



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 22 Number 7

July 2011

President's Message

Jim Horton

Last month, many in the state of Indiana mourned the loss of another prominent herpetologist. Dr. Daryl Karns, Professor of Biology at Hanover College, Hanover, Indiana, passed away suddenly at the age of 61. Mr. Karns was a friend to the HHS and he had presented his talks at many of our meetings and symposiums over the years. Some HHS members had grown fond of him through acquaintanceship. He was well known in the herp community from academic colleagues to the amateur and private enthusiasts. He also headed Bio Blitz projects throughout Indiana. His work took him to many corners of the Earth but much of it was right here in Indiana. -He will be sadly missed.

Thanks to our members who exhibited at Holiday Park on June 26. Dave and Laurie Mitchell, Amy Baird, and Andy Hicks and his mother. Your help was greatly appreciated!

Our next canoe/kayak trip is Sunday, August 21. We chose Sunday so that Pat Hammond (who works most Saturdays) could attend. You'd better be there Pat. Last year we counted 138 turtles!

This month we have something a bit different. Our Guest Speaker will be a breeder of king and milk snakes. It has been a while since we've had a breeder as a guest. It should be interesting and informative.

Welcome New Members!

Renewals:

Pat Hammond

Dale Schentroupe

Kevin Shake

Mary Hylton (Sustaining Membership)

New Members:

William Hodopp

Don't forget our web address!

www.hoosierherpsoc.org

Friday Night Frogwatch Programs – Eagle Creek Park

Learn about frogs that call Eagle Creek Park home and then go out to visit a pond in search of frogs.

July 22 (9pm-10:30pm), August 5 (9pm-10:30pm)

\$5.00/person - Meet at the Earth Discovery Center (in park)

Pre-registration required – 317-327-7148 or www.indyparks.org

H.H.S. monthly meeting

Guest Speaker: Terry Dunham

Topic: "*Breeding Honduran Milk Snakes & Arizona Mountain King Snakes*"

July 20th 7:30 p.m., Butler University, Pharmacy Building Room #150

July's H.H.S. monthly meeting will welcome Terry Dunham as our guest speaker. He started breeding Australian birds and has written the T.F.H. *Book of Finches and the ABC's of Finches* published by TFH Publications. In the past decade he has bred snakes, always with a special interest in genetics and color varieties. He has been a regular contributor to online forums on king snakes, milk snakes and herpetoculture. He has written articles in *Vivarium, Reptiles, and Reptiles USA* magazines. Terry has given several presentations for herpetological societies in the United States and United Kingdom. He pioneered color varieties of Honduran milk snakes and Arizona Mountain king snakes. He produced the first snow Honduran milk snake in the world and missed by only weeks of producing the first ghost and hybino Hondurans. His presentation will include more than 60 photos of snakes and herpetocultural equipment. The talk will explain genetics, care and breeding techniques, and more, with applications for all colubrid snake species.

Our last guest speaker

The Tarantula Teacher, Dr. Barbara Reger

Jim Horton

Barbara Reger has had the love of spiders in her blood all her life. Her June 15 presentation was filled with life stories involving spiders of all types. The front area of the meeting room was filled with photos, live specimens, and facts about spiders and other arachnids.

She also dispelled the myths concerning spiders such as the daddy longlegs (correctly called the harvestman). They are not the most venomous spider in the world. In fact, they aren't even spiders.

The familiar *giant blood-sucking camel spider* was posted on the internet from our U.S. Servicemen in Iraq. It's not so giant and it doesn't eat the stomach of a camel. It actually has a leg span of about 5 inches.

Just a few bits from her talk... She has a tarantula named after her. Her favorite hunting spot for spiders is the desert southwest with the Amazon Rainforest being a close second. She discovered a new species of tarantula in Arizona.

Barbara also has the siblings of orb weaver spiders that are currently in orbit at the NASA Space Station.

