



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 26 Number 4

April 2015

April HHS Meeting

Wednesday April 15th 7:00 p.m.

Holliday Park Auditorium

Speakers: Jim Horton & Pat Hammond

Topic: "Arizona - Herping the Monsoon Season"

Arizona has been a "Mecca" for "herpers" for a long time. This state offers many different species of reptiles and amphibians. In fact, it is known as the "Rattlesnake Capitol of the World", having more species of rattlesnakes than any other state or area! HHS members Jim Horton and Pat Hammond spent a week herping this state and encountered a wide variety of different fauna and flora. Both are excellent field photographers and if their entries in the last photo contest is any indication, we are in for a great presentation!

Be sure to attend this terrific program!

WELCOME RETURNING MEMBERS!

Renewals

Barbar Filtri - sustaining

Eugene Holmes

Lauri Mitchell

Andrea Quigley

Robert T Foreman Sr.

Katrina Tingle

www.hoosierherpsoc.org

President's message

Jim Horton

Spring is here in its full splendor! Now is the time to get outside to see and hear the frogs calling and welcome the rest of the herps emerging from a tough winter season.

Last month, Indiana State Herpetologist, Sarabeth Klueh-Mundy had given a great presentation on the work she has done with Indiana herps (see review inside). We thank Sarabeth for her willingness to be at our meeting.

The Amphibian Outing at McCormick's Creek State Park was a great success! Thanks to everyone who helped out at this educational event!

Herpetology Weekend is April 17/18 in Slade, Kentucky. This event is in the Red River George area of Daniel Boone National Forest. It's a great event that features fun for the whole family! Field herping all day and presentations in the evening. We have a great HHS presence at this event every year. Hope to see you there!

I'll be at McCloud Nature Center in Hendrix County on Saturday, April 25, along with Angela Thomas. We're giving a presentation on amphibians. A donation will be given to the HHS for our efforts.

Our best outing of the year is coming up Saturday, June 6. The 16th Annual **Hoosier Herpout** will be at Hardin Ridge Recreation Area on Monroe Lake. This involves field herping all day, a cookout, camping, and an evening presentation at the amphitheater. More detailed information to come next month in the newsletter.

This month, Pat Hammond and myself will give our presentation of *Arizona, Herping the Monsoon Season*. This talk was to be given in February but the meeting was cancelled due to bad weather.

The HHS has a surplus of the classic (out of print) *1972 edition of Amphibians and Reptiles of Indiana* by Sherman A. Minton. You can get this field guide for only 10 bucks! Get yours now!

KNIVES AND HERP ART (Part 38)

Photos & text by Roger Carter



This is a small folding knife shaped to look like a crocodilian. The knife is four and one/eighth inches long open, two and one-half inches closed and the blade is only three sixteenths of an inch wide making this the smallest of my herp knives. There is a small thumb notch near the middle of the blade to open it and, near the crocodilians tail, on one side is etched "CHINA" and on the other side is etched "NOVELTY KNIFE CO." There are three small rivets in the croc's body holding the two halves of the body together, one just in front of the eye, one between the front and rear legs and the last one near the curve of the tail where the blade is attached. I have no idea what material any part of this is made from but I am assuming that the blade is stainless steel. The blade is sharp.

March guest speaker

By Jim Horton

Last month, Indiana's Herpetologist, Sarabeth Klueh-Mundy, gave her inaugural presentation to the HHS. This talk focused on eastern box turtles that were being affected by the I-69 interstate project. Sections of this highway plow right through some pristine forestland in southern Indiana. Unfortunately, wildlife is being compromised as a direct result of the construction (and ultimately, the completion).

Eastern Box Turtles are listed under special protection by the state. These turtles are long lived and adults reproduce only after 10 years of age. Great numbers of wandering turtles are sure to be killed by oncoming traffic on this highway after its completion.

In 2010 the Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT) and the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) teamed up to save as many as possible before the bulldozing began.

Sarabeth and other DNR employees scoured the right-of-way areas where the highway was to be constructed. In what is called section 2, they collected 50 turtles. Section 4 (a larger wooded area), about 250 were found and taken to safety. Special *turtle sniffing* dogs were utilized in locating many box turtles. The turtles were to be held while the highway was under construction.

The turtles were held in a protected area near Patoka River National Wildlife Refuge. Special large fenced enclosures were built for the turtles. This temporary housing encompassed the same habitat that is needed for them to survive. Each specimen was given an individual number for identification purposes. Numbers were created by using a dermal tool on the plastron.

Each turtle was tested for any conditions the might affect the health while in captivity. Routine exams indicated that the Rana virus had infected several turtles. Many more had this condition as the testing continued. Unfortunately, this virus had proved fatal to 2/3 of the population.

After separating those without the virus, strict protocols were followed through disinfecting anyone and anything that might come into contact with the healthy populations.

To this date, healthy temporary captive box turtles have been released (relocated) at a reclaimed coal mine. DNR has been tracking these turtles for the last year and so far they have accepted their new home.

