

Captive What?

Abbreviations and Terms Used When Listing on Classified Ads for Reptiles and Amphibians

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There can be confusion regarding the meanings of specific terms used when producing, selling, and purchasing reptiles and amphibians in today's market. Abbreviations are often used in descriptions of animal classifieds. It is up to the seller's integrity to state the animal's origin and sex in their advertisement. Below is a list of commonly used terms and their definitions.

1.0.0: The numbers in specific positions are used to identify the number and sex of animals being sold. The number in the first position designates the number of male animals in the seller's inventory. In this case, there is one male for sale.

0.1.0: The number in the second position designates the number of female animals in the seller's inventory. In this case, there is one female for sale.

0.0.1: The number in the third position designates the number of unsexed animals in the seller's inventory. These animals may be juveniles or of undetermined sex. In this case, there is one unsexed animal for sale.

Example: 2.4.3 indicates that the seller has 2 males, 4 females, and 3 unsexed specimens in their inventory.

Wild-Caught (WC): These are animals taken straight from the wild, plain and simple. Most of these animals do not survive. They are dehydrated and stressed, and many contain internal and external parasites. Quarantine is a must for these specimens.

Long-Term Captive (LTC): This term can be confusing and unclear. It refers to wild-caught animals that have been in captivity for a period of time, as opposed to recently imported animals. What one person considers "long term" may differ from someone else. This term should be used lightly. Caution regarding parasites should be exercised with these specimens. The author notes that this term is best used for animals in captivity for several months to a year.

Captive Hatched (CH): These are reptiles produced from recently wild-caught imports. Many captured females will be gravid, recently bred, or retaining sperm. They then give birth or lay eggs in the weeks or months after being brought into captivity. This is a very common term to see on price lists when species come in and lay eggs at an importer's facility. Sperm retention varies by species, but most wild-caught animals that produce young in the first year after capture can be considered captive-hatched. Most of these animals fare very well in captivity

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and can be a good bargain for purchasers. This term is not used for amphibians since they use external fertilization.

Captive Bred (CB): These are animals that are produced from a mated pair in captivity. For the most part, after a wild-caught reptile has been in captivity for over a year, its offspring are considered to be captive-bred. Amphibians can only produce captive-bred offspring since they undergo external fertilization.

Farm Raised (FR): These are animals that are kept in outdoor environments, many in the country of their origin. There is a lot of speculation that these animals are taken straight from the wild and placed in these facilities to be sold. This can be true in many situations. However, companies such as Fluker's® Farms have created true farms for animals outside their country of origin and sell the offspring to many chain pet stores. Fluker's® facility in El Salvador has produced "cherry-headed" red-footed tortoises, bearded dragons, and panther chameleons. As the reptile and amphibian market has become more mainstream in the pet trade, reptile and amphibian farms are starting in the United States in states such as Arizona, Texas, and Florida.

Conservation Projects: There are true frog farms in South America. Through the work of people like Ivan Lozano of Tesoros de Colombia, Wikiri Selva Viva in Ecuador, and Mark Pepper, farms are producing frogs in their native habitat sustainably and legally importing them into the United States and Canada. These projects fund the purchase and protection of habitats. These projects have brought many new species into the hobby.

Remember, best practices will protect a hobbyist's animals, collection, and investment. Quarantine all newly acquired wildlife, whether it is wild-caught, long-term captive, captive hatched, captive bred, or farm-raised, even if the animal is acquired through a reputable source.

References

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