REPTILES

Magazine Research Record

United States | 1993 to present | ISSN 1068-1965



October 1993 premiere issue represented in the collection

Publication Identification

Field	Information
Country	United States
Publisher	Fancy Publications, Inc. (premiere issue). Later documented publishers: I-5 Publishing, LLC; Lumina Media LLC; Pet360 Media Group; Living World Media, Inc.
Publisher address	Pending research update
Magazine title	REPTILES
Publication status	Active. Current subscription information states six issues per year.
Publication run	Began October 1993. Represented issues extend through July/August 2024. The complete future run remains ongoing.
Editor	Phillip Samuelson (original editor represented in the collection). Later issue specific editors: Pending research update.
Printer	Pending research update
ISSN	1068-1965
Language	English
Publication type	Specialist reptile and amphibian keeping, breeding, husbandry, conservation, behavior, and natural history magazine
Publication frequency	Bimonthly at launch, monthly beginning December 1994, and bimonthly again by 2017. Current subscription: six issues annually.
Collection coverage	Distinct represented issue dates from October 1993 through July/August 2024, as documented in the chronology below
Earliest issue represented	October 1993 premiere issue
Latest issue represented	July/August 2024
Subtitle / recurring descriptor	Guide to Keeping Reptiles and Amphibians
Original editorial leadership represented in collection	Editor Phillip Samuelson; Managing Editor Russ Case
Primary subject	Reptile and amphibian keeping, breeding, husbandry, veterinary care, natural history, field herping, conservation, behavior, and the reptile hobby.

Preservation Significance

REPTILES is unusually valuable within the preservation project because the collection documents the title across more than three decades, from its premiere issue in October 1993 through 2024. The surviving issues show changes in editorial design, husbandry advice, breeding culture, veterinary emphasis, conservation reporting, public attitudes toward reptiles, and the commercial reptile hobby over time.

The run is also significant because it preserves major publication transitions rather than only isolated issues. Early issues document the Fancy Publications era. Later issues preserve the change to I-5 Publishing, the short 2017 sequence involving Lumina Media LLC and Pet360 Media Group, and the subsequent Living World Media period. The November 2000 cover is especially useful documentary evidence because it explicitly announces that REPTILES was "Now Incorporating The Vivarium Magazine." This provides direct physical evidence of the absorption of another reptile periodical into the title.

Several issues have independent historical importance. The October 2002 issue celebrates the magazine's tenth anniversary. The November/December 2023 issue marks thirty years of REPTILES. The May/June 2024 issue is a memorial edition for Brian Barczyk, a highly visible modern reptile educator, breeder, entrepreneur, and media personality whose work reached a large international audience. Preserving that issue documents not only the magazine itself, but the way the reptile community publicly remembered one of its best known contemporary figures.

The breadth of the surviving covers also records changing subject priorities. Snakes dominate much of the represented material, including pythons, boas, colubrids, vipers, rattlesnakes, hognose snakes, kingsnakes, anacondas, and venomous species. Other issues document turtles, tortoises, lizards, amphibians, veterinary medicine, field research, conservation, captive breeding, morph development, enclosure design, behavior, enrichment, and reptile related careers. Taken together, the issues form a long running primary source record of the modern reptile hobby in North America.

Publication Metadata and Masthead Documentation

The October 1993 premiere issue was published by Fancy Publications, Inc. The original editorial leadership documented for represented issues includes Editor Phillip Samuelson and Managing Editor Russ Case. The subsequent publisher and corporate transitions are documented in the publication history table below. Publisher addresses, printing information, and later issue specific editors remain pending research update where not documented in the present record.

International Distribution

The publication originated in the United States and served readers of the reptile and amphibian hobby. Specific historical international distributor names and circulation territories are pending research update; they are not inferred merely from the magazine's broad readership.

Publication History and Publisher Transitions

Period	Documented development
1993	The premiere issue is dated October 1993 and was published by Fancy Publications, Inc. Contemporary reporting identifies Phillip Samuelson as the editor who developed the concept for the magazine.
1994	Independent publication histories state that the magazine changed from bimonthly to monthly publication in December 1994.
1990s to early 2010s	Collection mastheads document Fancy Publications as publisher through the long early period. Fancy Publications later operated within the BowTie corporate structure.

Period	Documented development
2000	The November 2000 cover states “Now Incorporating The Vivarium Magazine,” providing direct physical evidence that material or readership from The Vivarium was folded into REPTILES.
February 2013	I-5 Publishing, LLC acquired the BowTie magazine group, including REPTILES. Collection evidence from October 2013 identifies I-5 Publishing.
2016 to 2017	I-5 Publishing was renamed Lumina Media. A September/October 2017 issue in the collection identifies Lumina Media LLC. An August 2017 transaction notice independently confirms that Lumina sold Petcha.com and REPTILES to an undisclosed purchaser.
November/December 2017	The physical masthead evidence supplied for this issue identifies Pet360 Media Group. Because public corporate histories surrounding Pet360, PetSmart, and the 2017 sale are not completely consistent with the masthead sequence, this transition should remain documented exactly as the physical issue states rather than reconstructed beyond the available evidence.
By 2020	January/February 2020 and later represented issues identify Living World Media, Inc. The official REPTILES website currently identifies Living World Media, Inc. as the parent company.
Current status	REPTILES remains active. Current subscription material states that it is published six times per year.

Issues Represented in the Collection

Duplicate photographs and duplicate physical copies were reconciled before this list was prepared. The following list records distinct issue dates represented by the uploaded covers. Where the cover itself supplies volume or number information, that information remains part of the physical record even when not repeated in this condensed chronology.

