



# 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 2

February 2014

Happy 25<sup>th</sup> HHS!

*Welcome Hoosier Herpetological Society members!*

***RENEWAL MEMBERSHIP***

Erin Wagner  
Dr. Andrea Hatcher  
Jim Horton  
John Olson (Sustaining membership)

***New***

Jet Kaiser  
Jennifer Laughlin  
James Gregory  
Josh Harrison  
Chris Walker  
Courtney & Jeremy McIntire  
(Sustaining membership)

## February Guest Speaker:

Jim Anno (Greater Cincinnati Herpetological Society)

Topic: *'Herping South Florida'*

February 19<sup>th</sup>, 7:00 PM, Holliday Park Nature Center

Jim currently resides in Batavia, Ohio (east of Cincinnati). Past VP of the Greater Cincinnati Herpetological Society (2009, 2010) and current field trip chairman. His passion is spending time in the field and photographing what is found. He has made several trips to Florida over the last 10 years. The most recent trip was with 3 other GCHS members, they drove 1,100 miles each way and spent 4 days in the field. The presentation will focus on southern Florida (from the south end of the Lake Wales Ridge to just north of the everglades), the herps encountered, and techniques that were most productive to find them.

# Photo Contest Winners



Roger Carter and Erin Wagner



Jackson Rhoads



Roger Carter, Angela Thomas, Jim Horton

Congratulations to the winners and thanks to all participants!

## Captive Category

1st Place – Roger Carter  
2nd Place – Angela Thomas  
3rd Place – Jim Horton

## Wild Category

1st Place – Roger Carter  
2nd Place – Roger Carter  
3rd Place – Erin Wagner

## Kids Category

Jackson Rhoads

## President's message

Jim Horton

The HHS will host the **Midwest Herpetological Symposium (MHS)** October 17-19. During this event, an auction is held to help raise funds for the hosting organization. The HHS is seeking herp-related items for this auction. One-of-a-kind artwork, sculptures, jewelry, clothing, etc. You can help by donating items to the MHS for this fundraiser.

I'd like to welcome our new members and thank our returning membership! I hope you enjoy our members, meetings, and outings throughout this year and years to come.

In the event of a meeting cancellation or other interruptions, please check the HHS website, Facebook page, or don't hesitate to contact me. [Stardali84@hotmail.com](mailto:Stardali84@hotmail.com)

It's tax time! One of the best ways to get much needed funds to non-game species such as reptiles and amphibians is by donating a portion of your tax return to the Indiana Non-game section of your return. Game species receive more than enough funding from Hunting and fishing licenses and other fees.

This month we have Mr. **Jim Anno** from the Greater Cincinnati Herp Society. Jim will present, *Field Herping in South Florida*. Take your mind off of this cold/icy weather with a refreshing trip to the tropics!

It is tough when you lose someone forever. This past week, we lost a wonderful person that most of you had known or had recently come to know. Amy (Magness) Baird passed away unexpectedly. This is an incredible loss for all of us. Please keep Amy, her husband Peter, and all of her family in your thoughts.

# My First Snake

by Ed Ferrer

I acquired my first snake almost by accident. As a middle school science teacher, I was always looking for ways to communicate with my students to see what motivated them. Often it is hard to get to know these students as they are going through changes and a wide range of emotions. Often we teachers jokingly referred to them as "hormones with feet". At the beginning of the year I had students fill out a general open ended questionnaire to see what type of hobbies they had or other interests or problems. I found out that one of my students, Joey, had two snakes that he really enjoyed. One evening after school I visited his apartment and he proudly showed me his two snakes. One was a California king snake and the other was a young boa constrictor. I remember that his king snake was named "Killer" which he took from the title of an early Alice Cooper album. (I also was a fan of Alice so that gave us another interest in common.) He told me how he cared for them and it was obvious that he learned all the correct requirements and had done a good job of researching his subject. Joey always made good grades in my science class but when I asked him about his other subjects he confessed that he was flunking his language arts class. After a little research I found out that his Language Arts teacher didn't like Joey, in fact she didn't particularly like boys period. We have all seen some teachers that had grown weary of their job and were just holding for a few years to reach retirement. She would pick on Joey and he would smart off to her and fail her class. I explained to him that life isn't always fair and there were going to be some people that you just had to deal with. I made a deal with Joey. I told him that if he did his work and kept his mouth shut in her class and got a "C" grade in her class that I would take him and his dad to the serpentarium in Nashville as a reward. I kept checking on him and the next grade period he got his "C" along with good grades in his other classes.

