

Basic Guidelines for Heating Vivaria

Reptiles are Ectotherms, that is they heat themselves and regulate their body temperature by means of the environment. They move in and out of hot and cool areas to maintain their preferred temperature. It is therefore important that the vivarium has a suitable temperature gradient for the reptiles to behave naturally.

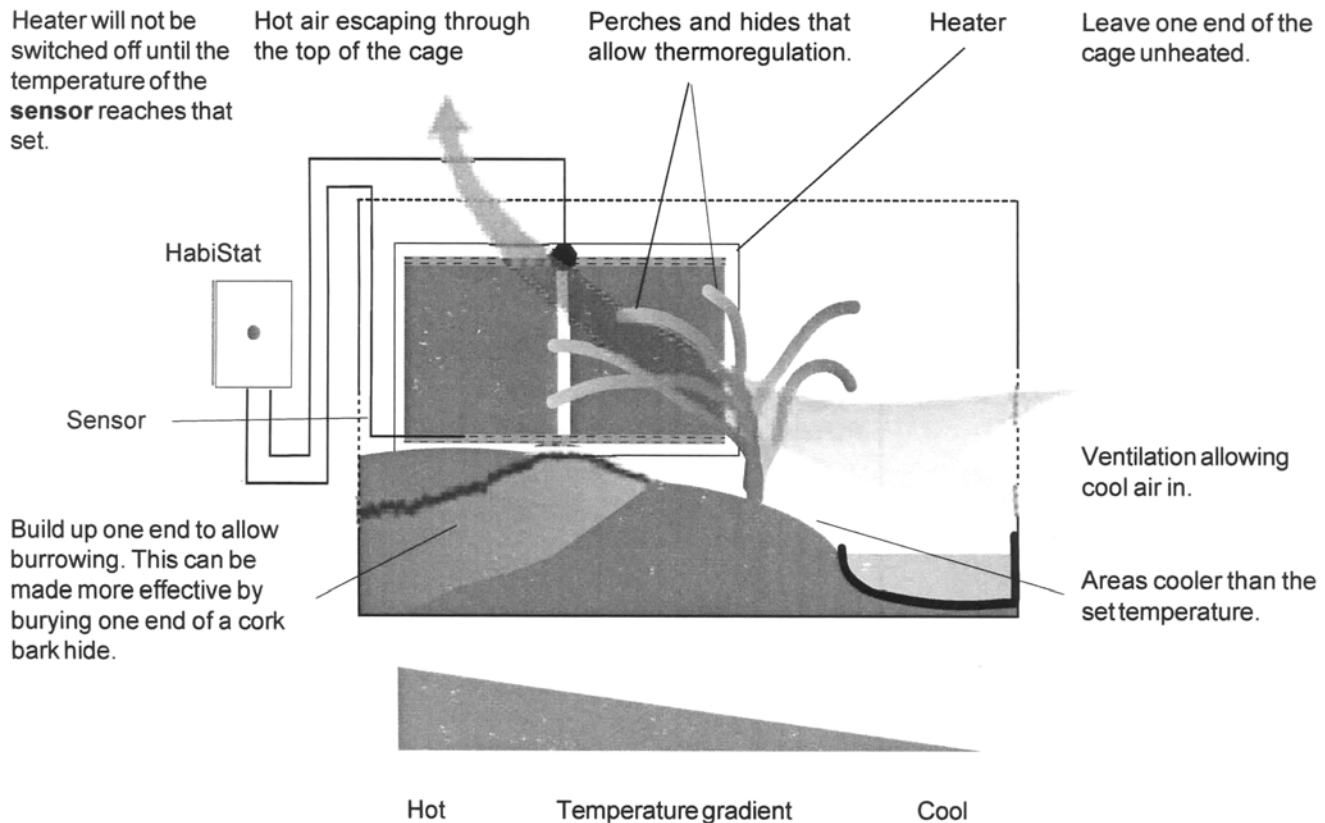
The heater should be placed at one end of the vivarium in a condition that does not heat the whole of the enclosure. In this way the temperature will vary between the hot area near the heater and the cooler areas at ambient temperature. For sophisticated temperature management the Twin Channel HabiStat can be used to maintain a comfortable ambient temperature with the safety of a controlled hot spot.

Size Matters

Heaters must be large enough to heat the vivarium to the required temperature. An underrated heater will rarely supply enough heat to reach the temperature set on the HabiStat. Too large a heater will supply so much heat that the HabiStat is continually switching it off. This would lead to poor temperature management and may cause the heater to fail.

More than one heater may be controlled by the HabiStat, providing the total load of 100 watts is not exceeded.

Heaters with high surface temperatures should be effectively guarded so that accidents are avoided. This is especially important with some types of heaters that can burn both animals and people or even ignite adjacent inflammable material! *Think of the safety of your animals!*



Positioning the HabiStat sensor to obtain a thermal gradient.

...Using the HabiStat.

The HabiStat will control the temperature at the level set and detected at the sensor. The function of the remote sensor is to enable selection of the site at which the temperature can be sampled and controlled.

The range of the temperature gradient will be proportional to the distance between the sensor and the heater and the ambient temperature. If the HabiStat is set at a temperature on the dial but the sensor is placed away from the

heater, there will be areas near the heater that are hotter than the set temperature. Similarly, if the sensor is placed near the heater, there will be areas away from the sensor that are cooler than the set temperature.

It should also be noted that as hot air rises, setting the sensor at the top of a vivarium will only maintain the required temperature at that point. A vivarium that houses ground dwelling animals may be too cool if set up in such a way. Place the sensor where the animals are likely to be!

Some criteria for controlling the temperature are:

- Ensure that the placement of the sensor is representative of the temperature required, use common sense in choosing the position.
- Remember that the HabiStat will be most accurate in the middle of its range. Try to use this, rather than the extremes, to maintain accurate control of temperature.

The Mat - Stat is suitable for controlling heat mats and strips. They must not however, exceed the 100 watt limit. The dial gives an accurate indication of the temperature set. For precise temperature control, an accurate thermometer must be used to check the actual temperature.

It is important to remember that temperature control is critical to the successful keeping of reptiles. HabiStat thermostats use hi-tec sophistication to give precise control and peace of mind.