



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 11

November 2014

HOOSIER HERPETOLOGICAL SOCIETY

Celebrating 25 years!

HHS Monthly Meeting

November 19th 7:00 p.m. Holliday Park, Nature Center

Guest Speaker: Dr. Jason Hoverman, Purdue University

Topic: "*Ranaviruses: Exploring Drivers of Disease Risk within Amphibian Communities*"

This month's guest speaker is Dr. Jason Hoverman. He is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Forestry and Natural Resources at Purdue University. He received his PhD from the University of Pittsburg and conducted post-doctoral research at the University of Colorado, the University of Tennessee, and Pennsylvania State University. His research investigates the mechanisms through which environmental stressors, both natural and anthropogenic in nature, affect the outcome of interspecific interactions and the function of ecological communities. He focuses on three topics in particular: 1.) the ecological and evolutionary importance of inducible defenses in prey, 2) the direct and indirect effects of anthropogenic chemicals on communities, and 3) the ecology of emerging diseases. In his research he has utilized a diversity of freshwater aquatic systems (e.g. ponds, wetlands, lakes) and their associated taxa (e.g., amphibians, snails, insects, fish, trematodes, viruses).

WELCOME NEW AND RETURNING MEMBERS!

New

Trevor Walker

Renewals

Alan Resetar

Gerald Zimmerman

Rick Marrs

President's message

Jim Horton

We have successfully hosted another **Midwest Herpetological Symposium!** I'm proud of our symposium staff and all of their hard work this past year. There are too many people and organizations to thank! But if it wasn't for our members, supporters, donors, guest speakers, and sponsors, this couldn't have been done.

I was pleased with how everything went. Our final numbers aren't in yet but if we did make a profit, we hope to donate a portion to reptile/amphibian related conservation fund(s)
I would like to thank our symposium staff for a wonderful job. Roger and Holly Carter, Barbara and Giuseppe Filtri, Dale Schoentrup, Pat Hammond, Mary Hylton, Ed Ferrer, Angela Thomas, and Will Brown gave their all to make this event a great success.

To our online membership –We're sorry for the delay in your mailing last month. There was a misunderstanding regarding the mailing and it was then delivered late. Please accept our apologies – the Monitor staff.

Just a reminder that our holiday party is **December 14** at Jockamos Pizza in Greenwood. Time – 5:00 p.m. RSVP Mary Hylton by Sunday, **December 7** at: liblady81@hotmail.com

This month we will vote for 2015 officer positions. There is still time to nominate any member (including yourself) for a position on the HHS board.

This will be our last issue of the Monitor for the year.

HHS HOLIDAY PARTY

The annual HHS holiday party is Sunday, December 14 at Jockamos Pizza in Greenwood. Time – 5:00 p.m. More information will be sent to you in the following weeks. Hope to see you there!

Bridgestone/Firestone donates to the HHS



Roger Carter presents a check to HHS president, Jim Horton

The HHS received a donation from *Bridgestone Americas Trust Fund*. HHS member Roger Carter applied for the donation and it came through! This donation helped to fund the Midwest Herpetological Symposium. The HHS hopes to donate a portion of the symposium proceeds to local conservation efforts. Please thank Roger for this job well done!

2014 elections/nominations

Nominations were taken at the last meeting (October) for new officer positions. There is still time to nominate someone or yourself for a position on the HHS board. Please be thinking about who you might want to nominate for the year 2015.

The following is a list of the nominees for elected offices for the year 2015

President: Jim Horton, Angela Thomas

Vice-president: Mary Hylton, Ed Ferrer, Dale Schoentrup, Rick Marrs, Pat Hammond.

Secretary: (Incumbent) - Holly Carter

Treasurer: Dave Mitchell, Roger Carter

Sergeant-at-Arms: Will Brown

Holly Carter Keeps notes on board meetings, helps out wherever possible. Active at all HHS functions. Helped to coordinate four Midwest Herpetological Symposiums.

Roger Carter Have served as president and vice-president. Will work with David Mitchell (current treasurer) to continue keeping track of clubs finances. Attend all meetings and club functions whenever possible.

Pat Hammond- I've been involved with the HHS since the mid 90's. My main interest is snakes, although I enjoy finding any and all herps in the field. I have traveled to several top destinations for field herping in the US with several members of the HHS and found some amazing animals.

