



SDHS Position Regarding Commercial Trade of Reptiles and Amphibians

The mission of the San Diego Herpetological Society (SDHS) is to engender the appreciation of reptiles and amphibians through education, promoting the conservation and proper care of all wildlife in general and of herpetofauna in particular, and to cooperate with other organizations and individuals that share those goals.

In support of that, SDHS has developed this document to outline our position regarding the commercial trade of reptiles and amphibians. We hope that this document might act as a guideline for those who are involved in the trade of reptiles and amphibians.

SDHS supports responsible, ethical, and lawful conduct in the trade of reptiles and amphibians. Irresponsible, unethical, or illegal trade in reptiles and amphibians reflects poorly on the entire herpetological community and may lead to the passage of laws restricting the ownership of reptiles and amphibians.

We support the legal sale, trade, and captive maintenance of reptiles and amphibians and endorse the concept of reptile shows and expos, animal vendors, breeders, and pet stores. SDHS participates in such venues through booths, displays, and presentations but only as formally approved by the SDHS Board of Directors. SDHS members only officially represent SDHS when working at Board approved events.

We encourage knowledgeable people to educate the public about the needs of reptiles and amphibians and to help prospective owners choose animals that are appropriate to their circumstances and abilities. We expect those involved with reptiles and amphibians to deal with them responsibly and ethically: namely, animals must be housed in a proper environment, transported securely and as comfortably as possible, given a proper diet and appropriate medical care, and provided protection from other animals and untrained people.

We highly recommend that animals intended to be pets be obtained from captive bred stock. Captive bred animals acclimate better to captivity, are readily available, and their use puts no pressure on wild populations or their environments. We urge all animal vendors, event organizers, store proprietors, breeders, and consumers to know and abide by all federal, state, and local laws, including the federal Endangered Species Acts, and the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES).

We encourage event organizers to contractually bind vendors to abide by the above regulations and recommendations. We encourage all SDHS members and affiliates to consistently follow these guidelines and maintain conduct that is legal, ethical, and humane when participating in the in the trade of reptiles and amphibians.