****Reptile Handling Health & Safety Risk Assessment

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| **Activity** | Reptile Presentation and Handling Workshop for the University of Southampton Natural History Society |

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| **Reptile Handers** | Jake Weeks & The Reptile Academy Ltd Staff | **Responsible Manager** | Jake Weeks (Director) | **Date** | 24/08/18 |

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| **Event Name** | Reptile Handling Workshop | **Event Organiser** | Thomas Land (Natural History Society President) & Imogen Gast (VP Herpetology) | **Location** | Highfield Campus |

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| **Brief description of activity** | Carrying out a short reptile presentation and handling workshop as an external speaker for the Biological Sciences Society and/or Natural History Society at the University of Southampton.  Educational Reptile Talk  Snake Handling Session  PowerPoint Presentation  Photography and/or Participants may take their own photos  Mandatory Safety Talk  **Animals may include but not limited to Burmese python, Boa constrictor, Royal python, Ackies monitors, Yemen chameleon, Chinese water dragon, Giant African Land Snails. No animals are listed on the Dangerous Wild Animals Act (DWAA) 1976 although we emphasise that any animal with a mouth has the potential to bite.** |

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| **Additional notes  (eg, references, persons at risk, risk factors, etc)** | **The Reptile Academy Ltd is an independent entity to the Natural History Society and sessions are delivered by The Reptile Academy Ltd as an external services provider booked by the organisers (Natural History Society).** The event organiser has been made aware of this risk assessment and public liability insurance. Risk assessment and controls are listed in the remainder of this document. The people at risk are the reptile handlers and more importantly the students and staff from UoS attending the talk and guest and children. The animals are well used to human contact by being handled by hundreds of people during last year’s reptile roadshow across Essex and Kent country shows generally lasting 8hrs per day and Petersfield Festival 2017 and 2018. Snakes will be monitored before and during the event (general health, stress, shedding, behaviour, temperament) and could be withdrawn at the discretion of the handlers without notice. A safety talk (10minutes) on handling the animals in the correct and safe manner will occur before handling begins; participants MUST attend the safety briefing before handling. All participants handle at their own risk and are under no obligation to handle the animals. Participants may be refused from handling the animals at the discretion of the handlers for reasons including but not limited to alcohol consumption or calmness for example. |

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| **Declaration by responsible manager:** I confirm that this is a suitable & sufficient risk assessment for the activity at this event. | | | | | |
| **Signed** | *JWeeks* | **Print name** | Jake Weeks | **Date** | 24/08/2018 |

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| **Declaration by other The Reptile Academy Ltd Handlers:** I confirm that I have read this risk assessment, will implement the controls outlined herein, and will report to the responsible manager any incidents that occur or any shortcomings I find in this assessment. | | | | | |
| **Signed** |  | **Print name** |  | **Date** |  |
| **Signed** |  | **Print name** |  | **Date** |  |
| **Signed** |  | **Print name** |  | **Date** |  |
| **Signed** |  | **Print name** |  | **Date** |  |

