



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

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President's Message

Jim Horton

The new and improved HHS website is up and running. Barbara Filtri has been constantly improving it and it looks great! Take a look at the new features, colors and information. It isn't done yet. We are still working on it and it will be improving it overtime.

Thanks to D.J. and Angie Mosley for their donation of \$44.00 to the HHS! D.J. held a 50/50 drawing at the Evansville Reptile Show with the proceeds benefiting the HHS. Your efforts are very much appreciated!!!

Thanks to our members who exhibited at the Johnson County Library on Saturday, July 18.

This issue features some great herp caging advice from Mike Wood.

Due to lack of interest, our field trip to Brown County has been put on hold for a later date.

But, we have another "refreshing" trip to offer: An HHS canoe trip!

HHS Canoe trip August 22

Join your fellow HHS members for a day of herping the water for a 6-mile trip down the Driftwood River in Bartholomew County. This river is loaded with turtles and several species of snakes have been found there.

Six-Miles is a 2-3 hour trip but we should be making plenty of stops along the way in search of reptiles and amphibians.

We will meet at Blues Canoes at 9:00 A.M. The trip will depart at 10:00 A.M.

Blues Canoe Livery (812) 526-9851 Web - www.bluescanoelivery.com
It is 40 miles south of Indianapolis, and just north of the I-65 and US-31 interchange. If you are traveling I-65, take exit #76B onto US-31 north. Turn left at the Marathon service station, across from the outlet shopping mall. Follow the access road left or south 1/2 mile.

What to bring: old "water shoes," insect repellent, sunscreen, cooler w/beverages and food, binoculars, cameras, waterproof bags, ziplock bags!!!

Group Rates (6 or more canoes or kayaks = \$2.00 discount per canoe) If we can get enough members going, we can get this rate.

Please RSVP Jim Horton by phone, email or private message on the HHS website.

Call Jim Horton for questions: (317) 865-0464 or email at: stardali84@hotmail.com



Trip (miles)	Canoe	Kayak	Raft
6	\$33*	\$25	
8	\$38*	\$30	4 person - \$70
2 Day Overnight (camp at livery)	\$70*	\$55	6 person - \$90 8 person - \$110

* these prices include 2 people

Update on HR 2811 (as of 8-29-2009)

Python Bill HR 2811 Passes Committee *House Judiciary Committee amends and passes python bill.*

Source: Reptilechannel.com

The House Judiciary Committee on Wednesday amended and passed [HR 2811](#), a bill that would add [Burmese pythons](#) and [African rock pythons](#) to the Lacey Act as injurious species.

The bill, which would have added all pythons as originally written, now moves to the full House, which is not expected to act on it until September at the earliest, after its August recess.

If the bill passes into law, the Lacey Act would prohibit the import, export and interstate movement of the two python species. Reptilekeepers, including the United States Association of Reptile Keepers (USARK), and pet industry members are expected to continue to work with legislators in an effort to further amend the bill to limit its trade restrictions to the importing of the two species. This would protect the existing commercial trade of captive-bred pythons.

[Andrew Wyatt](#), President of USARK, said that representatives expressed a "renewed commitment to work with us (USARK) on future issues."

Wyatt further noted that this bill would restrict importation of these python species, but would still allow for interstate traffic and trade of captive-bred species.

The amendment, offered by Rep. Thomas Rooney (R-Fla), replaced the phrase "of the constrictor snake of the species Python genera" with the phrase "of the Burmese python of the species *Python molurus bivattatus*; of the African Rock Python of the species *Python sebae*."

A related bill, [S. 373](#), still sits in a Senate committee as originally written.

Even with the amendment, the bill would bypass the statutory listing process included in the Lacey Act, according to the Pet Industry Joint Advisory Council (PIJAC). That process requires the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to conduct a risk analysis and seek public comment before listing a species as "injurious." The Fish and Wildlife Service is currently conducting such an analysis, PIJAC reports.

PIJAC warned concerned pet owners that the legislation, if passed as written, would set a dangerous precedent of adding controversial species to the Lacey Act without hearings and sufficient study. That precedent could affect owners of other pets, including birds, fish and turtles, PIJAC reported.

Editor's note:

Although this (HR2811) has passed, it appears to be legislation that most herpetological enthusiasts can live with. Naming the two large species (Burmese and African Rock pythons) is much more tolerable than what could have happened. The proposed law would have banned seven species of python, including the ball python from interstate transport, import and export.

