

Studbook breeding programme

Cordylus giganteus (Sungazer Lizard)



Annual Report 2009

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European
Studbook
Foundation

KvK nr. 41136106

www.studbooks.eu

Contents :

- 1. Introduction**
- 2. Studbook Population**
- 3. Locations**
- 4. Births**
- 5. Imports**
- 6. Deaths**
- 7. Transfers**
- 8. Discussion points**
- 9. Activities planned for 2010**

1. Introduction

Little emphasis has been placed on developing the Sungazer Studbook since the 2006 annual report (hence the lack of subsequent reviews), this is mainly due to the relatively poor number of animals registered within the studbook. Since taking over the administration of the Sungazer Studbook in June 2009, Fraser Gilchrist, along with the previous studbook keeper, Henk Zwartepoorte, have been working hard to raise the profile of this studbook, and increase the cooperation between keepers of this species.

With such a lack of information on the captive requirements of this species, one of the first tasks was to compile a general care sheet for maintaining the Sungazer in captivity, a questionnaire was issued to all participating members. The response was good and the results will be published shortly.

2. Studbook Population

As at June 2010 the total studbook population is 53 specimens (16.36.1) of this, only 32 (8.24.0) are currently still living. The ratio of males to females is quite alarming.

3. Locations

As far as the studbook is aware, this species is kept at 9 different locations throughout Europe. 1.2 animals are kept at Rotterdam Zoo in the Netherlands, 0.2 at Helsinki Zoo in Finland, 1.2 are kept at the Vissenbjerg Zoo in Denmark, 1.10 kept at Vienna Zoo in Austria, 1.2 at Hamburg Zoo & 1.2 at Frankfurt Zoo both of which are in Germany. A male and female pair is kept at a private collection in the UK. The remaining animals are kept at two private locations in the Netherlands.

4. Births

Sadly, no births of this species have been reported.

5. Imports

Since the last studbook report in 2006, 3.14 animals have been imported into Europe and have been added to the studbook. 1.1 came from a breeder in South Africa and now reside within the UK collection. 1.3 are now kept at a private collection in the Netherlands (location CG003) and the remaining 1.10 at Vienna Zoo in Austria.

6. Deaths

Since 2006, we have lost a total of 6 (1.5) animals. With such a low head count to begin with, any loss is a blow to the long-term survival of the species.

7. Transfers

There have been a total of 18 animals transferred into the studbook since 2006. 1.10 have gone to Vienna Zoo with the remaining 7 animals going to locations in the UK and the Netherlands.

8. Discussion Points

The relatively low number of male Sungazers registered within the studbook is alarming. The female animals housed at Helsinki Zoo have no contact with a male making reproduction impossible. Efforts need to be made to increase the number of males within the studbook population. Only then can we hope to recreate the communal living habits of this species.

9. Planned for 2010

Fraser Gilchrist will deliver a presentation on the Sungazer Studbook at this years Studbook Keepers conference at Rotterdam Zoo. The S.O.S Campaign (Save Our Sungazers Campaign) will also be launched at this meeting.

Genetic analysis on the UK based animals is currently underway. Findings will be reported in the New Year.

Practical Reptile Magazine – UK an article on the captive maintenance of the Sungazer has been written and is due to be published later in the year.

Work will continue to identify keepers of this species within Europe with a view to them registering their animals.

July 2010

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