



MAY 2010



I have great pleasure in introducing you to my first newsletter from **IRON BALLS**. My aim for this newsletter is to keep you all updated on the latest news on my collection, as well as to provide you with various tit-bits of info from the ball python world.

Aspects I'll be covering will be as follows.....

- News from my collection, in particular breeding
- Ball Pythons info & facts
- Base morph and designer morph features
- Any other useful bits of info I come across

I'll be sending out a newsletter every once in a while, please feel free to contact me with any questions, comments or suggestions.

I hope you enjoy.....

JULES



Well I've managed to get my first breeding season off to a start finally. I've got a normal female that is up to weight and at a good starting age for breeding. Paired with this female was my Spider male.

Just so you know, my females need to be a minimum of 1500g and at least 30 months old before I'd consider breeding them. Males need to be a minimum of 800g and 12 months old.



So, at the middle of March I started to lower the temperatures in my snake room, in line with the start of Autumn. I gradually brought the ambient temps from about 28C down to 24C over the course of a month.

I then introduced the male Spider to the female Normal on the 14th April. As this was the male's first breeding attempt I'm not sure he knew what to do, so I just left them to and the following morning saw that they had 'locked'... good stuff... !!

They have since copulated on 2 further occasions and I intend to introduce the Spider male to the female another 3 or 4 times over the coming month or so.....

So fingers crossed I'll be getting some eggs in the coming months, from this pairing the eggs have a 50% chance being Normals and 50% chance being Spiders..... I have also built my first incubator but I'll detail that in the next newsletter....

IRON FACT



The latin name for Ball Pythons is *python regius*, literally meaning *Royal Python*. In fact Ball Pythons are called Royal Pythons across Europe, whereas in the States and here in SA we call them Ball Pythons.

They are one of smallest python breeds, which, along with their generally docile nature and easy husbandry requirements, makes them one the most popular choice of pet snakes.

They are called Ball Pythons because of their defense action of 'balling-up' when feeling threatened. A great response which is much preferred by keepers instead of biting.....



IRON MORPHS

Let's take a look at a featured Base Morph from my collection and a Designer Morph that can be made from this Base Morph. A Base Morph is a colour or pattern phase that was originally found in the wild, a Designer Morph is a man-made blend of two or more Base Morphs....

PASTEL



PASTEL – BASE MORPH

The Pastel is one of the earlier proven morphs (Graziani 1997) and is an essential morph to have in any collection.

It is a co-dom (incomplete-dominant) morph for the colour trait. It is typified by its yellow colouration, blushing, and green eyes, and is used extensively in producing designer morphs.

Being a Co-Dom, there is a super form when breeding Pastel to Pastel. The Super Pastel is an extreme version of the pastel with very clean yellows and very strong blushing.

Common Designer Morphs that use Pastels are
PEWTERS – Pastel x Cinnamon
BUMBLEBEES – Pastel x Spider
LEMON BLAST – Pastel x Pinstripe



PEWTER – DESIGNER MORPH

Pewters are a blend of Pastels and Cinnamon Pastels. They were first produced by Greg Graziani in 2004.

The pewter takes the pattern and colour influence from the Cinnamon and lightens out the colour from the Pastel.

The result is an animal that has extreme fading and unique markings on a burnt orange body with light head and white belly.

As the Pewter contains 2 base morphs, breeding can be taken to the next level by producing

STERLING PASTELS – Super Pastel Cinnamon
SILVER BULLETS – Super Pastel Super Cinnamon

(image courtesy of VPI)

OTHER STUFF

If you have an interest in Ball pythons I'd recommend you join two online forums in particular
www.ball-pythons.net - This is a very popular international Ball Python forum website, here you will find the latest info on Ball Pythons and other reptile species.
www.sareptiles.co.za - This is the largest South African online reptile forum website, here you can find out what is happening on the local ball python scene.



Well folks...

That is it for the first edition of the IRON BALLS newsletter, I hope you found it enjoyable. Fingers crossed it won't be long before the next edition comes through as I'm expecting some further breeding action from the Spider and Normal over the next month or so.....

Cheers for now.....

Important Note

Information provided in the IRON BALLS newsletter is of my own thoughts, opinions and experience. I fully recommend that you research any and all aspects of Ball Python care and follow your own judgement. IRON BALLS cannot be held liable for any issues that arise if you follow any information provided in this newsletter.