I have attended all but one Midwest Herpetological Symposium since 1997. I have helped the HHS host the Midwest Symposium three times. I have participated in many HHS educational programs over the years. I have helped man the table at the reptile shows throughout the years also. I have attempted to help promote the HHS through the social media site Facebook. I have served as vice-president to the HHS in the past and I look forward to serving again.

Mary Hylton - I am privileged to be nominated for Vice-President. I have served both as a Member-at-Large on the HHS Executive Board and written articles for the Monitor. I most recently assisted with the planning and coordination of communications between the HHS and speakers/registrants for the 29th Midwest Herpetological Symposium this past October.

Although I do not have animals of my own I find the world of reptiles fascinating. Field herping excites me the most. Outings in the woods become treasure hunts because one never knows what kind of treasure could be unearthed with each step!

As a librarian I believe in providing resources that educate and inform. That's why I value the HHS's dedication to educating its members and the public about the care and conservation of all amphibians and reptiles. If elected, I plan to promote awareness by sponsoring live animal exhibits/programs at the library.

Thank you for your nomination.

Dave Mitchell - I joined the HHS in October 1996 when I moved here from Connecticut. I love all God's creatures, but especially turtles. I've had them since I was 5 years old. That's 61 years. The Midwest reptile show got me into the Worlds species. I really would like to get a lot more shows with the public. I don't remember when I started as treasurer, but it's been at least 10 years.

Ed Ferrer - I am a retired middle school science teacher and I kept a large collection of snakes in my classroom which motivated my students to learn more about nature and particularly animals. During my retirement I now takes my snakes throughout Indiana to schools, libraries, scout meetings and even birthday parties showing the true nature and value of snakes.

Previously I served as HHS president for two years and for the past several years have served as vice-president and program chair in charge of finding guest speakers for the monthly meetings. Although I like all herps my favorites are the snakes, particularly my four Burmese pythons.

Jim Horton – Have served as HHS president for 7 consecutive years. Served as vice-president two times. I've been active on the HHS Board for over 17 years. Currently serving as editor of the Monitor and have held this position since 1996. Attend and support as many HHS meetings, outings, and displays (exhibits) as possible. Have served as staff/planning for three Midwest Symposiums. I coordinate many HHS outings and functions such as zoo trips, canoe trips, and field herping. I'm a lifelong self-taught amateur herpetologist/naturalist. I'm happy to have been a member since 1989 and the HHS remains big part of my life. I hope to help the HHS remain a strong force in herpetological education and conservation in the Indianapolis community for years to come.

Fall Festival at Holiday Park Nature Center

Ed Ferrer

Hoosier Herpetological Society members provided a live herpetological exhibit as part of Holliday Park's annual "Fall Festival" on Sunday Oct. 26th. Among the activities throughout the day was a band from 1:30-3:30, crafts for the children in a classroom, a campfire for roasting marshmallows, a scavenger hunt, and refreshments. Some 1,500 people attended this event (about double of last year). Director Adam Barnes said that according to the evaluations the **HHS exhibit was a huge hit!** Visitors were able to see, touch and in some cases hold and photograph a wide variety of reptiles and amphibians. Special thanks to HHS members, Holly and Roger Carter, Ed Ferrer, Pat Hammond, Rick Marrs and Angela Thomas for bringing a great collection of herps. These events are a great way for HHS to help educate the public about these often misunderstood animals in a fun way.

KNIVES AND HERP ART (Part 35)

Photos & text by Roger Carter

This is a small pocket knife with an image of an alligator on both sides of the handle. This knife is five and seven/eighths inches long with the blade two and three/eighths long. On one side of the blade near the handle is engraved "FURY" and, on the other side of the blade is engraved "20708 CHINA". The blade is a little sharp and is probably stainless steel.



New "Bat Frog" Found in Amazon, Named for Ozzy Osbourne

Dendropsophus ozzyi males make high-pitched, batlike calls

Carrie Arnold for [National Geographic](#) Published November 8, 2014

Holy Batfrog! Scientists have discovered a new tree frog species with a shrill, batlike call in the Brazilian Amazon.

"As soon as I heard its call, I knew it was a new species. I had never heard anything like it," said [Pedro Peloso](#), one of the frog's discoverers and a postdoctoral fellow at [Museu Paraense Emílio Goeldi](#), Brazil.