It was an excellent presentation that surprised a few hard-core herpers.

Keeping Crested Geckos

Rhacodactylus ciliates

Text and photos - Jim Horton

Crested geckos have been popular in the reptile hobby for the past several years and for good reason. These cute little semi-arboreal geckos are hardy, stay relatively small, and they are now bred in many color morphs.

Only about twenty years ago, crested (New Caledonian geckos) were almost considered extinct. Since then they have been re-discovered and other species of Island dwellers have been named. They are now bred in large numbers in the thousands annually.



Care of crested geckos is quite simple. There are now tropical temperature requirements, no special lighting, and no need for huge enclosures.

Temperatures should remain in the upper 70's to low 80's. This would replicate the natural environment where these geckos originate. Higher temperatures will stress crested geckos. High temperatures will stress crested geckos and may cause health problems.

Squeaks and small wails are part of the vocalization produced by crested geckos. These sounds occur through annoyance or during mating.

Cresteds are a long-lived species. Provided proper husbandry skills, they may live to 15 to 20 years or more.

These interesting geckos have soft skin, large eyes, and a prehensile tail. They are semi-arboreal and will need a tall cage to suit them. Their size (including tail) is about eight inches.

Crested geckos are easily found at most reptile shows. All are captive bred which means they are healthy and not taken from the wild. Young cresties need TLC through constant humidity control, cleanliness, and feedings. Young cresteds should be housed alone or they may bite the tails off of their cage mates.

Captive morphs include names such as 'fire', tiger', dalmatian, harlequin, creamsicle, and pinstripe. It is very critical that care is taken when handling these geckos. Their tails may easily be lost in stressful conditions. If a tail has fallen off, it won't grow back but will only produce a tiny stub.

These geckos don't require many of the husbandry techniques that other lizards need. No special lighting is needed. Water will be consumed in a bowl and should be kept clean at all times. A good rule for this is, if you wouldn't drink it, they should drink it. Water will also be consumed through droplets. I spray my cresteds in the morning and evening. Use distilled water to avoid water deposits on the enclosure.



Diet - Since these geckos are considered omnivorous and will consume insects and pureed fruits . Baby food can be used as a supplement food. It is important that a vitamin supplement be added to the baby food. A commercial diet called the “Rapashy Diet” is available at most reptile shows and online. It is mixed with water and placed in the enclosure.



Crickets, waxworms, and mealworms can also be added to the diet twice a week.

Adult crested geckos of opposite sexes will breed quite readily if placed together. Males should be kept in separate cages or they will continue to breed with the female. This will eventually cause unhealthy egg production.

Gravid females will usually dig and deposit 2 eggs. The eggs should be removed and placed in a separate container for incubation. Babies will hatch in a little over 2 months. The young will feed on pinhead crickets, baby food, and commercial fed diets.

Crested geckos can be purchased from breeders at most reptile shows and expos, pet stores, or online. Prices may range from \$20 to 150 depending on the size and morph patterns and colors. Newly produced morphs will bring a higher price.

Crested geckos will soon tame down with regular handling. These lizards are a rewarding species to work with in captivity. Their interesting behavior, easier husbandry, small size, and affordability might just entice any herp enthusiast into working with these animated little creatures.

A thank you note from Holiday Park

Jim,

I just wanted to say another quick thank you to you and your members for a great program yesterday. I think all of our participants appreciated how hands-on you let them be with the animals- it was a unique experience for them.

I'm sure I'll be in touch to see if we can work together again in the future.

Best!

