

Reptile Welfare, Enrichment, and Training Course

Total Duration: 6 hours (3 sessions + final evaluation)

Format: Remote via Google Meet video conference

Audience: Animal professionals in zoological parks, breeding managers, private keepers

Participants: 10 people max.

Prerequisites: Basic knowledge of species, Good understanding of english

Dates: 3 days in december from 7:30 to 9:30pm

Price: 190€, special price of 150€ for DGHT members

With a background as an experienced animal keeper and a specialization in reptile welfare, I offer a unique training course based on concrete field experience, acquired with various species.

Over my years in zoological parks, both in France and internationally, I have developed and implemented innovative enrichment and training protocols, adapted to reptiles with very specific needs, sometimes unprecedented in captivity.

This collective training, based on professional adult education methods, will provide you with concrete tools, directly derived from validated field practices:

- Close reading of behaviors and stress signals
- Creation of tailor-made environmental enrichments, even for poorly documented species
- Introduction to positive and medical training to improve animal welfare, safety, and cooperation

Each module is based on real cases, feedback from experiences with rare or demanding reptiles, and a rigorous scientific approach, to allow you to go beyond theory and transform your daily practice.

Included in the training plan:

- "Enrichment Plan" Form
- "Training Protocol" Form
- Post-training Support

Contact and Registration

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Session 1 (2h) – Basics of Animal Welfare and Stress Management

Educational Objectives & Skills Developed

- Understand the scientific bases of animal welfare applied to reptiles.
- Recognize and interpret signs of stress and distress.
- Acquire fundamental notions of ethology to adapt maintenance.

Agenda

Interactive Introduction (10 min)

- Presentation of the program and objectives.
- Round table: experience, expectations, concerned species.

Theoretical Contributions (30 min)

- Definitions: animal welfare
- Specificities of welfare in reptiles (differences mammals/birds).
- Notions of ethology: natural vs captive behaviors.

Stress Focus (30 min)

- Physiology of stress in reptiles (signs, consequences).
- Concrete examples: warning signs in snakes, lizards, turtles, crocodilians.
- Discussion: common errors in behavioral reading.

Case Study (30 min)

- Analysis of photos/videos: identifying signs of stress, well-being, distress.
- Sharing experiences: real-life situations.

Synthesis and Practical Tools (20 min)

- Observation tips.
- Online quiz on the course.

Session 2 (2h) – Enrichment: Methodology and Objectives

Educational Objectives & Skills Developed

- Understand the importance of enrichment for reptile welfare.
- Design enrichments adapted to the species and context.
- Formalize an enrichment plan.

Agenda

Review & Feedback on the Exercise (20 min)

- Collective debrief on last week's quiz.
- Discussion on noted signals, difficulties encountered.

Theoretical Contributions (40 min)

- Definition and objectives of enrichment
- Types of enrichment (food, sensory, structural, social...).
- Safety principles, adaptation to different factors.

Practical Workshop (30 min)

- Guided brainstorming: enrichment ideas for different species/groups.
- Setting up an enrichment program.

Personalized Action Plan (30 min)

- Enrichment description exercises
- Course quiz.

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Session 3 (2h) – Training and Conditioning: Methodology and Objectives

Educational Objectives & Skills Developed

- Understand the principles of training applied to reptiles.
- Identify errors to avoid and key success factors.
- Design a training program for a reptile.

Agenda

Review & Feedback on the Exercise (15 min)

- Collective debrief on the tested/designed enrichment.
- Discussion on observed effects, possible adaptations.

Theoretical Contributions (20 min)

- Principles of training: Introduction to positive reinforcement and conditioning.
- Presentation of tools and means of communication.
- Specifics of reptile training (motivation, limits, patience).

Demonstrations and Analyses (20 min)

- Videos or diagrams of simple exercises (targeting, station...).
- Collective analysis: points of vigilance, adaptations according to the species.

Program Creation Methodology (20 min)

- Presentation of creation tools and their use.

Conclusion, Evaluation and Perspectives (45 min)

- Implementation of a chosen program to be submitted to the trainer.

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