



# 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 10

October 2011

## *Welcome Back Members!*

### NEW MEMBERS

Zach Truelock (Sustaining Membership)

### RENEWALS

Anita Carter – (Sustaining Membership)

Martha Horton

**HHS Meeting: Wednesday Oct. 19th 7:30 p.m.**

**Speakers: Jim Horton and Pat Hammond**

**Topic: *Field Herping Southwestern United States***  
**Butler University, Pharmacy Building, room #150**

Our October Hoosier Herpetological meeting features HHS members Jim Horton and Pat Hammond as our speakers. Jim is currently president of HHS and editor of the Monitor newsletter. Pat is a board member and regulates the message board of our web site. Both are experienced field herpers and excellent wildlife photographers. Some of their field trips have explored the various herp habitats of the American Southwest. Much of their time was spent in Arizona ("rattlesnake capitol of the world")! Now that our weather is starting to turn colder, it will great to take a "virtual field trip" to a warmer climate. Be sure to attend and see what they have encountered!

## *HHS to host a Special Guest Speaker in November*

### **Stan A. Shultz**

Retired medical research technologist at the University of Calgary, Alberta, Canada, former pet shop owner, and expert on Tarantulas. Stan is the author of *The Tarantula Keeper's Guide*, including *Second and Third Editions*.

Stan and his wife, Marguerite, travel North America in their motor home promoting *The Tarantula Keeper's Guide*, helping enthusiasts enjoy their pets, and delighting in being archetypal snowbirds.

# Desmognathus by nature, Leurognathus by name

By Todd Pierson

Any herper who has visited the Great Smoky Mountains or another region of the southern Appalachians is familiar with the genus *Desmognathus*. Flip just about any rock along a stream or seepage, and a squirming salamander will slip past your fingers and into the water. They definitely deserve the name that Andrew Hoffman has given them—the “jumping seepage slugs”.



However, this genus is far more diverse than people give them credit for. From the enormous, largely-aquatic *Desmognathus quadramaculatus* (the black-bellied salamander) to the fully-terrestrial—with no aquatic larvae—*D. aeneus* and *D. wrighti*, this group fills many ecological niches across their range. There is, though, one species that takes the cake.

*Desmognathus marmoratus* (the shovel-nosed salamander) was originally described as the genus *Leurognathus*, and it wasn't until much later that it was found to fit within the *Desmognathus* clade. Was its original description as a novel genus due to ignorance or lack of attention to detail? No—and when I first searched for this species, I quickly recognized its distinctiveness.

In the early spring of 2011, I browsed my list of the salamanders of Georgia. Of the greater than fifty species, I had seen all but a handful. Several of the forms I had yet to see were extremely localized and specialized (i.e. *Haideotriton* and *Gyrinophils palleucus*), but for at least one species, I had no excuse. I had spent a lot of time in the Blue Ridge, and I had seen many hundreds upon hundreds of

*Desmognathus*, but never a *D. marmoratus*. My buddy Grover and I set off to a beautiful second-order mountain stream to rectify that problem.

*D. marmoratus* is most closely-related to the black-bellied salamanders, and as we flipped rocks along the bank of the stream, I carefully inspected each individual of this latter species, hoping to spot one with a slightly more sloped face and be able to call it *D. marmoratus*. It was, in my opinion, just an odd form of the black-bellied salamander. After quite a while searching, we were still empty-handed.

Eventually, Grover flipped a nice flat rock more than a foot under water, resting in the middle of a small rapid. He held his net downstream of the rock, and when he pulled it up, a very different creature lay within. Smooth black skin, a heavily-keeled tail, highly-keratinized toe tips, and a nearly flat head let us know right away that this was our target species—*Desmognathus marmoratus*—and demonstrated the reason that it was originally described as a different genus. Never again would we doubt its uniqueness.



In fact, I would later discover that this was a typical experience. Unlike other *Desmognathus*, the shovel-nosed salamander does not have semi-terrestrial habits. This species spends its entire life underwater, living mostly in the fast-flowing rapids of these streams where other species cannot persist. After I figured out its microhabitat, I began to find them with more regularity, but the feeling of surprise when I have when I pull one out of the water still hasn't faded.