The Tuesday of spring break I took Joey and his dad to Nashville and when we got to the serpentarium it was closed! I went to the Chamber of Commerce and called the owner. I explained my reward and he agreed to meet us and give us a private tour. We had a great time and Joey was thrilled. His father was very pleased that Joey was finally having success in school. When I took them home, Joey's dad asked me if I ever had a snake in my science classroom. I told him that in the past I did have a school of red-bellied piranhas and a tarantula but had not thought of adding a snake. He told me "wait a minute" He went inside his apartment and gave me a crisp \$100.00 bill. He said, "Mr. Ferrer, get a snake for your class room".

The next couple of days I did my research into all the equipment I would need to house a snake and checked out the different species that were available. I knew the manager of the reptile section at the Greenwood Uncle Bill's pet store and she had just received a shipment of baby boa constrictors. I picked out a beautiful neonate with a great pattern and salmon or mauve coloring on its side. When my students returned from spring break they were pleasantly surprised. My snake was an instant sensation! Everyone in the school wanted to see my new addition! I named him Vincent because Alice Cooper's given name was Vincent Furnier. Joey especially thought that was "cool" because of the connection with the rock star. From then on most of the students every year wanted to be in the class with the snakes. As the years went on my students would often return to see how Vincent was doing and how much he had grown. My snakes helped my students get excited about science. I kept adding to my collection and when I retired I had 18 snakes in my room. Joey became a very good student and now is a successful owner of his own business. I joined the Hoosier Herp Society about 18 years ago. Since I have retired I brought my snake collection home and now do educational programs for schools, libraries, scouts and also birthday parties. So I am still teaching science but now I can concentrate on my favorite part of science.

## Field herping reminder

**If you field herp in Indiana, you'll need to acquire an annual fishing or hunting license through the DNR.** Indiana residents over the age of 17 may not collect amphibians or reptiles from the wild in Indiana unless they have a valid hunting or fishing license, unless otherwise exempted by law. For all collectors, there is a daily bag limit of 2 per day and a possession limit of 4 on all nongame species except endangered species and eastern box turtles for the period of April 1 through March 31 of the following year. Collection of endangered species and eastern box turtles is prohibited. No more than 4 live native reptiles or amphibians can be possessed per species with the exception of the game species, which have a limit of 50 game turtles and 50 game frogs, and those possessed under a special permit. The common snapping turtle, smooth softshell turtle, spiny softshell turtle, bullfrog and green frog are regulated as game animals with specified methods of take, bag limits and seasons. The taking of box turtles is prohibited.

### Indiana Frogs and toads Need Your Help – here's how

The **Indiana Amphibian Monitoring Program** was established in 2001 as a part of the North American Amphibian Monitoring Program (NAAMP). NAAMP is based on citizen science, where the public helps gather data to aid scientists. In this program, data is gathered on calling frogs and toads (amphibians).

NAAMP volunteers drive a pre-determined route and listen for calling frogs and toads. There are ten stops per route, and volunteers listen for five minutes at each stop. Routes are driven at least a half-hour after sunset, and should be run at least once per window. Volunteers record their data and sent it to the state coordinator. If you would like to volunteer, please email your state coordinator at [naamp@dnr.IN.gov](mailto:naamp@dnr.IN.gov)

Several routes are still open for volunteers. Get yours now! [www.pwrc.usgs.gov/naamp](http://www.pwrc.usgs.gov/naamp)

## In Memoriam

### *Amy Baird*

1969-2014

The HHS has lost one of our own.

Last week Amy Magness Baird unexpectedly passed away. This is shocking and a great loss to all of us who have known her over the years.

Amy had been an HHS member for almost two decades. She was a regular at field outings and live animal displays and most other functions.

We'll miss her perky smile and her fun personality.  
We'll miss her willingness to help out whenever needed.

We'll miss seeing her at our annual outings.

We'll miss everything about her.

We'll miss her dearly.





