



WESTERN AUSTRALIAN SOCIETY of AMATEUR HERPETOLOGISTS (Inc)  
(Member of the Australasian Affiliation of Herpetological Societies)

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## PRESS RELEASE

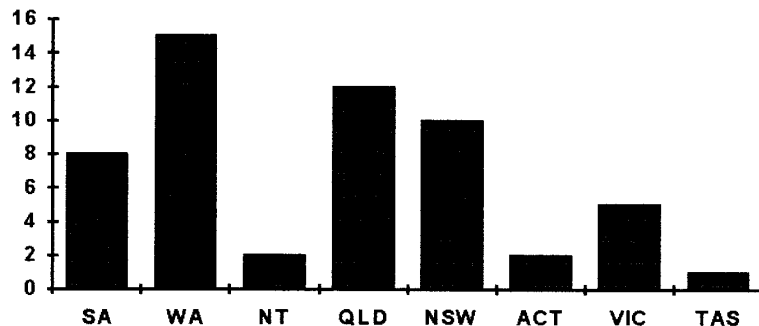
14 August 1995

### **A STORM OVER CALM: low cost conservation efforts crushed by policy**

CALM's reluctance to license people to keep reptiles or frogs continues the ignorance of these animals by suppressing amateur herpetology in Western Australia. This policy conflicts with the world herpetological community. We believe CALM's job is to manage the conservation of the forest industry, national parks & reserves, and flora & fauna *with the people not against the people.*

The high number of endangered and vulnerable species in WA is reason enough for CALM to enlist the assistance of interested members of the public in learning about WA's reptiles and frogs. The vastness of this state, plus limited government resources available for this type of research, leaves no other logical path for them to take. *To conserve, first we need to know!*

**Endangered & Vulnerable Reptiles Relative to State or Territory**



Source: Cogger, H.G., Cameron, E.E., Sadlier, R.A. & Egler, P. 1993. *The action plan for Australian reptiles.* ANCA PN124.

Their draconian policy on reptiles and frogs continues to hinder us from contributing our resources to the gathering of information that is essential to conservation biology and management.

It is only since the 1970's that world knowledge has grown sufficiently to allow reliable captive breeding in these animals. The negative situation in Western Australia has resulted in a meagre contribution to the general knowledge base by interested people living here. This has meant an almost total lack of knowledge of the WA species.

We request that CALM's attitude change so that their policy reflects a more positive benefit to the conservation of reptiles and frogs by,

1. allowing a greater involvement by private herpetologists in keeping for study purposes and
2. recognising the rights of residents in other Australian States or Territories to legally keep reptiles and frogs and allow them to bring them into WA if they move here, as happens with native birds.

We also request that the 1984 *open season* notice in Government Gazette Number 41 be repealed. We consider of more positive educational benefit the inclusion of a clause within the legislation allowing the only defence for killing a snake to be when it is an immediate danger to life or property.