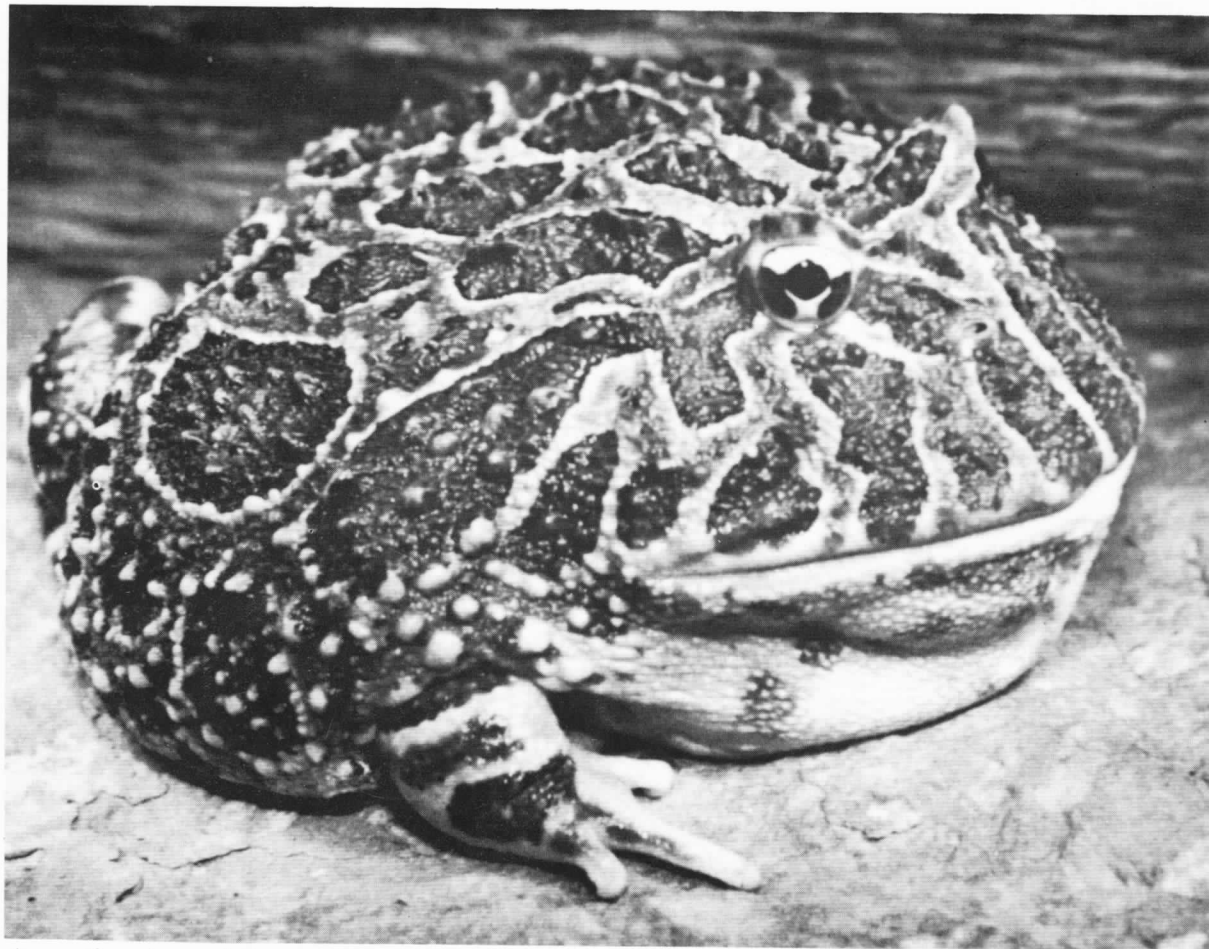


**BULLETIN**  
of the  
**Chicago Herpetological Society**



Volume 27, Number 1  
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Argentine horned frog, *Ceratophrys ornata*. Photograph by Michael Redmer.

# BULLETIN OF THE CHICAGO HERPETOLOGICAL SOCIETY

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## Reptiles in Association with Illicit Drugs

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### Abstract

After responding to several requests from Colorado police to identify and remove venomous and nonvenomous snakes that had been encountered in drug raids, we became curious if herpetologists elsewhere have had similar experiences. Also, we wanted to understand the role played by reptiles in drug dealerships. Accordingly we published a survey in several periodicals, and the information we obtained is here summarized and interpreted. An association between reptiles and illicit drugs is a common observation in the United States and elsewhere. Sometimes the reptiles, usually formidable snakes, are merely pets. But, there are at least three kinds of activity (not mutually exclusive) in which reptiles are used for nefarious purposes: (1) transportation of drugs, (2) guarding of drugs or money (this is a broad category with several subdivisions), and (3) raising the profit margin of smuggling operations (i.e., reptiles and other exotic animals have become additional valuable items that well-organized smugglers can transport and sell as a sideline to their usual commodities).

