



WESTERN AUSTRALIAN SOCIETY of AMATEUR HERPETOLOGISTS

# NEWSLETTER

28 January 1994

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Well this is our first attempt at a newsletter. We are hoping to eventually make this a regular thing so we can keep everyone well informed on all that is going on.

We trust everyone had a great Christmas and the New Year brings all you wish. Let us all hope CALM comes to the party with what we want.

WASAH is an informal group of people with similar interests - all wishing to keep for private study and "love", frogs, turtles, lizards or snakes! But as the

present departmental policy generally outlaws all amateur herps from doing this we formed primarily to lobby CALM for positive changes.

WASAH, this year, joined the Affiliation of Australasian Herpetological Societies, also we plan to go formal in 1994.

## 2nd World Congress

The Second World Congress of Herpetology was held in Adelaide in Dec/Jan. Brian Bush, Brad Maryan and Robert Browne-Cooper attended as WASAH's representatives.





Brian Bush presented a couple of papers. One on problems with double clutching in Gwardars (*Pseudonaja nuchalis*) and the other on the modern myth associated with Australian elapids, that is the mistaken belief that Australia's snakes are the most toxic or deadliest because of the emphasis placed on the LD50 - a laboratory measurement of toxicity on mice. We doubt there are any mice reading this newsletter!!! With fatalities from lance-headed and saw-scaled vipers (*Bothrops* spp. & *Echis* spp.) numbering 4,000-25,000, our 24 deaths in 13 years pales to almost insignificance. It must be added here that many of those Australian deaths can not be completely attributed to snakebite.

Back to the Congress, it was a good turnout with approximately 900 people attending from around the world. It was really great to have a beer with people like Rick Shine or Allen Greer. In fact one of the best parts of the whole thing was the socialising! Although it appeared to us that the bar was closed too early each night.

We met a bloke by the name of Raymond Hoser, author of the book *Smuggled* which exposes the involvement of some employees of various Australian wildlife authorities in the illegal dealing of our fauna. What a powerhouse of energy he is! The NSW National Parks & Wildlife Service will probably rue the day they forgot they were dealing with people not machines!

Brian Bush was asked by the organisers of a display running in conjunction with the Congress (NARAMA) to provide some live reptiles. This all fell through from the WA end though, when

CALM claimed they had not received the application which was sent 6 weeks previous. Even the South Australian wildlife authorities met a brick wall when dealing with CALM.

## HERPETOFAUNA

A worthwhile publication recommended by us for all the readers of this Newsletter. Send a cheque for \$15/one year or \$40/three years to

The Editor  
PO Box R307  
Royal Exchange  
SYDNEY 2000

## WASAH STEERING COMMITTEE

Brian Bush  
(09) 295 3007  
Brad Maryan  
(09) 444 6412  
Robert Browne-Cooper  
445 2409

Address all  
correspondence to:  
9 Birch Place  
STONEVILLE 6081