## ***Hundreds of dead Madagascar reptiles and amphibians discovered at airport***

By [kingsnake.com](http://kingsnake.com) Tue, February 4, 2014 From the BBC

Hundreds of dead reptiles and amphibians originating in Madagascar, some of them endangered species, were discovered at a South African airport. More than 1000 animals were in bad condition but alive, and are being treated by veterinarians at a local zoo.

Some of the animals were so tightly packed together that they were unable to move or turn around, local media report.

Many of the recovered animals were classified as endangered, vulnerable, or threatened, according to the Convention on the International Trade in Endangered Species (Cites).

Those on Cites appendix II protocol, meaning that they can be traded, but only with a special permit.

The Star newspaper reports that they did have the authorization but local animal rights groups have called for an investigating into how the consignment came to arrive in South Africa.

The NSPCA and the Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries are further investigating the matter.

"The authorities suspect that there are South African agents involved [who work as middle men] and once investigations are finalized they would be charged with animal cruelty," said Ainsley Hay, head of the NSPCA's Wildlife Unit.

The department will be contacting authorities from Madagascar to discuss what should be done with the animals, until then they will be treated in some zoos locally.

## **Winter Advisory**

With our extreme winter holding on tight, we need to be prepared for power outages. In Indiana, icy, snowy, cold weather that cause outages can happen well in to the month of March.

If you keep herps, it's a good idea to have an alternative heat source in the case of an emergency. Heat sources such as propane and kerosene heaters can be helpful but one must use these devices safely. A generator is one of the best ways to produce electrical current for heaters and lights. Hand held reusable and disposable heat packs will also work well. Keep warm!

## **KNIVES AND HERP ART (Part 30)**

Photos & text by Roger Carter



This we found at a flea market in Indianapolis, Indiana. It shows two snakes whose rear portions are wrapped around each other, almost a mating position (?), resting in the horns of a goat-like skull. The snakes are a dark brown but there is a little pattern that is visible. The front part of the snakes separate from the body and have knife blades. The entire unit is twenty-five inches long. When separated the body is ten and one quarter inches long and each of the head portions are fourteen and one-quarter inches long with the stainless steel blades six and three-quarter inches long. The edges are not sharp. This was made in China.

## Parking at Holliday Park

**7:00pm to 9:00pm** is our meeting time at **Holliday Park**.

Holliday Park entrance gates close automatically when it gets dark. **After darkness hours, drive your car up to the gates and they will open.** Also, we need to park behind the hill or knoll. Parking is allowed closer to the center on the other side of the knoll only if the vehicle has a handicap sticker. Park rangers do patrol the lot and will tow vehicles that are parked in the wrong lot.

**6363 Spring Mill Road, Indianapolis, IN**

The Monitor is printed courtesy of: **Harding Poorman**



## 2014 HERPETOLOGICAL EVENTS

**February 19, 2014** – HHS meeting, guest speaker: Jim Anno (GCHS). Topic: ‘*Herping South Florida*’  
Holliday Park Nature Center, 7:00 PM

**February 23, 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](http://www.midwestreptile.com) (future dates: April 6, June 1, Aug. 31)

**March 15&16, 2014** – North American Reptile Breeders Conference (NARBC), Tinley Park, IL. Sat 10:00AM-5:00PM, Sun 11:00AM-4:00PM Tickets - \$15.00 adults, kids under 13-\$8.00, under 5-free

**March 22, 2014** – *An Amphibian Outing*, HHS will be participating in this event. Features presentations, a *kids* amphibian triathlon, and hiking field trips to find salamanders. 2:00PM till dark, McCormick’s Creek State Park, Spencer IN.

**May 9 &10, 2014** – Herpetology Weekend, Natural Bridge State Park, KY Field trips all day Saturday. Herpetology professionals will be speaking on Friday and Saturday evening in the Woodland Center. For more information, contact Brian Gasdorf at [brian.gasdorf@ky.gov](mailto:brian.gasdorf@ky.gov) or call 1-800-325-1710.

**June 4-7, 2014** – Biology of the Pit Vipers 2 Symposium, Tulsa, OK. [biologyofthepitvipers.com](http://biologyofthepitvipers.com)

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

### ***Mostly Reptiles***

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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**

**MEMBERSHIP FORM**

**New Member**

**Renewal**

**Name** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date** \_\_\_\_\_

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**Email Address** \_\_\_\_\_

**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, it's time to renew your membership!