We have had three occasions to identify and take charge of snakes that were encountered by police as drug dealerships were raided. One of these events took place in Boulder about 15 years ago, and the other two occurred in Denver during the last two years. In none of these cases did we actually visit the place where the snakes were found. Rather, the animals were transported to an animal shelter and we were asked by shelter personnel to identify and remove the snakes. Hence, we cannot be certain about the role played by the snakes at the drug dealership. From numerous sources, however, we have heard that the snakes were used to guard drugs and money. Presumably, both materials were at times placed into cages to discourage theft. While this explanation is reasonable, it ignores the fact that in the Boulder case some snakes were not confined to cages, but were loose in the building. Here it seemed reasonable to hypothesize that the snakes were intended to occupy the police for a period of time, perhaps to allow the drug dealers to escape or to destroy (or remove) evidence.

Since we wondered if herpetologists elsewhere in the country have had similar experiences, we published the following questionnaire (see Table 1) in several periodicals (*Newsletter of the Animal Behavior Society*, *Notes from NOAA* and *Animal Behavior Consultant Newsletter*). Fifteen written responses and two phone responses were received, and we here summarize the results.

### Taxonomic summary

A wide variety of reptiles have been found in association with illegal drugs. In the following list of generic names we include only those responses in which we have reasonable confidence that correct identifications were made by zoo or academic herpetologists. Because we promised anonymity to our respondents (see Table 1), their names will not be included in this report. The genera of reptiles found in association with illicit drugs were: *Bitis*, *Caiman*, *Crotalus*, *Dendroaspis*,

*Dispholidus*, *Naja*, *Notechis*, *Oxybelis*, *Oxyuranus*, *Pseudechis*, *Pseudonaja*, *Python*, *Thelotomis*, *Trimeresurus* and *Tropidechis*. [The common names of these animals are: Gaboon viper, caiman, rattlesnake (at least six species), mamba, boomslang, cobra (at least two species), tiger snake, vine snake, taipan, red-bellied black snake, brown snake, python, bird snake, green tree viper and rough-scaled snake, respectively.] All of these animals are venomous, except for *Python* and *Caiman*, but each of these can be quite dangerous for other reasons.

It is not possible to specify the exact number of reptiles involved because some of our respondents were unable to provide this information. However, a reasonable estimate would be that at least 200 snakes were included in the 17 reports we received.

### Geographic summary

Our respondents represent the following states: California (Carpinteria, Los Angeles, Oxnard), Colorado (Boulder, Denver), Iowa (Des Moines), Pennsylvania (Philadelphia), Minnesota (St. Paul), Missouri (St. Louis) and Texas (Dallas). We also had responses from Australia (Victoria, South Australia, Queensland, New South Wales). Most of the respondents reported specific details about reptiles (e.g. genera, species, numbers of individuals). We also had responses that provided no information other than "dangerous reptiles were associated with drugs". Including these would extend our list to Florida, New York and New Jersey.

### Deployment of reptiles by drug dealers

There is good reason to believe that some reptiles discovered during drug raids were simply pets, and that the animals were not kept with nefarious intentions. Among these cases we include a report from Iowa in which a Burmese python in good condition was kept in a proper cage that contained no drugs, paraphernalia, or money. Further, the arrested owner

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## SNAKES GUARDING ILLEGAL SUBSTANCES: A REQUEST FOR INFORMATION FROM THE HERPETOLOGICAL COMMUNITY

On Friday, 9 March 1990, we responded to a request from the Department of Environmental Health (Denver, CO) to identify and remove two snakes that had been confiscated during a police raid on a "crack house". The snakes turned out to be a western diamondback rattlesnake (*Crotalus atrox*) and an Asiatic pit viper (*Trimeresurus* sp.), respectively. Although we cannot be certain what role these animals played at the "crack house," it is suspected that they may have been used as temporary guards of drug packets placed into their cages. This is the second time in our experience that snakes have been taken during police raids on Colorado drug dealerships; the first incident occurred about a decade ago and involved a mixture of venomous and nonvenomous species.\*

We wonder if colleagues around the country have had similar encounters or are aware of similar incidents. Accordingly, we invite correspondence on this subject. In particular, we would much appreciate receiving the following information.