1993: October

1995: February, March

1996: January, March, June, July, October, November

1997: April, June, November

1998: January, March, July, November, December

1999: April, May, September, November

2000: January, April, May, June, November

2001: February, April, June, September

2002: January, July, August, October, December

2003: June

2004: April, July, December

2005: January

2006: March, October

2007: January, February, October

2008: March, August

2009: November

2011: March, July

2013: October

2017: May/June, September/October, November/December

2020: January/February, May/June, September/October, November/December

2022: March/April, September/October

2023: November/December

2024: May/June, July/August

Notable Issues and Documentary Evidence

October 1993: Premiere issue. The cover is explicitly marked “NEW” and “Premier Issue,” making it a key anchor for the publication chronology.

February 1995: Features Guns N’ Roses guitarist Slash in a REPTILES interview while holding a snake. The issue documents the magazine’s early use of popular culture to broaden reptile interest.

November 2000: Cover states “Now Incorporating The Vivarium Magazine,” directly documenting consolidation within reptile hobby publishing.

October 2002: Special anniversary issue celebrating ten years of publication.

December 2002: “History of the Sideshow Snake Charmer” issue, an unusual example of the magazine addressing reptile related cultural history in addition to husbandry.

August 2002 and October 2006: Special venomous issues documenting the magazine’s treatment of hazardous species, keeper safety, venom research, and specialist husbandry.

October 2007: Fifteenth anniversary issue.

November/December 2023: Thirty year anniversary issue. Cover topics include mental stimulation, snake fungal disease, feeder selection, and remote monitoring technology, showing the modern expansion of husbandry concerns.

May/June 2024: Memorial issue for Brian Barczyk. The cover reads “In Loving Memory Brian Barczyk, September 1969 to January 2024” and “Thoughts From Brian’s Fans.”

July/August 2024: Demonstrates continuity after the memorial issue and the active Living World Media period.

Subject and Historical Research Value

The represented run is useful for longitudinal study because the magazine repeatedly returns to the same taxa and husbandry questions across decades. Ball pythons, corn snakes, boas, reticulated pythons, tree pythons, kingsnakes, hognose snakes, and venomous species recur in different periods, allowing changes in care recommendations, morph culture, breeding practice, and public presentation to be compared over time.

The covers also preserve evidence of changing scientific and welfare language. Later issues explicitly foreground topics such as mental stimulation, disease, conservation, veterinary care, technology, recognition and learning, and behavioral management. Earlier issues more often emphasize breeding, morphs, species acquisition, enclosure construction, and the novelty of particular animals. This makes the run potentially useful for research into the development of reptile welfare and husbandry standards.

The magazine also intersects with the histories of herpetological organizations, reptile expos, conservation programs, public figures, field herping, zoo work, and the commercial pet trade. Because many of these topics appeared in ephemeral hobby publishing rather than academic journals, preservation of the physical issues retains evidence that may otherwise be difficult to reconstruct from the web alone.

Numbering and Frequency Notes

The publication began in 1993 and changed frequency over time. It should not be described simply as “monthly” for the entire run. Independent publication history states that the first year was bimonthly and

that monthly publication began in December 1994. The surviving 2017, 2020, 2022, 2023, and 2024 issues demonstrate a later bimonthly schedule.

Volume numbering visible on later covers is broadly consistent with a continuing annual volume sequence. Examples represented in the collection include Volume 10 in 2002, Volume 15 in 2007, Volume 21 in 2013, Volume 27 in 2020, and Volume 32 in 2024. Individual issue numbering should be taken from each physical issue or masthead rather than reconstructed when a cover does not display it.

Research Cautions

The 2017 ownership sequence requires caution. The physical issues identify Lumina Media LLC for September/October 2017 and Pet360 Media Group for November/December 2017. A contemporaneous transaction notice confirms that Lumina sold REPTILES in August 2017 but does not identify the purchaser. Public corporate summaries are inconsistent enough that the physical mastheads should remain the primary evidence for this transition.

The title's corporate history should be distinguished from its publication imprint. Fancy Publications, BowTie, I-5 Publishing, Lumina Media, Pet360 Media Group, and Living World Media reflect different points in ownership, corporate naming, or publication responsibility. A masthead name is evidence for the issue in hand, but it should not automatically be treated as proof of the full legal acquisition chain.

Duplicate cover photographs in the uploaded research set do not represent additional issues and were excluded from the distinct issue chronology above.

Source Notes

- Primary evidence: physical REPTILES covers and masthead pages represented in the collection, including the October 1993 premiere issue, November 2000 Vivarium incorporation issue, 2017 publisher transition issues, 2020 Living World Media issues, 2023 thirtieth anniversary issue, and 2024 Brian Barczyk memorial issue.
- Damien.world Magazine Preservation catalog, REPTILES section. The site records issue dates, publisher information transcribed from mastheads, and the working publisher chronology.
- Los Angeles Times, "Cosmo for the Cold and Scaly," January 25, 1999. Contemporary profile of REPTILES, Phillip Samuelson, Fancy Publications, and the magazine's early history.
- The Fisher Company, August 2017 transaction notice, "Lumina Media LLC sells Petcha.com and Reptiles."
- REPTILES Magazine official website, Living World Media, Inc. privacy and terms pages. These identify Living World Media, Inc. as the current parent company.
- REPTILES Magazine, "Brian Barczyk, September 1969-January 2024," and the May/June 2024 memorial issue. These document the publication's memorial coverage following Barczyk's death.
- Current REPTILES subscription page. States that the magazine is published six times per year.