

Studbook breeding programme

Pyxis a. arachnoides (Malagasy spider tortoise)



Photo by Glen Jacobsen

Annual Report 2008 / 2009

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1. Introduction and activities in 2008/9

1.1. Introduction

This report is an update of the annual report of the Studbook Breeding Programme *Pyxis arachnoides* published in 2007. The programme aims to form genetically healthy, reproducing captive populations, to study these, and to gather and distribute as much information about *P. arachnoides* as possible. In order to keep the studbook manageable (in terms of number of tortoises and contacts between participants and coordinator), it has been decided that the studbook will operate exclusively in Europe, despite occasional applications from keepers of *P. arachnoides* in the USA. *Pyxis a. arachnoides* especially appears to be present in Europe in sufficiently large numbers. It would be a welcome development if someone in the USA would set up a studbook on *P. arachnoides*, similar to the Studbook Breeding Programme *Pyxis arachnoides*. Eventually, both studbooks could be linked.

This report will summarise the activities of the Studbook Breeding Programme *Pyxis arachnoides* in 2008/9, plans for 2010, and it will give an overview of the current composition and changes in the captive population *P. arachnoides*. Additional information may be obtained from the internet site of the ESF (European Studbook Foundation) or from the studbook co-ordinator.

In the following sections, an overview of the main activities in 2008/9 is presented.

1.2. Presentations and publications

No publications or presentations were given by studbook participants during 2008/9.

2. Plans for activities in 2010.

Since the subspecies *brygooi* and *oblonga* are very limited in numbers in the studbook registration, we must try to find as many interested keepers as possible. A subspecies with so few animals registered is not viable. It is the opinion of the coordinator that more animals are present on the European continent. Contacts have been made, by the studbook coordinator, with keepers of the subspecies *brygooi*, but for some (or more) reason(s), people are (very) reluctant to join the studbook. It could be that some keepers are of the opinion that there is a lot of work involved with the registration itself or with being registered. It should be pointed out more clearly that this is not the case. On the other hand, is it advisable to register the animals or join the studbook if one is not committed? This is a problem not only for this studbook but for more studbooks. This is something that needs attention.

3. Current living studbook population.

Please see the separate studbook view.

4. Total studbook population and future perspectives

The current total registered studbook population consists of 165 specimens.

The population is strongly biased towards subspecies *P. a. arachnoides*. The number of specimens of this subspecies is sufficiently large to offer a positive perspective for the studbook, but it is necessary to combine the specimens in an optimal way to create as many bloodlines as possible, to increase breeding success, and to minimise risks of disaster in the relatively small population.

The other two subspecies are present in much smaller numbers.

August 2010,

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