## President's Message

Jim Horton

It appears that the warm, pleasant weather has been prolonged a bit into October. This extended summer-like weather has given field herpers more of a chance to get outdoors and see our native herps before these animals seek refuge below the surface for the long winter ahead.

The NARBC show at Tinley Park, Illinois was this past weekend. This event is one of the largest of its kind in the Midwest. We attended on Sunday and one thing I can say is BALL PYTHONS WERE EVERYWHERE! This popular snake in all its morphs was very prominent at the show. I managed to purchase a few field guides and other supplies.

Another great activity this month is the Midwest Herpetological Symposium. This year it is being held in Minneapolis, Minnesota (the birthplace of the MHS). The October 21-23 weekend conference is one of the best around and it has been held since the early 80's. Here is a lineup of activities: an ice breaker on Friday night, Saturday guest speaker presentations, the banquet and an auction Saturday evening, and a live animal sale on Sunday. For more information go to [www.mnherpsoc.com](http://www.mnherpsoc.com)

Don't forget to check out the HHS display/exhibits at select Marion County Libraries. This month is the Wayne Township and Irvington branches. Look for us in November at the Franklin Township branch.

We have a special guest speaker for November. *Tarantula extraordinaire*, Mr. Stan Shultz will be stopping by on his trip across the country promoting his latest book, "*The Tarantula Keeper's Guide*". If you keep tarantulas or just would like to know more about them, this is the place to be. This HHS will have copies of *The Tarantula Keeper's Guide* available for sale and you can have the signed by the author at the meeting.

### **U.S. FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE LISTS THE OZARK HELLBENDER AS ENDANGERED AND MOVES TO INCLUDE HELLBENDERS IN APPENDIX III OF CITES**

The Center for North American Herpetology

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has designated the Ozark Hellbender as endangered under the federal Endangered Species Act (ESA) and also finalized its decision to list the Ozark and Eastern Hellbender in Appendix III of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES). In combination, these listings will provide significant protection to hellbenders, both domestically and internationally.

Currently, two [allopatric] subspecies of Hellbenders are recognized, the Ozark Hellbender and the Eastern Hellbender. The Ozark Hellbender only occurs in Missouri and Arkansas, whereas the Eastern Hellbender range includes portions of the following 16 states: Alabama, Georgia, Illinois, **Indiana**, Kentucky, Maryland, Mississippi, Missouri, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia, and West Virginia.

[www.hoosierherpsoc.org](http://www.hoosierherpsoc.org)

# Indiana adds two amphibians to the Endangered Species list

The DNR has proposed that the **four-toed salamander** be removed from the list of endangered species, and that the **plains leopard frog** and **mole salamander** be added to the list. The DNR is required to review the list of endangered species every two (2) years and make appropriate amendments under IC 14-22-34-11.

Extensive research has been conducted on the four-toed salamander over the past five years in Indiana to determine its population in this state. Seven new county records were found, and older records were verified and/or reconfirmed, with a population found in at least twenty Indiana counties. This salamander lives along forested areas near springs, seeps, woodland ephemeral wetlands, and bogs. They can also be found in moist areas under leaf litter, logs, and moss in the spring and summer. Their distribution is scattered throughout the state but appears to be stable.

The mole salamander is proposed to be added to the list. It was only recently discovered in Indiana and is known only to exist in a single population in one county. They typically inhabit floodplain forests located near gum and cypress swamps. Because of its isolated, small geographic range in Indiana, narrow habitat tolerance, and small population size, the DNR is requesting that it be listed as an endangered species. Several other states also consider this species to be imperiled or vulnerable due to the draining of wetlands and clearing of floodplain forests.

The plains leopard frog is also proposed to be added to the list as a result of new population information and habitat loss. Recent surveys in Indiana have not found the plain's leopard frog, even in areas where they were found in the past 10 years. Furthermore, some locations where they were found in the past have been converted to agriculture and no longer provide habitat suitable for this species. This salamander needs prairie, savannah, and grasslands to live and breeds in marshes and ponds. With few actual records now known in Indiana and its limited distribution, the DNR is also requesting that it be listed as an endangered species.



Mole salamander *Ambystoma talpoideum*  
Image © Suzanne L. Collins, 2001



Plains leopard frog *Lithobates blairi*  
Image © Suzanne L. Collins, 2001

## *HHS Selling Books and supplies*

The Hoosier Herpetological Society has a wide variety of brand new herp-related books and ZooMed supplies for sale to our membership. Sales from these items will fund the HHS.