1. In what city and state did the incident(s) occur?
2. Were local police involved (or state police or federal agents)?
3. Approximate date(s) — i.e., month, year — of the incident(s)?
4. What species were involved?
5. How were the snakes or other herps used by the persons from whom they were confiscated (insofar as this is known)?
6. What illegal substance(s) or activities were involved?
7. Were the arresting officers able to identify the animals correctly (at least as to venomous vs. nonvenomous status)?
8. Were the officers or others endangered by the presence of the animals?
9. Did officers remove the animals or did they seek help from others?
10. Were the animals in good condition at the time of confiscation?
11. Did the owners evince any interest in the fate of their animals?
12. What was the fate of the animals?

We would appreciate a response even if you cannot answer all of these questions. Naturally, we will also appreciate whatever additional comments you can provide on incidents in your experience. We will treat your response as confidential in the sense that your name will not be used in eventual summaries of this information. Finally we will provide all respondents with a summary of the findings.

\*Note: Between the time this questionnaire was prepared and the present writing, a third case occurred in Colorado, involving another *C. atrox*.

Figure 1.

expressed interest in the animal and hoped that it would be properly looked after. At least one of the reports from California falls into this same category. We should, perhaps, consider the symbolic role of pet snakes in underworld locations, not only as ominous confirmation of the flaunting of the values of straight society, but also because potentially irascible customers might be intimidated by an ophidian ambience perceived to be dangerous, mysterious and Mephistophelian. Such psychological possibilities, though interesting, are difficult to quantify, and no more will be said about them.

There are at least three unquestionably nefarious uses to which reptiles have been put in the drug industry. The terms "carrying", "guarding" and "backloading" have been used to describe these activities which, incidentally, are not mutually exclusive categories. We will describe each in turn.

*Carrying* refers to the use of animals (including humans) to transport concealed drugs through some inspection barrier. Large reptiles have been forced packages containing drugs. Upon successful importation of the reptile, the animal is sacrificed and the drugs recovered, presumably for sale. Although none of our respondents described such events, several cases of this sort were widely publicized in years past. Although we have no way to assess the number of animals

used for this purpose, we suppose that the number is relatively small and that the Endangered Species Act and related legislation has effectively reduced or eliminated this technique.

*Guarding* functions of reptiles have unquestionably been documented by our respondents. Consider this case from New South Wales.... "A fellow grew large quantities of Indian hemp (marijuana, an illegal drug in this country) in an indoor enclosure. The man also had a number of large aggressive eastern brown snakes (*Pseudonaja textilis*) in the same enclosure. The presence of the snakes was supposedly to deter thieves or raiding police from entering his enclosure and taking his drugs." After describing this case, our Australian respondent expressed some doubt about the authenticity of some details of this story, but there is no doubt that some people have deployed dangerous snakes in this way in the United States. Of course, we cannot address the question of how effective snakes or caimans might be as deterrents to thieves or to police. The issue here is simply that a number of drug dealers have used this technique; consequently, drug enforcement officers (and animal control personnel) must expect to encounter such animals on occasion. Related to the presence in drug dealerships of dangerous caged reptiles, are

reports of similar animals loose on the premises. A case in Texas illustrates this. A Gaboon viper (0.8–1.0 m long) was apparently liberated from its cage when drug dealers learned that the police were enroute. This formidable animal commanded the attention of police officers (who summoned animal control personnel, who eventually enlisted the aid of zoo personnel). It is not known whether this interfered with an arrest; but it seems evident in this and similar cases that the dealers' intention was to slow down the authorities, thus providing time for exculpatory behaviors.

Cases of this sort are usually sensationalized by the press, and we have a number of clippings of this type. For example, from Philadelphia comes this Associated Press report: "A narcotics officer found a 10-foot python wrapped around crack vials and glassine bags under a mattress during a house raid Thursday night (November 7, 1991). 'The way he was screaming, I thought he'd found a mother lode of coke,' said police Lt. John Gallo of officer Jimmy Coolen. 'But then, I see this huge snake slithering out from under the mattress, flicking its tongue, heading toward us,' Gallo said." (This report was on the AP national wire, and our clipping came from the Athens Daily News, Athens, Georgia). Another case from Denver, not previously reported, involved a Burmese python that was horribly mistreated specifically to increase its aggressiveness. The animal had been cut repeatedly, and had become quite aggressive. Nevertheless, as in the Philadelphia case, the animal was captured and placed in a local shelter.

