

*The Maintenance of Bats in Captivity* by Susan M Barnard (1991). 103 pp. Obtainable from the author, 6146 Fieldcrest Drive, Morrow, GA 30260, USA. Price US\$11 surface, US\$15 airmail.

Within the past few years bats have become popular, so that while any injured or sick specimens in the past would be left alone to die, now large numbers are retrieved and attempts made to rehabilitate them. Generally, zoos and laboratories (excepting a few specialist research establishments) have not attempted to keep bats because, although the fruit eating species are relatively easy to maintain, caring for most other bats is acknowledged to be difficult.

There are a few publications dealing with various aspects of bat husbandry, but these are scattered, difficult to obtain, out of date or poor in content. With that as background, it is most pleasing to find both a comprehensive publication and one which is revised and improved annually as knowledge is gained.

The manual covers in detail all aspects of how to keep and maintain bats of a wide variety of species. Included are topics on how to construct caging, including materials, how to keep live food for insectivorous bats, together with all the key information on feeding adults and infants of insectivorous, frugivorous and sanguivorous species. Also, details are given of feeding frequencies, growth rates, time taken to weaning and longevity.

In all, this is a vital handbook for all those maintaining bats permanently as well as for rehabilitation. Its strength lies in the fact that information is annually updated. The manual was written for the American market, consequently the product list and availability is geared to North America. Some items may not be readily available in Britain, which is a slight drawback, although addresses and telephone numbers of suppliers are included. Nevertheless, the information in most of the manual also relates to British species.

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