



# Western New York Herpetological Society

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The following glossary of terms is provided to help clarify some of the information in our care sheets.

**Albino** – Genetic mutation that causes the lack color pigment usually seen with red eyes

**Aquatic** – Spending most of the time in fresh water

**Basking Spot** – Area of the enclosure kept warmer with the use of a heating element to allow the animal to thermoregulate

**Bridge** – Area of the shell on turtles and tortoises that connects the carapace and plastron

**Brumation** – Period of cooling down a reptile to simulate natural seasons, helps to stimulate breeding

**C. B.** – Abbreviation for Captive Bred

**Captive Bred** – Animal bred in captivity and not caught from the wild, generally healthier and better adjusted to live in captivity, abbreviated C. B.

**Carapace** – Dorsal portion of the shell on a turtle or tortoise

**Carnivore** – Feeding exclusively on meat

**Cold Blooded** – Body temperature and metabolism is controlled by the external temperature, see also Exothermic

**Crepuscular** – Active primarily during dawn and dusk hours of the day

**Dechlorinate** – To remove the chlorine from ordinary tap water by letting it sit out for 24-hours to allow the chlorine to dissipate naturally or by using commercially available products

**Diurnal** – Active primarily during the day

**Dorsal** – Referring to the back or top of an animal, portion with the backbone, opposite side of ventral

**Endothermic** – Body temperature and metabolism controlled internally and not dependent upon the external temperature, see also warm blooded

**Exothermic** – Body temperature and metabolism is controlled by the external temperature, see also Cold Blooded

**Gut Loading** – Process of feeding prey items good quality food to ensure proper nutrition for the animal being fed the prey items

**Heat Rock** – Commercially available product that consists of a heating element surrounded by rock; notoriously unreliable and often causes burns to the animals it is used with; see also Hot Rock

**Herbivore** – Feeding exclusively on plant material

**Herpetoculture** – The science of keeping herpetofauna in captivity

**Herpetofauna** – Referring to both reptiles and amphibians

**Herpetology** – Study of reptiles and amphibians

**Herptile** – Inaccurate and incorrect slang term for reptiles and amphibians, see herpetofauna

**Hibernation** – Often used inaccurately with regards to herpetofauna, see Brumation

**Hopper** – Juvenile mouse that is just starting to move around

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- Insectivore*** – Specialized carnivore that feeds exclusively on insects
- ISIS*** – International Species Information System, tracks taxonomic and breeding information of all species, used extensively in zoos and aquariums
- Leucistic*** – Genetic mutation that causes the lack of dark colored pigment to be present, usually seen with blue eyes
- Marine*** – Spending time mostly in salt water (i.e. ocean) surroundings
- Melonistic*** – Genetic mutation that cause more dark pigment than normal to be present
- Nocturnal*** – Active primarily during night
- Omnivore*** – Feeding on both meat and plant material
- Photoperiod*** – Period of light and dark to simulate the natural day and night cycle, important for the health and well being of animals in captivity
- Pinhead*** – Small sized crickets
- Pinky*** – Baby new born mouse, is hairless and pink in color
- Plastron*** – Ventral portion of the shell on turtles and tortoises
- Salmonella*** – Bacteria that causes Salmonellosis, commonly found in poorly prepared poultry and occasionally found on herpetofauna (usually thought of with turtles)
- Salmonellosis*** – Bacterial infection caused by Salmonella that causes diarrhea, fever, and abdominal cramps for 4 to 7 days
- Semi-Aquatic*** – Spending time on both land and fresh water
- Substrate*** – The material used as a floor or bedding for your animal
- Taxonomy*** – The organization of all organisms into categories to better describe them
- Temperature Gradient*** – Temperature range provided for herpetofauna to thermoregulate
- Terrestrial*** – Spending time primarily on the land only
- Thermocouple*** – Used to measure temperatures accurately, especially one consisting of two dissimilar metals
- Thermoregulate*** – Process in which the animal will move to warmer or cooler places to regulate its body temperature and metabolism
- UV*** – Ultraviolet light, usually not visible to the naked eye and described as three different types
- UVA*** – Visible to the naked eye, responsible for inducing normal behavior such as feeding and mating; provides for mental well-being
- UVB*** – Not visible to the naked eye, gives humans sun tans, allows for synthesis of vitamin D3 which allows reptiles to process calcium to prevent bone disease
- UVC*** – Not visible to the naked eye, used in sterilizers and kills bacteria, extremely dangerous and can cause damage to DNA
- Ventral*** – Referring to the bottom or belly area of an animal, opposite of dorsal
- W. C.*** – Abbreviation for Wild Caught
- Warm Blooded*** – Body temperature and metabolism controlled internally and not dependent upon the external temperature, sell also endothermic
- Wild Caught*** – Caught or trapped in the wild, generally carriers of parasites and more prone to sickness due to stress of capture and shipping, abbreviated W. C.