-Adam

Adam Barnes

Assistant Manager / Indy Parks

City of Indianapolis Department of Parks & Recreation

Holliday Park Nature Center

KNIVES AND HERP ART (Part 9)

Photos & story by Roger Carter

This knife is a folder that I used to carry and use until someone suggested that it might be considered “a weapon”. Anyway, this knife has a cartoon-like image of a rattlesnake on the blade with the text “Rattlesnake by Remington” with the snake and is seven and five-sixteenths of an inch fully opened and four inches closed. The football shaped hole at the thick side of the blade is to allow you to open the knife with one hand. You hold the knife firmly in your hand and push your thumb against the edge of the hole and the blade swings open and locks into position with an audible “click”. Some folding knives have a hole like this and some have a stud that you push against to open it. These kinds of knives typically have a clip on one side so you can attach it to the edge of your pocket or maybe your belt. This blade is razor sharp in addition to the one inch long serrated edge and was made in America.

In last month’s newsletter there was a small knife that had an image of a cobra on it and I thought that it had been painted on because I could feel something. I found out from one of the engineers that I work with, Bob Taylor, that this kind of thing is etched into the un-finished blade by a laser and then the blade is smoothed and polished. Bob has an electronic magnifier at his desk and he took some enlargements of the images on this blade. There is an image of the head of the snake, the rattle of the snake and part of the word Rattlesnake taken at 50X magnification showing the little pock marks from the laser.



EVENTS

July 20, 2011 – General Meeting, Special Guest Speaker – Terry Durham, Kentucky. Topic: Breeding Honduran Milk Snakes and color morphs.

August 7, 2011 – Indiana Reptile Expo, Hamilton County Fairgrounds, 10am-4pm
www.indianareptileexpo.com

August 21, 2011 – HHS Canoe/kayak trip. Blues Canoes (Edinburg,IN) on the Driftwood River. More information to come.

August 28, 2011 – 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. (317) 899-1599, www.midwestreptile.com

August 2011 - 34th International Herpetological Symposium, Fort Worth, Texas

October 21-23, 2011 – 27th Annual Midwest Herpetological Symposium, Minnesota. Banquet, speakers, auction, photography, vendors, videos, more! www.mnherpsoc.org

Classifieds

For sale: 1.1 c.b.2008 red blood pythons male is striped female is het for albino.

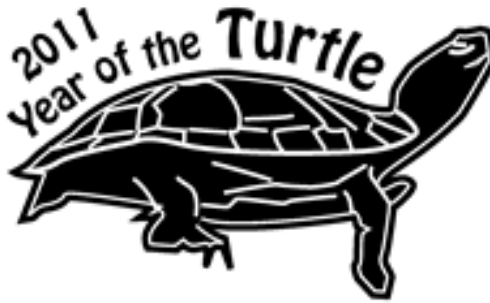
1.0 c.b. 2010 Albino red blood python. Group price 750.00 These were produced by Matt Turner, are healthy, eating frozen thawed. Contact Mike Wood 574-269-3441 twobears@embarqmail.com

www.Petfinder.com

Petfinder is an online, searchable database of animals that need homes. It is also a directory of more than 13,000 animal shelters and adoption organizations across the U.S., Canada and Mexico. Organizations maintain their own home pages and available-pet databases.

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 7:30 p.m. at Butler University, Gallahue Hall, Room 105 or **108**. Membership is open to all interested individuals. **No venomous animals are allowed at the General Meetings.**

*******Note: Meetings are currently held at the Pharmacy building, room # 150*******



Your HHS Board of Directors for 2011

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The Harding Poorman Group

Got Rodents?

Hoosier Mouse Supply can take your orders for rodents and they will deliver to the monthly meetings. (317) 831-1219

EARPS, Exotic Animal Rescue and Pet Sanctuary (EARPS, Inc.) is a 501(c)3 non-profit rescue group made up of volunteers working together to improve the quality of life for pocket pets, exotic pets, and non-traditional pets through fostering, adopting, and educating, as well as helping control the pet population through spaying and neutering.

The North American Field Herping Association (NAFHA) www.naherp.com

Hoosier Herpetological Society

MEMBERSHIP FORM

New Member

Renewal

Name _____ Date _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____ Phone _____ Email

Address _____

Corresponding Membership \$12.00

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!