Doing what they could was a step in the right direction in a dire situation such as the I-69 project. Let's hope that these turtles continue to thrive at the new location.

A Successful Amphibian Outing!

Jim Horton

The 3rd annual Amphibian Outing was a well attended event. It was a beautiful day for frog and salamander fans of all ages at McCormick's Creek State Park on March 21.

This day-long event boasted a kid's triathlon, PowerPoint presentations, live exhibit of Indiana amphibians, bead crafting, and hikes to creeks and ponds.

Thanks to HHS member and park naturalist, Barbara Filtri for orchestrating the event. We also thank HHS members who helped out for the day. Mary Hylton, Dale Schoentrup, Jim Horton, and Rick Marrs. The HHS was also well represented with many members and their families attending.

This outing seems to be growing every year. We look forward to next year being even bigger!

Spring NARBC Convention and Reptile Show

Tinley Park Show, Illinois

by Ed Ferrer

The NARBC Convention and Reptile Show is the "Mecca" for all "herp" hobbyists who are interested in live reptiles and amphibians and "herp" related supplies, books and other items. I always try to go and I had planned on going on Saturday Oct. 14th but I wasn't able to go that day because the snake themed birthday party was changed from that Sunday to Saturday. This birthday party was for an 18 year old student so there were more older students than normal. One of the guests was a sophomore at Center Grove High School and he brought a beautiful ball python that he called a "butter" phase. It was particularly striking because its colors were very similar to that of a copperhead, my favorite Indiana snake. As we were talking after the party he mentioned that he was going with a friend to the Tinley Park show on Sunday. I told him that I had planned to go on Saturday but didn't because of the birthday party. He then invited me to go with them on Sunday so I was able to attend after all.

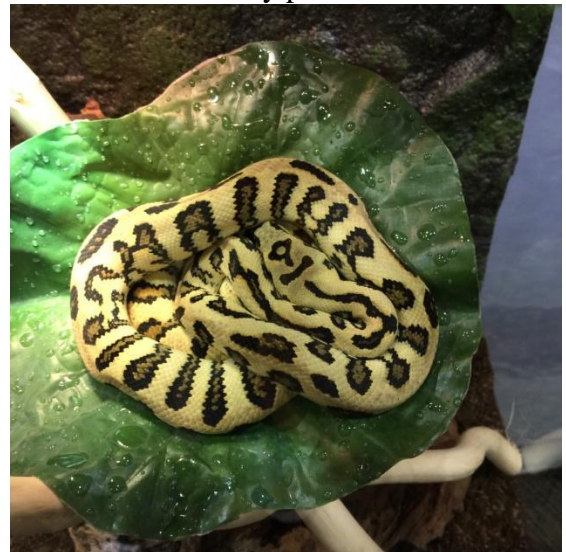
Tinley Park is located on the south suburb of Chicago so it was an easy 3 hour drive from Indianapolis, not having to navigate through the whole bunch of highways and entrances going through the city of Chicago. I found out that the two "herpers" had purchased VIP passes (for \$50.00 instead of the normal fee of \$15.00) that allowed them to enter the show an hour early to avoid the waiting and rush of the normal opening. I decided to do the same. (Hey it is only money!) I found that the two students were very knowledgeable about their hobby and it made for great conversation on the trip there and back. I made a thorough search of all the booths and then decided which ones I wanted to return to make a few deals if possible. "After all the countless booths containing gecko and ball python morphs there was a good variety of carpet pythons, green tree pythons and reticulated pythons for sale. I was somewhat surprised to see a few Burmese pythons offered since they are currently on the list of "injurious" species in the ridiculous Lacey Act that made it illegal to ship across state lines.

There was one large yellow and white albino Burmese python in a tube marked "Make Offer". I asked about it and was told that it was offered as a

silent auction and the current high bid was \$575.00! I bought a "SnakeBytes" t-shirt featuring a spread hooded cobra around a large egg in silver, black and blue colors. (I seem to always buy a souvenir shirt whenever I go to one of the big shows.)



I then found a beautiful desert king snake that had a glistening black background with a contrasting bright yellow chain link pattern. I asked to handle it to see if it would be a good candidate to use in my educational snake programs. As I was carefully handling it while I was talking to the owner it struck me! He then mentioned that that snake wasn't really good to handle so I decided to pass on that snake. I then saw an adult Sinaloan milk snake, a species that I always use in my shows, and I thought it would be a good idea to have another in my collection to allow some rest and to insure that I would always have a brightly colored one for my shows. (When they go through their opaque stage during their shed the bright red turns to a light mauve color, not nearly as striking as the crimson red!) After negotiating a slightly lower price, I made my purchase.



I also visited the ECO booth and decided to buy the new updated copy of Rattlesnakes of the United States and Canada by Manny Rubio. (I have always

been fascinated by rattlesnakes which I consider one of the most intelligent and highly evolved of all snake species of the world.) Another option this show has are experienced speakers discussing various topics of interests. I attended the program on "Crocodilians 101" presented by Tom Crutchfield as he discussed his many experiences breeding and raising numerous species of crocodiles and alligators.