Health & safety risk estimation matrix

**High risk** – requires controls to reduce risk before activity / task can commence (or continue).

**Medium risk** – requires controls to reduce risk as much and as soon as is reasonably practicable.

**Low risk** – all risk should be reduced to this tolerable level, so far as is reasonably practicable.

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| **Reasonably foreseeable worst case consequence**  **Likelihood 3 of hazard event** | **Minor** superficial injury;  or slight and temporary health effect | **Moderate** significant injury or illness 1;  or temporary minor disability x | **Major** serious injury or illness 2;  or significant or permanent disability | **Critical** fatal injury or illness;  or substantial and permanent disability | **Catastrophic** fatal injury or illness for multiple persons  x |
| **Likely** high probability,  1 in 10 chance or higher,   once in two weeks or longer for activities on a daily basis | **medium risk** | **high risk** | **high risk** | **high risk** | **high risk** |
| **Possible** significant probability,  1 in 100 chance or higher,  once in six months or longer for activities on a daily basis | **low risk** | **medium risk** | **high risk** | **high risk** | **high risk** |
| **Unlikely** low probability,  1 in 1,000 chance or higher,  once in four years or longer for activities on a daily basis | **low risk** | **low risk** | **medium risk** | **high risk** | **high risk** |
| **Rare** very low probability,  1 in 10,000 chance or higher,  once in a decade or longer for activities on a daily basis | **low risk** | **low risk** | **low risk** | **medium risk** | **high risk** |
| **Almost never** extremely low probability,  less than 1 in 100,000 chance,  once in a century or longer for activities on a daily basis | **low risk** | **low risk** | **low risk** | **low risk** | **medium risk** |

1 ‘Significant injury’ could include, for example, a bite from the reptiles  
‘Significant illness’ could include, for example, contracting salmonella for the reptiles

2 ‘Serious injury’ could include a serious bite causing fracture or dislocation, amputation, loss of sight, penetration to eye, electric shock, asphyxia, or any injury leading to unconsciousness or requiring resuscitation or admittance to hospital for more than twenty-four hours.

‘Serious illness’ could include, for example, requiring medical treatment after a bite such as antibiotics due to infection.

