

Garden centre reptile market nipped in the bud

Wednesday 11 June, 2025

Woodbank Garden Centre & Nurseries in Bingley has announced on its Facebook page that it will not now be hosting a reptile market planned for 22nd June 2025. Their action has been praised by animal welfare groups as responsible and appropriate, given the advice they received from Bradford City Council about potential law-breaking at the event and likely breaches to their own pet shop licence.

The Garden Centre joins a growing list of venues across the UK that refuse to host, or be associated with, reptile markets. Local council enforcement has improved in line with growing public awareness about the abhorrent animal welfare conditions that are typical of these events. As a result, the International Herpetological Society, organiser of this notorious, large-scale event, now seems to be running out of road.

Reptile markets are commonly misdescribed as 'shows' or 'breeders' meetings' when in fact they are commercially-driven markets involving the sale of thousands of animals. Reptiles and amphibians are typically housed in small, plastic, containers, restricting their movement and denying them the ability to stretch or turn around. Animals are routinely deprived of food, water, and movement for extended periods. Environmental necessities like controlled temperature, appropriate lighting, and suitable humidity levels are often absent.

Says Elaine Toland, Director of the Animal Protection Agency:

"Officers and members of Bradford City Council sent a clear signal that animal welfare is a priority, and Woodbank Garden Centre is to be commended for cancelling the event. We will continue to be a thorn in the side of reptile markets, as long as these outdated practices continue."

Says Laura Walton, Campaigns Manager, Freedom for Animals:

"These are not shows but trade events built on the exploitation of thousands of vulnerable animals. Cancelling the event was the decent thing to do and we thank Woodbank Garden Centre for this very welcome move."

Says Charlotte Regan, Wildlife Campaigns Manager, World Animal Protection:

"We are pleased to hear that the planned reptile market at Woodbank Garden Centre has been cancelled. Reptiles and amphibians are wild species with complex welfare needs, and their exploitation at events like these is unacceptable in today's society."

The Animal Protection Agency, World Animal Protection and Freedom for Animals are working together towards an end to the inhumane trading of wild animals at markets.

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