



THE MONITOR

NEWSLETTER OF THE HOOSIER HERPETOLOGICAL SOCIETY

A non-profit organization dedicated to the education of its membership and the conservation of all amphibians and reptiles

Volume 25 Number 10

October 2014

HOOSIER HERPETOLOGICAL SOCIETY

Celebrating 25 years!

HHS Meeting: Wednesday Oct. 22nd, 7:00 p.m.

Holliday Park Nature Center Auditorium

Guest Speaker: Rod Williams, Purdue University

Topic: "The Hellbender, Challenges & Successes with a Giant Salamander"



This month's guest speaker is Rod Williams. Rod is an Associate Professor in the Department of Forestry and Natural Resources at Purdue University. His lab is broadly interested in the ecology and conservation of amphibians and reptiles. His research interests focus on using a combination of field and laboratory methods to: (1.) investigate habitat selection and use in both aquatic and terrestrial systems, (2.) characterize amphibian and reptile mating systems, (3.) examine the factors influencing amphibian malformations, and (4.) measure population structure and inbreeding in threatened or endangered herpetofauna species. The hellbender is currently listed as an endangered species in Indiana. This program will discuss the current status of Indiana's largest salamander and what steps are being taken to assist its recovery.

This month we are meeting on the fourth Thursday of the month!

President's message

Jim Horton

This is it!! The **Midwest Herpetological Symposium** is next week! (October 17-19). Please attend this event. You'll love it! The MHS is educational and fun. It is also our **main HHS fundraiser** for the next several years. We need your support!

Again, It takes a lot of HHS people to have a successful symposium. If you are interested in helping out in any way, please contact myself or any board member.

Don't forget that our next meeting will be the 4th Wednesday, October 22nd.

I'd like to see more of our membership attend our public educational programs. All you have to do is show up with your animals and answer questions. We ask that you have a clean, presentable cage and healthy, docile animals. This is a great way to showcase your animals and get to know fellow members. Two such programs are coming up.

October 26 is the Fall Festival at Holliday Park and the HHS will be there. All members are invited to exhibit and educate visitors with your animals. Please contact Ed Ferrer with any questions.

HHS members are still needed and welcome help out at some of our upcoming exhibits. Our last display/exhibit of the year is **November 1st at Garfield Park**. If you are interested in bringing some of your herps for display, please contact me. My contact information is inside the back page of this issue.

WELCOME NEW AND RETURNING MEMBERS!

Returning members

Chris Young
Stahl Family
Martha Horton
Stokes Family
Hollyn Anderson
Maryann Watson

Robert Tyler
John & Linda Jett
Janice Kucera
Stacey Summitt-Mann
David Miller
Mary Hylton

New Members

Brandon Grass
Stacey Roesch

Sustaining Memberships

Roger and Holly Carter - Sustaining
Caleb Wood – (sustaining)
Mike McNeeley
Leonard Gray

HHS at Indiana Master Naturalist class

The HHS was invited to teach the reptile/amphibian course for Indiana Master Naturalist students.

The event was held at Twin Bridges Recreation Lodge in Danville.

HHS members presented a PowerPoint of *The Amphibians and Reptiles of Indiana*. This was followed by an opportunity to get close up with live specimens. The evening was a huge success. In fact, students had taken evaluations regarding our class and had given us top scores! Several had written comments saying that ours was the best program of the year!

Special thanks to Roger and Holly Carter, Rick Marrs, Ed Ferrer and Jim Horton.

HHS members help at Bradford Woods event

Several HHS members donated a full Saturday to help at the HandiCapable Camp at Bradford Woods near Martinsville, IN. Groups of guests arrived in buses throughout the day to see, touch and hold live amphibians and reptiles.



Roger and Holly Carter, Dale and Lori Shoentrupe, Karen and Connor Davis, Angela Thomas, and Jim Horton had spent the cool morning setting up at the camp.



This weekend long event offers guests with the incapacilities of down syndrome to enjoy a weekend of many activities throughout Bradford Woods.

The tours at our (HHS) shelter house was one of the more popular stops along the way for the guests.

The folks from the Handi Capable organization donated \$300 to the HHS for our efforts! The look in the eyes and the reactions from our guests made the day well worth it.



Tip of the Month

Mike Wood

This time of year it can be hard to keep the humidity up in some cages. Keep a close eye out and when your snake or lizard is getting ready to shed, try keeping a damp paper towel in small cages like shoe and sweater boxes. In larger cages I have good results by keeping a damp cotton towel in the cage. This helps raise the humidity and gives them something wet to rub against.

Subhendu Wolf Snake Discovered in India

September 30, 2014

By [John Virata](#)

A new species of snake that was discovered last year in India's Berhampur City has been described in the *Russian Journal of Herpetology*, and this snake is a beauty. The snake, named the Subhendu wolf snake (*Lycodon odishi*) after the state in which it was found, grows to about 350mm and features a yellow and black pattern with a black head and a yellowish ring around its neck.



According to the amateur herpetologists who first discovered the snake, it was perceived to have been a known species, [Lycodon jara](#). Upon further research from noted Indian herpetologist Dr. Sibaprasad Parida and the *Russian Journal of Herpetology*, the snake was found to be distinct from [Lycodon jara](#).

“Although strikingly similar to the other species, *Lycodon odishii* is much smaller and has a yellow collar which the [Lycodon jara](#) lacks,” Parida told *The New Indian Express*.