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| **Hazards, hazard events, and reasonably foreseeable worst case consequences** | **Inherent risk (no controls)  from matrix  (mark with X)** | | **Controls  (measures to reduce risk)** | **Residual risk (with controls)  from matrix  (mark with X)** | |
| Snake Bite  Minor Pain  Possible Severe Bleeding  Open wound  Bacterial infection  Both handlers and public at risk | **High** | **X** | Health and safety briefing and correct snake handling instructions given to participants prior to handling, such as avoid grabbing, touching/poking face and tail areas which are sensitive.  Animals never left unattended with the public.  Animals are non-venomous.  Animals are well fed appropriately before the event.  Wash hands in alcohol based hand sanitiser before handling to remove scent of food/other animals.  Behaviour/stress of animals closely monitored and animals removed from handling. | **High** |  |
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| **Medium** |  | **Medium** |  |
|
| **Low** |  | **Low** | **X** |
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| Constriction (non-bite or after bite)  Asphyxiation  Blood clotting  Suffocation  Both handlers and public at risk | **High** |  | Handlers always monitoring snake behaviour for signs of stress.  Number of people that handle at once is limited to small groups  Appropriate health & safety handling talk and/or signage to not touch face/tail areas  Handlers always present to uncoil snake. Snake constriction is not very powerful, unlikely to overcome a grown adult human unless unconscious and alone.  Public asked how they are feeling when handling snakes and if the grip is too tight. Grip for snake to hold on is not constriction. Handling not allowed for small children i.e. under 3. | **High** |  |
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| **Medium** | **X** | **Medium** |  |
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| **Low** |  | **Low** | **X** |
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| Bacterial infection  From bite, touching skin, urine. Commonly associated bacteria include *E.coli* and *Salmonella*  Handlers and public at risk | **High** | **X** | Wash hands with provided alcohol based hand sanitiser before and after handling to kill bacteria i.e. before eating again.  Antibiotics should be prescribed by doctor in event of bite.  Appropriate signage and/or health and safety briefing highlighting risk of bacteria  Animals are generally bathed after toileting to keep them clean. They are not wild and do not mix with other animals so less likely to contract harmful bacteria.  Risk of bacteria by handling is no greater than from when you touch an egg or pet dog/cat etc.  Snakes observed by handlings to watch for signs of toileting (raising of the tail) | **High** |  |
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| **Medium** |  | **Medium** |  |
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| **Low** |  | **Low** | **X** |
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| Allergic reactions  To hand sanitiser gel, or in rare case snake skin  Rashes  Handlers and public at risk | **High** |  | Wet wipes provided, people advised to seek medical attention.  One handler is an emergency first aider. | **High** |  |
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| **Medium** |  | **Medium** |  |
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| **Low** | **X** | **Low** | **X** |
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| Snake defecating on somebody during handling  Risk of bacteria and spoiled clothes  Handlers and public at risk | **High** |  | Monitored for signs of toileting (raising of tail, persistence to reach ground level).  Snake is given breaks on ground to go to toilet if need be.  Sanitiser and wet-wipes available. | **High** |  |
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| **Medium** | **X** | **Medium** |  |
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| **Low** |  | **Low** | **X** |
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| Reptiles catching an infection or getting injury, stress  Common infections include RIs (respiratory infections)  Snake may be dropped/grabbed by public  Snakes at risk | **High** | **X** | Public must sanitise hands before handling to prevent spread of bacteria on them from other animals such as pets to the snakes.  Snakes must not come into contact with other animals such as dogs which are commonly brought to outdoor events. No animals from outside our event can be allowed into the display/handling/photography area. Small children must be supported by one of the handlers or a responsible adult. Young children must be accompanied by an adult who is responsible for them.  Snake monitored for stress and may be removed from handling experience with no notice and taken to vet.  Handlers always present to prevent injury to snake. Sometimes people become too excited/erratic and if do not calm down may be asked to leave the handling area. | **High** |  |
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| **Medium** |  | **Medium** |  |
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| **Low** |  | **Low** | **X** |
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| Flash photography  Epileptic seizures  Other photo-sensitive reactions  Dizziness  Public at risk | **High** | **X** | Appropriate signage of flash photography in use  People asked verbally if they are okay with flash photography | **High** |  |
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| **Medium** |  | **Medium** |  |
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| **Low** |  | **Low** | **X** |
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| Trip hazards  Injuries including banging head, breaks, sprains etc.  Such as photographic equipment; cables, tripod, flash umbrellas  Also display table, gazebo and guide ropes  Handlers and public at risk | **High** | **X** | Signs warning about trip hazards and high-vis labelling of guy ropes.  Cables taped down.  Restrict access to small numbers at once. | **High** |  |
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| **Medium** |  | **Medium** |  |
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| **Low** |  | **Low** | **X** |
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| Manual handing/lifting related injuries  Such as setting up the gazebo, photographic equipment, lifting boxes, holding 20lb snake for a day  The handlers are at risk | **High** | **X** | Work in groups, no lone working.  Be aware of people working around you.  Take regular breaks.  Follow correct manual handling procedures.  Ask for help if you need it. | **High** |  |
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| **Medium** |  | **Medium** |  |
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| **Low** |  | **Low** | **X** |
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| Electrical shock  Due to photographic equipment such as camera, lighting, power packs  Handlers/animals/public at risk | **High** | **X** | Sources of power not used outdoors in wet weather conditions.  Public entering handling/photographic area are always supervised by handlers and restricted to small numbers.  No mains electrical equipment outside handling area.  Electrical devices out of reach of public.  Integrity of electrical devices i.e. exposed wires, bent casing etc. checked before events. | **High** |  |
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| **Medium** |  | **Medium** |  |
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| **Low** |  | **Low** | **X** |
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| Photographing people  Issues with photographing children most importantly  Handler/photographer is at risk | **High** | **X** | Ask permission to take photographs, if it is a young child consent is needed from the parent if the child is the man subject of the shot.  Appropriate signage to state photography is taking place.  People asked to sign model consent forms and/or verbal permission for photos to be published online (Facebook page, website etc.) | **High** |  |
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| **Medium** |  | **Medium** |  |
|
| **Low** |  | **Low** | **X** |
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| Handling money  Theft, germs on money  Handlers | **High** | **X** | When exchanging money was hands before handling reptiles.  Store money in belt pouch and transfer to locked location when appropriate i.e. end of the day or belt pouch full. | **High** |  |
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| **Medium** |  | **Medium** |  |
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| **Low** |  | **Low** | **X** |
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