Peloso and colleagues found the 0.75-inch (19.4-millimeter) amphibian in 2009 as part of a biodiversity survey of Floresta Nacional de Pau-Rosa, a protected area.

During the month-long expedition, the team found 21 specimens of the brown-and-orange creature, which has mysteriously long, delicate fingers and toes.

The male frogs also have an unusually large vocal sac, a nearly transparent piece of skin that inflates to produce its unique high-pitched chirping sound. Male tree frogs in general make loud calls to communicate with females in distant treetops, but the new species is the first known to sound like a bat.

Once the team had brought their treasure back to the lab, "we kept talking about the 'bat frog,' which led to us talking about being fans of [Ozzy Osbourne](#) and [Black Sabbath](#)," Peloso said.

At a concert in 1981, Osbourne bit the head off a bat that a fan threw on the stage, although Osbourne later said he believed it was rubber. Peloso named his bat frog *Dendropsophus ozzyi*, and it's [described November 6 in the journal *Zootaxa*](#).

Easy to Miss

During the 2009 expedition, Peloso and colleagues traveled up the Amazon by boat, sleeping in hammocks and collecting everything they could find. Peloso's collection technique was remarkably low-tech: He carried only a plastic bag, a flashlight, and a digital audio recorder to capture the sounds made by the species he collected.

This strategy paid off: He found the new frog in three different areas of the Brazilian Amazon.

Since the locations were so far apart, and travel between them difficult, Peloso believes the frog is widely distributed in the Amazon and is not in immediate danger of extinction.

Despite the fact that the frog is likely common, he's not surprised no one had found it before. "To find a species, it's a matter of being in the right place at the right time. If the conditions aren't right, it's really easy to miss them," Peloso said.

Even so, the fact that a new species was discovered in a relatively well-studied area of the Amazon further highlights the tremendous biodiversity of the area, said [José Padrial](#), an assistant curator at the Carnegie Natural History Museum in Pittsburgh who wasn't involved in the study.

"The work was very, very thorough and represents just how little we know about life in the Amazon," Padrial said.

The Streamside Salamander

By Jim Horton

2014 - Year of the Salamander

One species that seems rather confusing to some in the mole salamander world is the streamside salamander, *Ambystoma barbouri*. It looks incredibly similar to another ambystomid - the small mouth salamander, *Ambystoma texanum*. *A. barbouri* wasn't confirmed as a distinct species until 1989. The two species differ mostly in habitat and range. Other minor differences between the two are the teeth and premaxillary bones.



Streamside salamander *Ambystoma barbouri* Photo-Gregg Lipps

The slender head and short snout of this robust salamander are similar to that of the smallmouth. Coloration is light bluish, or gray to dark brown. Some are handsomely marked with speckling or lichen like markings along the sides.

Streamside salamanders are one of a few late fall to early winter breeders. In fact, gravid females may be found from late November to March. Eggs are deposited on the underside of large flat rocks or logs at the edge of the stream. Fish will prey on the larvae; therefore smaller seasonal streams are preferred. Both young and adults may be found on hill sides under rocks and logs outside the breeding season.

Food items for this species may include earthworms and other arthropods.

The genus name *Ambystoma* is derived from Greek meaning "blunt mouth". Species name, *barbouri* was named after herpetologist, Thomas Barbour.

The streamside salamanders are one of our few large salamanders that may be found for many months of the season. If you're lucky, you might just get to see one yourself.



Streamside Salamander with eggs. Photo-Google Images

Streamside salamanders inhabit small rocky streams and occur only in the extreme southeastern section of Indiana bordering the Ohio River.

Deciduous forests and rolling hills are the preferred habitat for this species. Regional range is limited to western Kentucky, Central Tennessee, and western West Virginia. Smallmouths are found almost statewide and found in flat wooded floodplains. They also have a larger range in the U.S. than *A. barbouri*.

HHS EXHIBIT AT GARFIELD PARK

Members of the HHS spent a portion of their day showcasing their animals at the Garfield Park Conservatory. The display was Saturday, November 1. A steady stream of visitors were curiously captivated by the many different species of captive herps. HHS members, Lia and Andy Hicks, Karen and Connor Davis, Roger Carter, Dale and Lori Schoentrup, Ed Ferrer, and Jim Horton had all displayed an interesting group of herps.