The Subhendu wolf snake is a nocturnal species that feeds on skinks and geckos. It is non-venomous. According to the scientists, it had often been mistaken for a young [Lycodon jara](#), known as the twin-spotted wolf snake.

2014 elections/nominations

This month we will be taking nominations for new officer positions. Please be thinking about who you might want to nominate for the year 2015. You may even nominate yourself.

The following is a list of the elected offices with a brief description of responsibilities of each officer.

President: presides at meetings of the Society, is the nominal head of the society, and appoints committees as they are needed for the business of the Society.

Vice-president: fulfills the duties of the President if the President is absent and assumes the office of President if that position becomes vacant.

Secretary: maintains the records of the Society, such as the minutes of Society meetings.

Treasurer: maintains the funds of the Society, such as paying the Society's bills and depositing funds collected from membership dues, donations, etc.

Sergeant-at-Arms: keeps order at Society meetings and other functions sponsored by the Society.

THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN PYTHONS AND BOAS

By Jim Hicks

(Reprinted from The Monitor Vol. 2, No. 3)

What are the differences between pythons and boas? The most obvious characteristic that separates boas from pythons is their means of reproduction. All pythons are oviparous, which means that they lay eggs. The females of most species will remain with the eggs coiled about them until they hatch. Some species are known to actually incubate their eggs by spasmodic twitching of their bodies as they lay coiled around the eggs. When viewed, you can actually see undulating ripples that run down the length of the body.



Female Ball python coiled around eggs. Worldofballpythons.com

This characteristic is a unique phenomenon which no other reptile can achieve. The female python can actually raise the temperature of the eggs by as much as 12 degrees F.

Boas, on the other hand, bare living young. A very effective and more advanced means of reproduction since the female boa does not have any maternal instincts and no eggs to protect from predators.

Furthermore, the young are able to seek shelter within minutes of birth, increasing their chance of survival.



Female rainbow boa with young.

Photo – Jim Horton

Another characteristic that separates pythons from boas is a small bone called the *suraorbital bone* located above the eye of all pythons. Also most pythons do not have teeth on the *premaxillae*, a pair of small bones at the very front of the upper jaw. The head of the pythons are also covered with plate - like scales rather than small beaded scales found on the head of boas. This, however, can be quite variable. One more distinct characteristic is that pythons usually have two rows of subcaudal scales and boas only have a single row.

Although pythons and boas may appear to be similar, especially between the Green Tree Python (*Chondropython*) and the Emerald Tree Boa (*Corallus caninus*), these main characteristics separate them into two main subfamilies: Pythoninae and Boinae.

KNIVES AND HERP ART (Part 34)

Photos & text by Roger Carter

As far as being a herp, this is a little bit of a stretch but I like this one. I think the head looks like a Chinese caricature of the head of a lizard. The handle is a dark resin or plastic with dark blue eyes. The blade has a pattern like Damascus steel, which is a steel alloy that gives the pattern you see here. This knife is not real Damascus. Damascus steel knives are a little expensive. This knife is fourteen and one/half inches long with the blade eight and seven/eighths inches long and has a sharp edge. The words "STAINLESS CHINA" are engraved on the blade near the handle.



2014 HERPETOLOGICAL EVENTS

October 17-19, 2014 – Midwest Herpetological Symposium, Indianapolis, IN. Hosted by the HHS.

October 19, 2014 - Midwest Reptile Show, 10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. Southwest Pavilion, Indiana State Fairgrounds, Indianapolis. \$5.00 admission, reptiles, amphibians, books, cages, feeder animals, and other supplies. Sell your herps and dry goods free of charge at our H.H.S. information booth (HHS members only) www.midwestreptile.com

October 22, 2014 – HHS meeting, guest speaker – Rod Williams (Purdue University), Topic: *The Hellbender, Challenges, and Successes with a Giant Salamander*.

October 26 – Fall Festival at Holliday Park, 1-5 PM, All HHS members are encouraged to exhibit their herps.

November 1, 2014 – HHS live animal exhibit at Garfield Park Conservatory, 10am-1pm. Volunteers needed for this event. Please contact Jim Horton for more information.

November 2nd, 2014 - Indiana Reptile Expo in Noblesville, IN on the first Sunday of the month from 10 AM to 4 PM at the Hamilton County Exhibition Center & 4-H Grounds.

December 14, 2014 – HHS Holiday Party at Jockamos Pizza in Greenwood. Time – 5:00p.m. RSVP Mary Hylton by Sunday, December 7 at: liblady81@hotmail.com

Your HHS Board of Directors for 2014

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	Rick Marrs		

The Hoosier Herpetological Society is a non-profit organization dedicated to the education of its membership and the conservation of all reptiles and amphibians. General monthly meetings are held on the third Wednesday of each month at 7:00 p.m. at Holliday Park Nature Center. Membership is open to all interested individuals. **No venomous animals are allowed at the General Meeting**

www.hoosierherpsoc.org

MEMBERSHIP FORM

____ **New Member**

____ **Renewal**

Name _____ Date _____
Address _____
City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____ Phone _____
Email Address _____

Individual/Family Membership \$15.00
 Sustaining Membership \$25.00 or more

Herpetological Interest(s)

Hoosier Herpetological Society
P.O. Box 40544
Indianapolis, Indiana, 46240-0544



Dated Material Enclosed

Address Correction Requested

_____ If this area is checked, it's time to renew your membership!