



# THE TRUTH ABOUT REPTILES

## - RESPONSIBLE, LOVING KEEPERS VS LUSH'S LIES! -

- The Animal Protection Agency is **NOT** a charity – and **does not advise the government** as they claim!
- LUSH has **been referred to the Advertising Standards Authority** for their "I'm a chameleon, get me out of here" campaign. A previous, similar complaint against LUSH was upheld by the ASA, **forcing LUSH to withdraw their advertising**. Here are just a **few of the many** bits of misinformation you're being fed!

## LUSH'S LIES, DAMNED LIES AND STATISTICS!"

*"Some dodgy dealers readily claim that reptiles are easier to keep than dogs!" – LUSH & the APA*

The **Companion Animal Welfare Council** is the UK Government's chosen **advisory body** on animal welfare issues. The CAWC's view on reptile keeping differs somewhat from the bleak picture presented by the APA:

"Meeting all the requirements (space, dietary, social, thermal, and so on) of a small, hardy, reptile may be **more readily achievable** for many people than adequately fulfilling all the needs of some breeds of dog."

[Source: The UK Companion Animal Welfare Council]

*"Six million reptiles were imported into the EU last year and almost 200,000 arrived in Britain from outside of the EU" – LUSH & the APA*

Wrong. HM Revenue & Customs report that: 17,194 reptiles were imported into the UK of which **9,800 were captive bred** and 7,394 wild caught. In addition, many species are exclusively bred by keepers. There were 250 Veiled Chameleons - featured in LUSH's campaign – exported worldwide of which **100%** were bred in captivity, **none were wild caught!**

[Source: UNEP World Conservation Monitoring Centre, HMRC]

*"The trade in wild-caught reptiles is driving species towards extinction" – LUSH & the APA*

False. The majority of reptiles are bred in captivity. Furthermore, many **endangered species**, such as the Hogg Island Boa, have **been restored to their habitats** after breeding by keepers and careful wildlife restoration campaigns. The Crested Gecko, **once thought to be extinct**, is now one of the most widely bred lizards in the world and is **thriving in the wild** – thanks to responsible and caring owners!

[Source: World Wildlife Fund]

*"Many commercial reptile-breeding operations in the UK routinely operate outside of the law, are unlicensed and un-inspected, and conditions are invariably inhumane" - LUSH & the APA*

All reptile breeders fall under the Animal Welfare act (2006) and can be inspected. RSPCA data shows that that **90% fewer prosecutions are brought against reptile keepers than any other animal owners**. More reptiles (8 million) are kept as pets than dogs (6 million) in the UK. Annually there are 25,000 dogs rehomed, but only 1000 reptiles. **Dogs are more than 25 times more likely to need rehoming** than lizards or snakes

[Source: the RSPCA, figures from 2003-2004]

*"There is very little reliable information available on basic reptile care. Good quality information is largely inaccessible to the general public" – LUSH & the APA*

Pet Marketing Services is the largest distributor of animal care books in the UK. They offer 104 titles on horses, 136 on cats and 200 on reptiles. **Today there is more information published on reptile care than just about any other companion animal**

[Source: Pet Marketing Services]

*"Most wild caught reptiles die within the first year" – LUSH & the APA*

The truth is that **reptiles kept in captivity are likely to live twice as long** as their wild counterparts

[Source: The British Veterinary Zoological Society]

*"Over half of the 200,000 imported reptiles die in transit – and are written off as acceptable losses" – LUSH & the APA*

**Official figures** show that the actual figure is **less than 0.5%** - and as more reptiles are bred in the UK, fewer than ever are being imported so it'll go down even more!

[Source: HM Revenue and Customs, BAA Heathrow Airport]



This sheet has been created with support from the members of Reptile Forums UK ([www.reptileforums.co.uk](http://www.reptileforums.co.uk)) and the Federation of British Herpetologists ([www.fbh.org.uk](http://www.fbh.org.uk)) – the best sources for accurate, honest information about reptiles!