See the selection at the Midwest Reptile Shows and General Meetings at Butler University. Books and supplies are sold below retail pricing.



# KNIVES AND HERP ART (Part 11)

Photos & text by Roger Carter

I don't know what purpose this little knife is supposed to serve. Maybe it is just a collectible. This little knife has a key chain ring and a cloth sheath to carry it in. The sheath has the image of a cobra raised up with the hood spread. The knife is three and three-quarter inches long with the blade two and one-eighth inches long. The handle looks like it is made to look like a bird and is plastic. The blade is steel with some sort of black coating and the word "PAKISTAN" on the blade. The blade is not sharp.



## EVENTS

**October 16, 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](http://www.midwestreptile.com)

**October 19, 2011** – HHS General Meeting, Guest Speakers: Jim Horton (HHS) and Pat Hammond (HHS). Topic – *Herping the Southwest United States*

**October 21-23, 2011** – 27<sup>th</sup> Annual Midwest Herpetological Symposium, Minnesota. Banquet, speakers, auction, photography, vendors, videos, more! [www.mnherpsoc.org](http://www.mnherpsoc.org)

**November 6, 2011** – Indiana Reptile Expo, Hamilton County Fairgrounds, 10am-4pm  
[www.indianareptileexpo.com](http://www.indianareptileexpo.com)

**November 13, 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) 899-99, [www.midwestreptile.com](http://www.midwestreptile.com)

**November 16, 2011** – HHS General Meeting, Guest Speaker: Mr. Stan Shultz. Topic – *Tarantulas*.

## 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.  
Used Hovabator incubator with window in excellent condition for 20.00, Contact Mike Wood 574-269-3441  
[twobears@embarqmail.com](mailto:twobears@embarqmail.com)

**For Sale:** c.b. October 2011 Kenyan sand boas - \$25.00 (\$20.00 HHS members). C.b. 2.0 2010 Indian sand boas \$70.00 each. C.b. 1.0 Argentine Boa, approx. 2-foot, \$140.00 Contact Jim Horton (317) 865-0464 or stardali84@hotmail.com



## Got Rodents?

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

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Mark Your Calendars...



**THE MINNESOTA  
HERPETOLOGICAL  
SOCIETY**

presents the  
**27th Annual  
Midwest  
Herpetological  
Symposium**

**October 21-23  
2011**

*speakers • videos • photography •  
auction • banquet • vendors • more!*

**SPEAKERS  
TO INCLUDE:**  
 Jeff Ettling, PhD  
 Tony Gamble, PhD  
 Jeff LeClere  
 Paul Moler  
 Barney Oldfield, DVM  
 Salvatore Santelli  
 Chris Tabaka, DVM

The event will be held at:

**Best Western Kelly Inn**  
 2705 Annapolis Ln N.  
 Plymouth, Minnesota, 55441  
 Phone: 763.553.1600

(discounted room rates, pet-friendly, and just a hop, skip, and jump from downtown Minneapolis)

[www.mnherpsoc.org](http://www.mnherpsoc.org)



**For Sale: HHS shirts featuring herps  
of Indiana - \$15.00 (Larger sizes \$18.00)**

[www.hoosierherpsoc.org](http://www.hoosierherpsoc.org)

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, Pharmacy Building, Room #150. 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**

PRESIDENT	Jim Horton	(317) 865-0464	<a href="mailto:stardali84@hotmail.com">stardali84@hotmail.com</a>
VICE-PRESIDENT	Ed Ferrer	(317) 787-7448	<a href="mailto:pythonpals1@msn.com">pythonpals1@msn.com</a>
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## **Appointees for 2011**

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PROGRAM DIRECTOR	Ed Ferrer	(317) 787-7448	<a href="mailto:pythonpals1@msn.com">pythonpals1@msn.com</a>
		Cell - 727-7553	
WAYS AND MEANS	Angela Thomas	(317) 882-5266	<a href="mailto:necali@comcast.net">necali@comcast.net</a>
WEBSITE COORDINATOR	Barbara Filtri		<a href="mailto:barbara.filtri@hughes.net">barbara.filtri@hughes.net</a>

**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)**

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**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!