Thanks to the staff at Garfield Park for having us once again. We also appreciate the donation from the Friends of Garfield Park Conservatory.



Emerging disease could wipe out American, European salamanders

Source - sciencedaily.com

A fungal disease from Asia wiped out salamanders in parts of Europe and will likely reach the US through the international wildlife trade in Asian newts sold as pets, say US experts. Scientists report the fungus is lethal to many European and American newt species. It has not yet been found in North American wild amphibians.

The recently described fungus, *Batrachochytrium salamandrivorans*, has caused a crash in wild populations of fire salamanders in the Netherlands. After the fungus was discovered in Europe last year, an international team of experts tested more than 5,000 amphibians from four continents. Their results, published Oct. 31 in the journal *Science*, show the fungus probably originated in Southeast Asia 30 million years ago and reached Europe through the international trade in Asian newts, which are popular with amphibian fanciers.

Researchers have found that newts, a subgroup within the salamander family, are especially vulnerable to *B. salamandrivorans*. When two common North American species -- the Eastern red-spotted newt and the rough-skinned newt, which ranges from British Columbia to the Mexican border -- were exposed to the fungus in laboratory tests, 100% of the animals died.

The fungus, which is lethal to at least a dozen European and North American salamander and newt species, has not yet reached the Americas.

Scientists and policy makers should work together to stop this potential deadly disease from spreading around the world.

Biggest Venomous Snake Ever Revealed in New Fossils

by Stephanie Pappas, Live Science Contributor | November 06, 2014 10:35am ET

Walking the grasslands of what is now Greece 4 million years ago was a dangerous proposition: Lurking among the vegetation was the largest venomous snake ever known to man.

Laophis crotaloides measured between 10 and 13 feet (3 and 4 meters) long and weighed a whopping 57 lbs. (26 kilograms). Today's longest venomous snakes, king cobras (*Ophiophagus hannah*), can grow to be about 18 feet (5.5 m) long. But at typical weights between 15 and 20 lbs.

(6.8 to 9 kg), king cobras are scrawny compared to *Laophis*.

What makes *Laophis* even stranger was that it achieved this bulk not in the tropics, where most large reptiles live today, but in seasonal grasslands where winters were cool.

2014 HERPETOLOGICAL EVENTS

November 19, 2014 – HHS meeting, Guest Speaker – Dr. Jason Hoverman of Purdue University. Topic – ‘*Ranaviruses: Exploring Drivers of Disease Risk within Amphibian Communities*’

December 7, 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

January 18, 2015 - 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 other dates: March 1st.

HHS 2014 WRAP UP

Jim Horton

The HHS celebrated a birthday in 2014. We've been and educating organization featuring *everything herps* since 1989. Happy 25th birthday!

This year we lost a dear friend to the HHS. Last February, Amy Baird Passed away. She was a longtime member of the HHS and she will be sadly missed.

We shared some good times at our many activities including the Salamander Outing at McCormick's Creek State Park, the canoe trip, the National Amphibian Expo, the NARBC show, the Herp out, Herpetology Weekend, and our many exhibits and public displays.

We had a great lineup of guest speakers this year including, Mike Pingleton, Dr. Angela Lennox, Jim Anno, James Kiser, Carolyn Swagerle, Chris Rex, and Rod Williams.

Another good friend of the club, Erin Wagner, moved to Boston for a job opportunity. We hate to see her go but we wish Erin the best!

We cannot forget our largest event of the year – the 29th Midwest Herpetological Symposium! Thanks to everyone who helped out and attended this event!

A review of the last two meetings

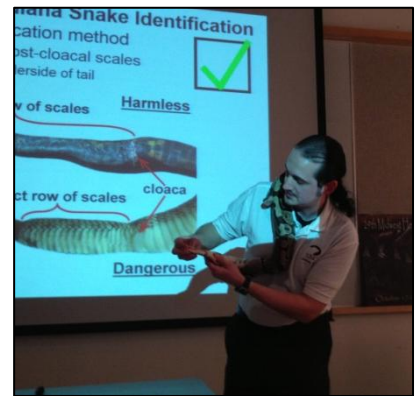
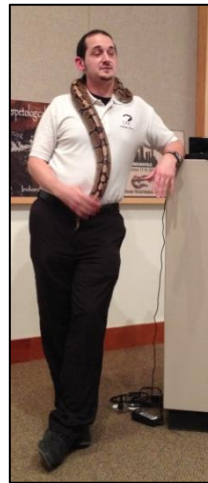
Jim Horton

