hazardous or dangerous under zoo licensing guidelines, and only animals that are classified as conservation critical if we can provide meaningful conservation opportunities or were already in the collection prior to being classified as being at risk. If an animal ticks all of those boxes then priority is given to an animal requiring sanctuary, then we would look to other collections that have surplus captive bred animals. We would only house an animal caught from the wild if it was part of a recognised conservation program to preserve the species.

### **Source of Livestock**

The Reptilium is committed to helping animals in need, and priority will now be given to rehoming animals from the pet trade that meet our criteria for species and welfare standards. Before accepting any animals, we will assess their health and welfare needs to ensure that we can provide them with suitable care. We will only rehome animals if we have the capacity to provide for their needs and they meet our criteria for species and welfare standards.

If not providing sanctuary to an animal via rehoming then all livestock should be sourced from captive bred stock, with consideration given to wild caught specimens only where they will provide genuine conservation benefits through breeding or research. We will obtain animals from regulated suppliers, reputable breeders, or via exchange with other organisations. Any new species of conservation value will be subject to ethical review prior to the final decision of housing them being made.

## **What Livestock to House**

The aim of the collection is to raise awareness of Reptiles, Amphibians, and Invertebrates and the threats they face. Animals in the collection should represent a broad cross-section of species found in different habitats while providing a balance among lizards, snakes, Amphibians, and Invertebrates. Focus should be placed on smaller species that make interesting and educational exhibits.

We will only house Reptilia, Amphibia, or Invertebrate species. We shall not house any species classified as a Dangerous Wild Animal under the DWA legislation or listed as Category 1 or 2 under the Secretary of State's Standards of Modern Zoo practice guidance. The limited number of species we already have in the collection that are in category 2 will remain. Species must fit into our themed areas of Desert, Rainforest, or Nocturnal creatures and provide educational or conservation opportunities.

Future acquisitions of conservation sensitive species as defined by the Secretary of states standards of modern zoo practice will only be considered where real conservation goals can be achieved and would be subject to an ethical review process prior to any final decision on taking any animals into the collection. Animals already in the collection in this category, and any animals housed in the collection prior to being classified as at risk shall remain. Species should offer education opportunities in regards to biomes, habitats, and conservation threats.

## **Housing**

Animals shall be kept in social groups or solitary as required on a species by species basis. Enclosures will be maintained as naturalistic "bio" enclosures. Any animals must be able to be housed in the existing enclosures we have and specific consideration must be given to stocking densities, animal sizes etc, we will use current guidance such as the Secretary of states standards of modern zoo practice and other current welfare guidance to inform our decisions regarding suitability of being able to house an animal. We will also refer to our vet for guidance as and when necessary.

## **Breeding**

We do not actively breed any of our animals and any eggs produced are destroyed. We will allow our animals that are kept communally to exhibit natural breeding behaviour but any offspring from missed eggs such as those laid discreetly in the soil in planted enclosures of smaller gecko species will be either retained to form new breeding groups or strengthen existing ones or transferred to other organisations/individuals. Our aim is not to breed animals unless they form part of a wider meaningful conservation effort. Any conservation-based breeding programs would be subject to ethical review prior to commencement.

## **Disposal**

We aim to keep any animals for the whole of their life. If this isn't possible, we would seek to rehome animals to other regulated organisations or private keepers. Euthanasia would only be considered as an extreme last resort if no other alternatives had been identified. Any decisions on euthanasia would be subject to ethical review prior to any final decision being made.