Still, it is crucial that we keep an eye on this and other legislation in the future. As a bill passes and becomes law, more amendments could be added in the future.

Thankfully we have organizations such as PIJAC and USARK to monitor this and other situations concerning restrictive laws. (If you can, please donate to these organizations for the work they do to keep these laws to a minimum.)

Review of July Meeting

Our Guest Speaker last month was Todd Pierson, a budding amateur herpetologist from the Indianapolis area. Todd brought us along on his trip to California earlier this year.

His talk was formatted chronologically with six days of herping with his father and friends from the west coast. In the Redwoods, he found Gilberts skinks, yellowbelly racers, alligator lizards, various skinks, and my favorite – *Ensatina* salamanders.

His stop at the coastline yielded Northern Pacific rattlesnakes, a rubber boa, red-sided garter snakes, and a quick sighting of the beautiful San Francisco Garter!

At another stop at the Redwoods, he found rough skinned newts, a horned lizard, and another favorite of mine – the Pacific giant salamander (larvae).

On their next stop, slender salamanders were common. One of Todd's favorites, from the climbing salamander family, the Speckled black salamander was a nice find.

Day four brought a member of the mole salamander family, Northwestern salamander. Many more slender sallies and Pacific giant larvae were photographed there as well.

His fifth day was a scenery photo session day for he and his dad. They found a nice Midland chorus frog just behind their hotel.

On day six, he found a gopher snake, yellow-legged frog, and *the* find of the trip. It was his friend Sam's "golden snake," the San Joaquin coachwhip. Apparently, this was a very rare find and his friend Sam couldn't quite believe that he'd been looking for years and Todd found one.

Herp of the month

If you would like to write about your favorite herp for "Herp of the Month, just send an email attachment, or even "snail mail" to Jim Horton at: stardali84@hotmail.com or HHS, P.O. box 40544, Indianapolis, IN 46204

WELCOME NEW AND RENEWED MEMBERS!

Renewals:

Thanks for your membership and continued interest in the HHS!

HHS T-shirts are in!

The new shirts feature a Kirtland's snake and our 20th Anniversary logo beside it. They are available for \$10.00 each at the general meetings and at the reptile show.

Useful Advice for herps!

I have been fortunate to have kept snakes for many years now and had very few problems. I would like to share my husbandry and other thoughts that you might find useful for your animals.

First let me say that I know the way I do things is not the only, or best way, but it has worked well for me for 40 yrs.

By having several different cage sizes and species I use paper as a substrate, like the white Springhill 66 that a print shop cuts to size for me, by using this it allows me to see any urine, defecation, or anything else that may happen in the cage, and saves time when cleaning cages.

The snakes all get fresh water 2 times per week and the water bowls are disinfected every 2 months.

If a snake defecates in the water bowl it gets cleaned and disinfected that day.

I make sure proper temperatures are where they need to be each day and keep a watchful eye on each animal that way if a problem is going on its caught early and is treatable.

If I set up at a reptile show I ask everyone considering a purchase to clean there hands with germX, 99% of the people do but the ones that don't want to....don't handle the animals, no exceptions.

When the snakes come home from a show they are quarantined for 30 days and like to use Provent-a-mite just to be safe.

I like to feed appropriate size rodents each week but will go to 10 days if I see an animal getting to fat, Its not good for snakes to be fat. A little extra weight at breeding season for females is ok, but fat animals will cause health problems most of the time.

The products I like are GermX, ARS caging, provent-a-mite, basic G disinfectant, white Springhill 66 paper.

I approach my husbandry with the old saying, " an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure" hope you have found something here you may find helpful.

Old herpers Rock :)

Mike Wood

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www.hoosierherpsociety.org

Thank you

TINY LIZARD FALLS LIKE A FEATHER

(submitted by Amy Baird)

Source – BBC

Matt Walker, Editor, Earth News

July 17, 2009



(Not one to free fall

A tiny species of lizard is so light that it falls to the ground like a feather, scientists have discovered.

Outwardly, little of the animal's body seems adapted to flying, gliding or moving through the air in any way.

But a slow-motion camera has revealed that when the lizard jumps from a height, it can slow the rate of its descent and land gently on the ground.

The lizard's surprising aerial ability might help explain how some animals became true gliders.

Details of the little lizard's talents are published in the Journal of Experimental Biology.

