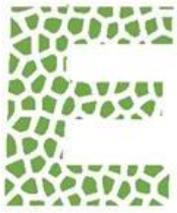


# Newsletter



## Happy New Year ESRAS!

First of all, hello and welcome to the New Year everybody! We hope you've all had a lovely holiday, got some amazing presents and are ready to tackle another busy year of shows, talks, school fairs and parties.

I would like to remind everyone that the newsletter is always looking for pieces or ideas from any member and that every piece will be accepted happily. More personal pieces or experiences would be lovely, such as Jack's article on Rango and Andy's Bob the Building Site gecko story in previous issues.

We also have a member's selling page for animals and equipment that will go out with each newsletter. If you have anything for sale, please contact me (Bethany Spence) or Lee Hollman via the Facebook group or the ESRAS email address [esras.uk@gmail.com](mailto:esras.uk@gmail.com). Descriptions of the equipment/animal are required along with price, age, gender, condition and contact details must be provided along with the above information. Pictures of the items may be asked for.

This past year has been very exciting and busy, especially at the larger shows like STEM fest and Bright Sparks. We've brought out a successful and steadily expanding line of ESRAS merchandise. Lastly, we would like to thank all members that are able to come along to support us at the shows and we hope that many more are able to join us soon.

ESRAS looks forward to what the New Year brings!

- Beth

## Xmas Meeting - 1/12/14

This year's Xmas Meeting was a good one with a great turn out from members and although not everyone could be there we had in excess of 40 people turn up to enjoy the festivities.

Congratulations to **'The Losers'** who won the 2014 Big Xmas Quiz



A big thank you to **Andy** who organised the questions and ran the quiz, and to everyone who brought food and donated raffle prizes. It was a very good evening and fun was had by everyone, even if they didn't win anything.

## E.S.R.A.S. Shows

### Sussex University Volunteers Day – 15/11/14

We set up in a large foyer in the Checkland Building on the Falmer campus of Brighton University amongst the face painting and a bouncy castle as part of a Volunteers reward day.

Members brought a diverse selection of animals from snakes and lizards, to escaping spiders, frogs and a salamander.

Everyone, children and adult alike had a great time holding and taking photos with the animals, and many overcoming long held fears. We made such an impression that we even received an email from the organiser about us.

**“Dear Dave and the team,**

**Thank you all so much for joining us at our first Family Fun Day for student parents and their families today at Falmer. The day was a huge success, with over 150 people attending. Your fantastic team provided a real treat for all the children and adults alike and offered such great opportunities for getting close up to the wonderful creatures that were brought. I hope your members all enjoyed the event too.**

**Regards, Mel”**

## **Kingsham Primary School Winter Fayre – 29/11/14**

We travelled all the way to Chichester to put on a show at a winter fayre we setup in a large classroom trying as hard as we could to keep out prying eyes.

As soon as the doors opened the room seemed to fill immediately and even Santa paid us a visit to see what was going on and said that even though he prefers Reindeer that even reptiles get presents from him as well.

As usual we had many people who had never even seen a reptile up close let alone held one and many fears were conquered that day.

We made such an impression that we received a lovely email and were asked to come back for their summer fayre also.

**“A big thank you for the amazing people you work with that came to the Kingsham Christmas Fayre on Saturday, you were definitely a big success, and the kids were thrilled and are still talking about it!**

**Hope to book you all again for the May Fayre so as soon as we have a date we will be contacting you!**

**Many Thanks!**

**Lisa Kirby**

**Friends of Kingsham Primary School”**

## **Woodingdean Xmas Fair - 29/11/14**

When we arrived we were really pleased to see that the school had used our new downloadable Posters from the website to advertise we would be there. Thank you to **Daren** for informing them and suggesting that they do this.

We did not have a lot of space as we were in a large storage room just off of the main hall, but it kept us close to the action as it were. We managed to squeeze everyone in and proved to be very popular, as usual, with many kids staying for a while wanting to see and hold everything.

We were also asked if we would like to return for the Woodingdean Festival in 2015.

**A big thank you to everyone who gives their time to help out at these events. Your support is invaluable to keeping these E.S.R.A.S. events going.**

## E.S.R.A.S. Merchandise Update

### Goodies

We are glad to say that the merchandise is selling very well, so well in fact that we have now expanded into Jewellery.

