1979

Another Frontier: Veterinary Herpetology

Kimo Jow
Iowa State University

Follow this and additional works at: https://lib.dr.iastate.edu/iowastate_veterinarian

Part of the Small or Companion Animal Medicine Commons

Recommended Citation
Available at: https://lib.dr.iastate.edu/iowastate_veterinarian/vol41/iss3/6

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Journals at Iowa State University Digital Repository. It has been accepted for inclusion in Iowa State University Veterinarian by an authorized editor of Iowa State University Digital Repository. For more information, please contact digirep@iastate.edu.
Another Frontier: Veterinary Herpetology

Kimo Jow*

When I was a growing youngster, I often had “unusual” house pets—the “ant lion,” Family Myrmeleontidae (which I commonly called the “doodle bug”), tadpoles, lizards and fuzzy caterpillars of all types. My favorite, though others had regarded it as repulsive, was the “horned toad,” Phrynosoma sp. While they were fun to keep, my parents made sure they were outside housepets.

Today, there continues to be youngsters, as well as many adults, who as amateurs collect reptiles and amphibians. This constitutes an increasing number of people visiting their local veterinarian about a disease or injury of their herptile.

Outside of the zoological parks, professional veterinary care to herptiles has been limited—often from lack of understanding or interest. However, a tremendous amount of information has been compiled in the recent years, particularly by the veterinary profession, in efforts to improve the care and health of reptiles. A valuable number of materials and resources are becoming more available by experienced professional and lay individuals on herpetology.

As a measure of further interests locally, there is the Iowa Herpetological Society (IHS). With objectives of education and conservation of herptiles, their activities include workshops, public displays and various publications. IHS membership is from all ages and walks of life, and is of benefit to both the collector and the practitioner, since the importance of veterinary care is stressed and worthwhile information about herpetology is provided.

As sophisticated as modern veterinary practice is today, there can still be a great sense of satisfaction and accomplishment in treating the scaley creatures of this world. Though a lot still remains to be learned of such animals’ husbandry and medicine, the application of a veterinarian’s basic medical knowledge and training is the first step in treating herptiles. Hopefully in the near future we can look toward improved veterinary care for these animals. This is in keeping with the Veterinarian’s Oath, “...a lifelong obligation (to) the continual improvement of (our) professional knowledge and competence.”

*Dr. Jow is a 1979 graduate of the College of Veterinary Medicine, ISU.

126

Iowa State Veterinarian