September Guest Speaker – Chris Rex

Chris Rex is currently working as a naturalist at Chain O'Lakes State Park. His talk in September was titled – 'Snakes: Beyond the Scales and Dispelling their Myths' Chris wasted no time with his excellent descriptions of venomous snakes versus non-venomous snakes. He had given the usual visuals such as elliptical iris, head shape, body shape, and keeled scales but was he stern about the **only** real method of identifying a venomous snake. Venomous snakes have heat pits and a single anal plate. Non-venomous snakes do not.

His interest is in venom and its properties were evident during his talk. He noted ten drugs that are derived from snake venom and how these animals are saving human lives. His statistics of only 6 snake bite deaths per-year in the U.S. vs 16-dog, 35-lightning, and 16 from aircraft strengthened the fact that snakes are less of a danger than other everyday occurrences. Most of these bites happened to males ages 16-25 and might have involved alcohol.

Mel, his ball python is used in his educational talks. He brought Mel along to demonstrate proper handling and identified the anatomy these animals. Chris is planning to begin his PhD next year. We thank him for his presentation and wish him the best!



October guest speaker – Rod Williams (Purdue University)

Jim Horton

Rod is Professor in the Department of Forestry and Natural Resources at Purdue University. His talk, *The Hellbender, Challenges & Successes with a Giant Salamander*, was an amazing account. His work with these huge aquatic salamanders started with disappointment but had ended in success!

The Hellbender in Indiana is a state Endangered Species and in dire need of help. Current studies now are making a difference. At the start of their project, they found only old adults. This indicated that they were not breeding.



Hellbender (*Cryptobranchus alleganiensis*)

After intense work in Southern Indiana involving pit tagging and manually surveying, rearing eggs and young, DNA work, building nest boxes, introducing young, he finally had good news. Adults were breeding!

One of the most important functions of his work in southern Indiana included interaction with the public. Rod and his students have worked with locals through education. Events featuring hellbenders have brought much needed appreciation and understanding from the residents. There is even an event called *The Hellbender Hustle* that features a 5k run. They have partnered with schools, zoos and other organizations to get the word out. Check out the website - www.helpthehellbender.org or like them on facebook.

Mostly Reptiles

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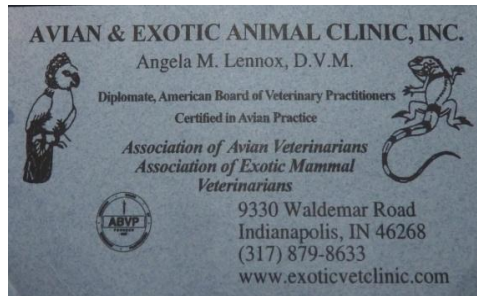
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The Hoosier Herpetological Society is a non-profit organization dedicated to the education of its membership and the conservation of all reptiles and amphibians. General monthly meetings are held on the third Wednesday of each month at 7:00 p.m. at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

Your HHS Board of Directors for 2014

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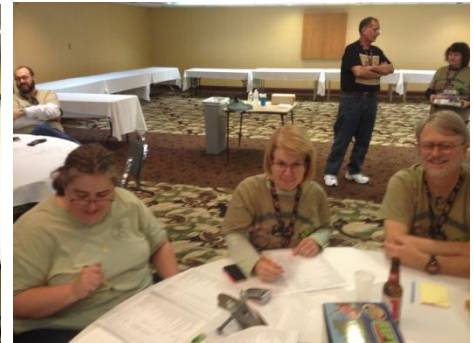
Cold weather is upon us – are you ready?

Indiana winters can get quite dangerous at times for our captive tropical and subtropical herps. If you keep more than a few herps and the power goes out in subzero temps, it may be detrimental to your herps.

Be sure to have an alternative heat/lighting source ready in such an event. Our animals depend on us and us alone.

2014 Symposium – a success!

Photos by Erin Wagner and Jim Horton



MEMBERSHIP FORM

New Member

Renewal

Name _____ Date _____

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City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____ Phone _____

Email Address _____

Individual/Family Membership \$15.00

Sustaining Membership \$25.00 or more

Herpetological Interests

If this area is checked, it is time to renew your membership

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