Controlled descent

Active flight, powered by the flapping of wings, has evolved in three living lineages of animals: birds, bats and insects. But at least 30 different types of animal have evolved the ability to control their aerial descent, by parachuting or gliding to ground. For example, gliding frogs use huge webbed feet, flying squirrels use long flaps of skin between their legs, and flying fish use their fins to glide.

Other animals have less obvious morphological adaptations. Gliding snakes flatten and undulate their bodies, which helps to slow their fall while some species of ant are so tiny they can jump out of trees and freefall gently to lower on the trunk without hurting themselves.

So Bieke Vanhooydonck of the University of Antwerp became extremely interested when she read some old scientific papers reporting anecdotal evidence that a relatively ordinary species of lizard might also be able to glide from tree to tree. *Holaspis guentheri* belongs to a group of lizards known as lacertids, which live in the Old World.

Though colourful, they do not stand out in terms of their behaviour, morphology or ecology.

"Also, compared to other gliding lizard species, it does not have any conspicuous morphological adaptations to an aerial lifestyle, ie no cutaneous flaps, webbed feet etc," says Vanhooydonck.

"It made me very curious about whether these animals were really able to 'glide' and if so, how they were accomplishing it."

Leaping platform

Vanhooydonck and colleagues in Belgium and France filmed individual lizards leaping from a platform two metres above ground.

They compared the performance of *H.guentheri* with a rock-dwelling lizard (*Podarcis muralis*) that never takes to the air, and a highly specialised leaping gecko (*Ptychozoon kuhli*) that has a range of skin flaps that it uses to parachute to the ground. For each, they examined the duration of each species' descent, the horizontal distance it covered and at what speed.

Both the rock-dwelling lizard and *H.guentheri* landed 50 centimetres from the base of the platform, while the gecko landed up to 1m away. But *H.guentheri* fell for longer, and more slowly than its rock-dwelling competitor.

"Much to our surprise, *H. guentheri* is able to slow down its descent and has low impact forces upon landing," says Vanhooydonck.

In fact, the lizard weighs just 1.5g, which is one third of the rock-dwelling lizard's weight and one-tenth of the gecko's. Once weight was factored in, the researchers found that *H.guentheri* landed 20cm further away than it should have done had it fallen like a stone.

"Also its wing loading, the ratio of mass to surface area, is extremely low and in the same range as that of the gekko."

However, the two species achieve this aerial ability in different ways. As a result of its webbed feet and body flaps, the gecko achieves a low wing loading by having a large surface area.

H. guentheri has a low wing loading too, but by being so light.

X-ray scans of the lizard's body revealed its bones are packed full of air spaces.

Although the lizard's light weight and ability to fall gently are linked, it is still unclear whether its air-filled bones are an adaptation for parachuting, or whether they evolved for another reason.

It is also unclear whether *H.guentheri* glides from tree to tree to escape predators or move about more efficiently.

"Because of [the lizards'] secretive lifestyle, it is very hard to observe them in the wild, but it seems plausible they use it as an escape response," says Vanhooydonck. And that could be just how other gliding animals took the first evolutionary steps towards an aerial lifestyle, she says.

HERP HAPPENINGS

August 30 – 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. For info: (317) 861-5550, www.midwestreptile.com

September 25-27 – Hoosier Outdoor Expo, Ft. Harrison State Park.

October 9-11, 2009 – Midwest Herpetological Symposium, hosted by the Chicago Herp Society. www.chicagoherp.org

Got Rodents?

Hoosier Mouse Supply can take your orders for rodents and they will deliver to the monthly meeting on Wednesday, the 17th. (317) 831-1219

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.**

Your HHS OFFICERS for 2009

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Suggestions, submissions and articles for *The Monitor* are welcome. Submit your typed or legibly hand written articles by the first Wednesday of each month to: PO. Box 40544, Indianapolis, IN 4620-0544 or 7712 Miracle road, Indianapolis, IN, 46237. Email articles to: stardali84@hotmail.com

Articles may be emailed or CD's are accepted. Back issues of *The Monitor* are available. Send requests to our PO. Box, or contact Holly Carter. Quarterly Advertisement Rates for publishing your ad in *The Monitor* are: ¼ Page - \$10.00; ½ Page - \$15.00; and Full Page - \$25.00. Classified Ads are free to all paid H.H.S. members and will be printed for two months. All ads must be submitted to the Editor by the first Wednesday of each month. All artwork is copyrighted and cannot be reproduced without written permission from the artist.

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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Dated Material Enclosed

Address Correction Requested

If this area is checked, its time to renew your membership!