We now have Turtle, Snake, Lizard and Spider charm necklaces which we will be selling for £2 each. Fingers crossed that they will sell as well as all the other merchandise we have at the moment.



### E.S.R.A.S. Shirts

From now onwards E.S.R.A.S. Shirts will be available at every monthly meeting to purchase the cost is £5 for a T-shirt.

**Please note: T-shirts are a requirement for displaying and helping out at shows.**

Below we have an article written by Chris Newman (the head of the Federation of British Herpetologists or FBH), which is for general distribution and he is personally encouraging the spread of his article to any reptile or exotics keepers, breeders, hobbyists, supporters etc.

### Future of shows in the UK

On the 10<sup>th</sup> of June 2014 the Federation of British Herpetologists was granted leave for a Judicial Review against Arun District Council for closing a breeders' meeting due to be held at Fontwell Racecourse following advice from the Animal Protection Agency. This case will have implications not only for the future of reptile meetings, but all vertebrate animal shows were hobbyists exchange or sell surplus animals they have bred.

For more than two decades animal rights activists have targeted animal shows and breeders' meetings and, whilst the main target has been reptiles and birds, other events have also been affected. Over the years many animal events have been disrupted or stopped from taking place altogether and the Judicial Review could, if successful see a way forward.

The argument from the animal rights lobby is that such events are inherently cruel and illegal but, after years of disruptions and threats, some Local Authorities took the decision to licence such events under the Pet Animals Act. In 2001 activists claimed it was illegal to licence such events under the Act, although the legal situation was ambiguous. In 2004, under the development of the Animal Welfare Bill (now Act), government proposed to clarify the law and make such events licensable where appropriate.

In 2006 activists orchestrated a Judicial Review at taxpayers' expense to try and clarify the law (Haynes v Stafford Borough Council) relating to Stafford Borough Council's decision to license the Parrot Society show held at the Staffordshire Show Ground. The case concluded that Section 2 of the Act precluded such events being licenced, but clarified that breeders' meetings fall outside of the remit of the Act and are, thus, lawful. The Parrot Society Show, and other similar bird-related events, continue to run.

In October 2013 Arun District Council ordered the closure of the Portsmouth Reptile & Amphibian Society Show as written advice from the Animal Protection Agency stated the event was illegal. The Council refused to meet with the Federation of British Herpetologists (the governing body to which the Portsmouth Society is a member) in order to reach a mutually acceptable conclusion and legal action was, therefore, taken.

The Judicial Review, which will now take place in the first half of 2015, is set to decide whether hobbyist (keepers) who dispose of surplus offspring from livestock they have bred themselves constitutes operating in the course of a business in the eyes of the law. If the outcome is unfavourable, i.e. it is decided that selling of surplus livestock does constitute running a business, then ALL animal shows, regardless of taxa, will be affected.

At present many events, including bird shows (principally pigeon), fish shows do enjoy a substantial sales element and we all want this to continue. If the reptile keepers are unsuccessful in the fight to retain sales at animal shows the implications for the whole pet hobby are disastrous and we would, therefore, urge all everybody to lend their support to this important cause.

## **Web and IT update**

Hi all, this is an update regarding the Web and IT side of things.

### **New Website**

On the 13<sup>th</sup> of November 2014 the completely 'NEW' [www.esras.co.uk](http://www.esras.co.uk) website was launched after many months of hard work and lots of research and collaborations.

The new site is more than double the size of the old one and includes many new pages and features which should help to make us more interactive moving forward into the future.

The new site features many new pages including an expanded About Us section including a complete list of all rules and regulations & Committee members' pages, a new Downloads page, a Merchandise page, a page dedicated to the Newsletter, an Education section, a Bookings page and ESRASTV.

The Downloads page features Desktop Wallpapers, Crosswords, Word-searches, Colouring-ins, Mazes, Double Puzzles and Spot-The-Differences that can be downloaded to be done and used.

The Merchandise page features pictures and prices of all the items we sell at the shows at the moment and will feature all new lines as they become available.

On the dedicated Newsletter page you can download the latest edition as well as back issues of the newsletter as well.