Even though this show was the largest show in the Midwest area, it was not as large as the NARBC show in October. For any reptile hobbyist I would highly recommend putting this October 10-11th weekend on your calendar!



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You can now join or renew your membership at the click of a mouse.
www.hoosierherpsoc.org

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Colorful New 'Dwarf Dragons' Found in South America

The newfound wood lizards live in Ecuador and Peru—and chances are, there are more yet to be discovered, scientists say.

Due to political unrest in Ecuador, it took nearly a decade for scientists to identify the reptiles, which are commonly called wood lizards. They are the Alto Tambo wood lizard (*Enyalioides altotambo*), rough-scaled wood lizard (*E. anisolepis*), and Rothschild's wood lizard (*E. sophiarothschildae*).

Wood lizards—which resemble miniature versions of mythical dragons—are among the largest and most colorful lizards in South American forests, making their discovery even more notable, according to scientists.

The study, published April 6 in the journal *ZooKeys*, brings the total number of wood lizard species to 15. That's nearly twice the number of species known in 2006—giving this group of South American reptiles one of the fastest discovery rates of the past decade.

"I am a very lucky guy," said study leader Omar Torres-Carvajal, curator of reptiles at the Museo de

Zoología QCAZ at the Catholic University of Ecuador in Quito. A prolific discoverer of wood lizards, Torres-Carvajal is also a research collaborator with the Smithsonian Institute's National Museum of Natural History.

"As I became more expert in the group, it became easier for me to suspect that something's weird or new."

Lizard of a Different Color



This new species, *Enyalioides altotambo*, is named for the village in Ecuador where it was discovered in 2005.

Scientists spotted the first new species, *E. altotambo*, in November 2005 in the northern Ecuadoran village of Alto Tambo (map). Bright green and black with smooth scales along most of

its nearly five-inch-long (13-centimeter) body, the animal looked just like a related species, *E. oshaughnessyi*, which has been known since 1881.

But when the team brought the reptile to their lab at the Museo de Zoología, they noticed one major difference: This new lizard had brown eyes, with golden rings around the pupils. *E. oshaughnessyi* has bright red eyes.

They also noted that the scales of the Alto Tambo are smoother than those of *E. oshaughnessyi*.

One specimen is hardly enough to confirm a discovery, so they decided to wait until they found another specimen. That took five years, because the lizards come from a region of Ecuador that isn't considered safe for scientists to conduct field research.

"These guys are usually more abundant. The reason we didn't find more is that we didn't actually look," Torres-Carvajal explained. "We just were too scared to go and look for more."

"This Is Something New"

Then in 2014, field researchers working along the border of Ecuador and Peru found a large group of wood lizards with distinctly white throats.

The lizards also had spiked scales and dark spots scattered all over their bodies, in combinations that differ from those in related species.

"I'm looking at them saying, 'This is something new, because it has a combination of traits that I've never seen before.' It was almost immediate—immediate and very exciting," he said of their identification.

Taxonomist Pablo Venegas, who consults with the Ecuadoran museum but is based at the Center for Ornithology and Biodiversity in Lima, Peru, recognized the white throat scales from wood lizards he had first seen in northern Peru in 2003 and again in 2008.

DNA testing proved the 2003, 2008, and 2014 specimens belonged to the same species, which was dubbed *E. anisolepis*. As they continued examining other lizards Venegas had collected, the international team recognized a third new species, *E. sophiarothschildae*.

This reptile also has a white throat, as well as a splash of black and turquoise scales.

That's not the end of the story. Torres-Carvajal predicts that in southern Ecuador and northern Peru, many more mini-dragons are waiting in the wings.

2015 HERPETOLOGICAL EVENTS

May 3, 2015 - Indiana Reptile Expo in Noblesville, IN on the first Sunday of each month from 10 AM to 4 PM at the Hamilton County Exhibition Center & 4-H Grounds.

April 17-18, 2015 – Herpetology Weekend, (Red River Gorge), Slade, KY. Herpetology presentations (fri/sat day/nights), field trips all day Saturday.

May 3, 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: June 28, August 30, October 18

June 6, 2015 – 15th Annual Hoosier Herpout, Hardin Ridge Recreation Area, Lake Monroe, Bloomington, IN A weekend of field herping, camping, and a cookout. Free to all HHS members.

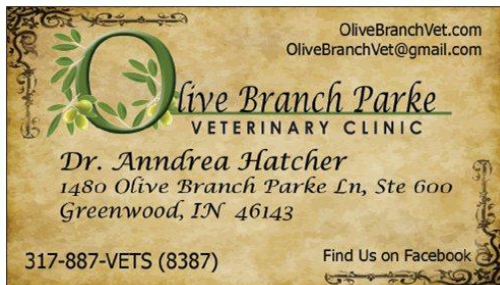
HHS DONATES TO U.S.A.R.K.

In continued efforts for our rights to keep those fascinating reptilians, the HHS has donated \$300 to the United States Association of Reptile Keepers (USARK)

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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 Meetings.**



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