

Media Release:

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New Guidelines for Keeping Venomous Snakes

Tree snakes, Whip snakes, and the deadly Taipan are just three of the 23 venomous snake species permitted to be kept as pets under the new Parks and Wildlife Service guidelines for keeping venomous snakes.

Jon DeLaine from the Northern Territory Parks and Wildlife Service's Wildlife Management Unit in Alice Springs said the new guidelines are based on captive husbandry knowledge, industry advice, species availability and access to anti-venom in the Northern Territory.

"The new guidelines allow better protection not only for the Territory's wildlife, but also for members of the public who chose to keep venomous snakes as pets, prospective venomous snake owners should be well informed of the needs and requirements for keeping these animals in captivity," Mr DeLaine said.

"Venomous snakes are potentially dangerous to humans, and extreme caution must be exercised when keeping or handling them in captivity, the guidelines specify age limits and minimum qualifications and experience that a person must have prior to keeping venomous snakes."

There are three permit categories of venomous snakes permitted to be kept in captivity in the Northern Territory, including mildly dangerous venomous, dangerous venomous and highly dangerous venomous which includes death adders and brown snakes.

"All venomous snakes that are native to the Northern Territory are protected and must not be taken from the wild or interfered without the relevant permits, venomous snakes must be obtained from a legal source - a person with valid and appropriate permit/s" Mr DeLaine said.

"All current venomous snake holders will receive a copy of the new guidelines in the coming weeks and are urged to contact Northern Territory Parks and Wildlife Service if they have any concerns or questions."

Members of the public who are interested in keeping venomous snakes should contact the Northern Territory Parks and Wildlife Service on 8999 4486 to arrange an inspection and assessment prior to purchasing the snake or visit www.nt.gov.au/nreta.

Ends

Media Note – for more information contact Jonathan DeLaine on 8951 8283.

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