

During the meeting several hours were spent in demonstrating live crocodile handling and care techniques. Pat Aia from Papua New Guinea carried a permanent souvenir home after a bite from one of our plucky two year old mugger.

PARENTAL CARE IN OSTEOLAEMUS

Charles Beck, Curator of Reptiles at the Memphis Zoo and Aquarium writes that a behavioural project was carried out on the breeding group of Osteolaemus this year. "We incubate artificially. The morning pipping started, we re-introduced three eggs into the nest. When the first young emerged, it was promptly picked up by the mother and held in the rear portion of her mouth, cross-wise, for almost a minute. Then it was gently laid down onto the nest. The other two hatched with no incident. The three shared the quarters, with both parents, for two months. They were removed to facilitate feeding".

VARANUS SALVATOR BREEDING AT MADRAS SNAKE PARK

Around middle May '77 mating was observed between a large male and female V. salvator at the snake park on several occasions. On June 19 the female laid 14 eggs which were left in the ground and covered with strong wire mesh. For a few days she showed protective behaviour toward the nest by chasing the other monitors and members of the staff who approached too close. On September 17, 2 eggs were removed for separate incubation. The average size of the eggs was 7cm x 4cm and the weight 30 gms. On November 17 the pit was flooded and the remaining 12 eggs drowned. In January '78 one of the two eggs was opened, revealing a fully formed embryo. On March 7 the other egg hatched for a total incubation period of 260 days. The hatchling is 25cm. long.

BITE OF CALLOPHIS MELANURUS

A 27cm specimen of the Slender Coral Snake (Callophis melanurus) was brought to the snake park from the adjoining Deer Sanctuary on 11 November '77. M Mani, our snake keeper untied the string around its neck (with which it was caught) and was bitten on his right hand. Intense local pain developed minutes after the bite and by evening the hand was considerably swollen. The swelling subsided the next morning.

CHELONIA MYDAS IN MADRAS WATERS

On March 4 a green sea turtle (Chelonia mydas) was captured in a fishing net near the Madras Crocodile Bank in Vadannemeli. This is the first record that we know of green turtles in coastal waters off Madras. A few days later while snorkelling off the rocks at Kovalam (6 kms north) Allen Vaughan saw another green underwater. These rocks support several species of sea grasses.