

Some experiences with hatchlings of the Moila Snake (*Rhagerhis moilensis*)

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In 2013 I purchased a wild caught pair of *Rhagerhis moilensis*. I suspected that the female was pregnant at the time, and indeed, a few months later she deposited 13 eggs.

I incubated the eggs on a mixture of vermiculite and perlite, as I am used to do with eggs of other snake species, at 28°C. The unit was placed in a bread oven au bain marie. Thus, the humidity was about 100%. I had to guess what would be a good incubation method as I could not find any data about it. Anyway, under

these circumstances it lasted as I can remember 90-100 days before the eggs hatched. Maybe higher incubation temperatures would shorten this period.

After about 70 days, I opened one egg, which appeared to contain an underdeveloped embryo. In the end, 12 eggs hatched successfully.

Three of the hatchlings started to feed on newborn mice immediately after the first shedding. The rest refused food. After a few weeks trying to get them to feed on day-old mice, I tried if they would feed on small lizards. Without success. I think I waited too long before I started to force feed them (6-8 weeks), and most of them were already too weak. Six of them died.

The young snakes were all kept in plastic containers on a heat mat, with a hot spot of 35°C. For substrate I used lignocel. This appeared to work well. They liked to hide under the surface.

All offspring that survived was sold.

The parents I still have. They are kept on sand (as used to play in) with hot spots of 40°C. During the day they bask there for some hours.

They are excellent feeders on mice.

I think they are very nice snakes to keep. They are active and very curious. When I open the cage,



they are always somewhat nervous and tend to show some 'hooding behavior', and then they flee. I never have observed them to attack and bite. Unfortunately, there has been no further real captive breeding.