The new Education Section features pages about the animals owned by members that people can expect to see at our shows plus a few others and this section of it will be expanded over time to feature other animals. These pages will tie into the 'NEW INFO CARDS' that I have designed which will be used at shows in place of the ones we have at the moment.

## Royal Python

Type : Reptile • Family : Pythonidae • Genus Python Regius • Diet : Carnivore

Lifespan : 40 yrs + • Size : up to 6ft (1.8m) • Weight : up to 6lbs (3kg)

Royal Pythons (Python Regius) are a nonvenomous python species found in Africa. This is the smallest of the African pythons and is popular in the pet trade, largely due to its typically docile temperament. No subspecies are currently recognised. It is also known as the ball python in America. The name "ball python" refers to the animal's tendency to curl into a ball when stressed or frightened. The name "Royal Python" (from the Latin regius) comes from the fact that rulers in Africa would wear the python as jewellery.

Adults generally do not grow to more than 152 to 182 cm (5.0 to 6.0 ft). Females tend to be slightly bigger than males, maturing at an average of 122 to 137 cm (4.0 to 4.5 ft). Males usually average around 90 to 107 cm (3.0 to 3.5 ft). The build is stocky while the head is relatively small.

In the wild, their diet consists mostly of small mammals, such as African soft-furred rats, shrews and striped mice. Younger individuals have also been known to feed on birds. Females are oviparous, with anywhere from 3 to 11 rather large, leathery eggs being laid (4-6 most common). These are incubated by the female under the ground (via a shivering motion), and hatch after 55 to 60 days. Sexual maturity is reached at 11-18 months for males, and 20-36 months for females. Age is only one factor in determining sexual maturity and ability to breed - weight is the second factor. Males will breed at 600 grams or more, but in captivity are often not bred until they are 800 grams (1.7lb). Females will breed in the wild at weights as low as 800 grams, though 1200 grams or more is most common; in captivity, breeders generally wait until they are no less than 1500 g (3.3 lb).



Scan for more information on Royal Pythons



Diego the Day Gecko Says this is a :- ROYAL PYTHON

Diego says here are some fun facts about them!

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Royal Pythons (Python Regius) are a python species found in Africa. This is the smallest of the African pythons and are popular as pets, in America it is called a BALL Python they call it that because it curls into a ball when frightened. In Europe we call it the ROYAL Python because Kings and Queens in Africa would wear the python as jewellery.

Adults grow up to 6feet (1.8m) which is around the height of a tall person. Females tend to be slightly bigger than males. They weigh up to 6lbs (3kg) which is over 18 bags of Haribo. They are 'cleanly' snake with a small head.

In the wild, they like to eat small mammals, such as African soft-furred rats, shrews and striped mice. Younger snakes also eat small birds.



Scan for more information on Royal Pythons



## THE NEW INFORMATION CARDS

The new Info Cards feature facts, maps and a brief description of the animal and its habitat. They also feature a QR code which, when scanned with a QR reader, will link to a page in the Education section of the website about the animal with more information.

The new Bookings page should allow people to get in touch with us easier to book shows or make enquiries; it also features details on what we do, what we offer and what people can expect from our shows and displays.

There is also a link to a YouTube page called ESRAS TV which at the moment is blank, but hopefully in the future will contain some instructional and educational videos. So as you can see the NEW website is now a more in depth affair in every aspect and I will strive to add more features, make it even more interactive and even more educational as we progress into the future.

At the time of writing this article (22<sup>nd</sup> of December) the website has been very well received as a whole with daily viewing figures exceeding expectations by doubling (average 120 visits per day) what we were getting on the old website (average 60 visits per day) with a high so far of 255 visits for the new site on a single day, which is almost triple the average at the moment which is awesome.

### The Web and Social Media

As for the rest of our online presence, the Facebook page is now up to 250 likes which is ahead of (at the time of writing) with E.R.A.C.'s FB page which is great.

We are getting likes from all over the country and the globe as well, which is great and all I can ask is that everyone shares the page once in a while or directs people to the FB page and the website as much as possible to get us 'out there'.

If anyone has any ideas to be included in the website then please contact me via Facebook or through the ESRAS email address [esras.uk@gmail.com](mailto:esras.uk@gmail.com).