

# Initial Assessment and Care of Herptiles

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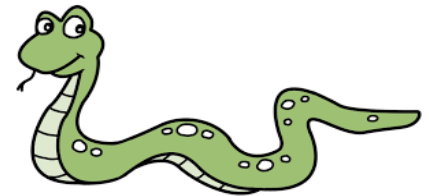


**The combined classes of reptiles and amphibians are often referred to as herptiles or herpetofauna.**

**Snakes, Lizards, Anoles...**

**Turtles, Tortoises, Terrapins...**

**Frogs, Toads, Salamanders...**



**We will NOT be covering Venomous, Marine, Crocodilians, Caecilians...**

# Amphibia

- Start out aquatic - transition to semi-aquatic/terrestrial
- Semi-permeable skin; sloughed and consumed
- Bones range from calcified to hollow ossified
  - Some species may be able to regenerate limbs

# Reptilia

- Large variation from shelled to scaled
- Skin more impenetrable, shed (not usually eaten)
- Some lizards' tails have a fracture plain
  - Can not completely regrow, cartilage replaces bone



# Zoonosis

- Diseases we can get from animals (including herps)
- Bacterial, Viral, Parasitic, Fungal
  - Most common - Salmonella
- Practice good hygiene to reduce the risk of the spread of disease for you and them



# Handling/Restraint

## Human Safety First!

### Small lizards and amphibians

- Wear gloves
- Ziplock baggies

### Snakes

- Tongs, Hooks, Bags
- Hold at base of head; 1 person/3 feet

### Turtles

- Two hands, not past midline
- Don't pick up by tail!





# Handling/Restraint - Snakes



# Handling Restraint - Herps/Lizards





# Handling/Restraint -Turtles





# Triage/Initial Assessment

- Shock/Stress - signs/symptoms; stoic/resilient
- Dehydration - eyes sunken in, skin loose
  - 10-30 ml/kg/day; topical for Amphibia, SQ for Reptilia
  - Reptile Ringers, Amphibian Ringers
- Illness - swollen eyes, discharge, swollen ears
  - Stomatitis, Mycoplasma, Ranavirus, Chytridmycosis
  - EBT - ear abscesses
- Trauma - HBC, Dog/Cat Caught, Foreign Body
  - Shell Fractures, missing limbs, golf ball impaction
- Length of time in inappropriate captive care

# DON'T...Go it alone!



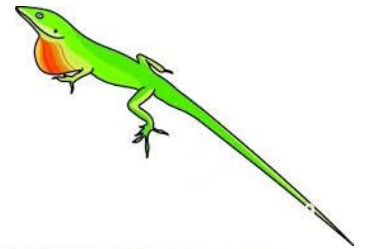
# Do...Work with a vet!





# Herps feel pain!

- Provide pain relief per veterinary protocols
- Assess, Decontaminate, Bandage fractures/wounds
  - Stabilize, don't realign without assistance
- Isolate sick patients, antibiotics as indicated
  - NO baytril in food animals
    - including turtles





# Husbandry

## Housing

- Thermal Gradient - POTZ,
  - no heat typically for amphibians
- Humidity
- UVB - check every 6 months
- Hide areas
- Enrichment/Furniture injury/illness appropriate



## Nutrition

- Well balanced for species and life stage
- Supplemented appropriately
- Presented so it is recognizable and attainable
  - I.e. whole leaves vs. shredded

# Housing



# Final Disposition

## Euthanasia Considerations:

- Injury/Illness irreparable
- Unable to reproduce in wild
- Unknown location found

## Euthanasia Methods:

- Irreversible; humane

## Release Considerations:

- Injury/Illness completely recovered
- Injury doesn't impair ability to breed
- Can be returned where found, within one mile



# References

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