Although some of our respondents indicated that dangerous situations were created, especially by loose venomous snakes, in no case known to us was anyone envenomated or otherwise injured. Accordingly, we conclude that formidable reptiles might slow down police activities and might thwart ophiophobic thieves, but these reptiles are by no means a fail-safe deterrent to police. If any use of snakes as guards is likely to be at least occasionally effective, it probably is the technique reported from Australia and California where drugs, paraphernalia and/or money were carefully hidden in a well-appointed, naturalistic cage containing one or more dangerous snakes. Here the idea is simply to discourage a search of the cage, with contraband being completely out of view. Our guess is that drug enforcement officers by now have become alert to this technique, and are prepared to deal with it. (This opinion has been seconded by narcotics detectives from Boulder and Denver who pointed out, incidentally, that aggressive dogs are far more frequently encountered during drug raids than are reptiles.)

*Backloading* is, without question, the most problematic involvement of reptiles and other exotic animals with the drug industry. Backloading is a truckers' term, referring to the fact that drivers prefer to return to home base with a load, so that both legs of their trip are profitable. A smuggler that brings a load of drugs into Australia, often prefers to make the return trip equally profitable. One way to accomplish this is to backload relatively small but rare animals that will fetch high prices in the U.S., Europe or elsewhere. Australian birds and reptiles are smuggled in this manner, and this illegal activity has been estimated to be worth up to \$80 million a year. Animal backloading is well known to Australian wildlife

officials who point out that it is connected not only to the drug trade, but also to trafficking in stolen art, antiques, and gems, and to the pornography industry (see the Melbourne newspaper, *The AGE*, April, 1990). We were unable to acquire further information about animal backloading from Australia, but it is clear that many hundreds, perhaps thousands, of birds and reptiles have been involved. We do not have clear documentation, but we suspect that similar backloadings arise from South Africa and probably from other places. Our suspicions are based on several reports in which police asked zoo or academic herpetologists to inspect confiscated animal shipments to ascertain whether or not drugs were present. Here is a case in point from Missouri. "In the spring of 1989, we were contacted by the local customs officials. They had confiscated two boxes from an individual who had arrived in St. Louis on an overseas flight. The individual was wanted on drug charges in Texas. He told the customs personnel that the boxes contained venomous snakes from South Africa. They requested that we check the boxes and verify that herps were the only things in the boxes. We carefully checked each sack and wound up with over 80 individual snakes, mostly poisonous species of *Bitis*, *Naja*, *Dendroaspis*, *Thelotornis* and *Dispholidus*. There were no drugs with the snakes, and most of the snakes were babies... not the size one would use to hide drugs in."

One of the authors (DC) has been phoned several times by an unsavory chap who was once arrested in Colorado with drugs and rattlesnakes in his possession. This person is now offering South African reptiles for sale, apparently out of an apartment in South Florida. Although DC cannot prove that this person has done anything illegal, it is easy to imagine that there is some connection between backloading, South Africa, and quasilegal shipments of reptiles.

## Conclusion

Clearly, exotic animals have been involved with drug and other illegal "industries". Sometimes the animals turn out merely to be pets of people who happen also to be felons. In other cases the animals have been explicitly deployed as carriers or as guards ("mantraps" is an Australian term that seems apt in some circumstances). The most insidious aspect of our findings, however, are those associated with backloading. Smuggling of endangered or nonendangered animals is ugly business, but connecting it with organized crime (as is evident in Australia and as may be developing elsewhere) provides a frightening set of resources to an "industry" that will probably increase its horrible efficiency. We can only conjecture at the cost to the world's herpetofauna and avi-fauna, and we urge the press to explore and report these matters because it is vital that the American public become aware of this devastation.

## Acknowledgements

We thank the societies that published our survey, and we thank each of our respondents. Although we would like to name these people from around the world who took the time to provide information, it was a condition of our survey to treat all responses as confidential. So we shall. Furthermore, it must be pointed out that we have made inferences based on

data provided by respondents, particularly in the case of South African reptiles. Our respondents provided facts. If our inferences are incorrect, that is certainly not the fault of the respondents. The famous case of "the rattlesnake in the mailbox" (People of the State of California v. Synanon, C. E. Dederich, L. Kenton & J. Musico, Los Angeles County Super-

rior Court, 1980) came up in our responses. We have elected not to include a reference to it in the text because this case of conspiracy and use of a rattlesnake as a deadly weapon, though still fascinating, is unique and defies categorization. Finally, we thank a former student, KMS, who responded to the Boulder case described in the text.

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## Notes on Mexican Herpetofauna I: *Senticolis triaspis* and *Trimorphodon tau*

David Lazcano<sup>1</sup>, Alan Kardon<sup>2</sup> and Karl Peterson<sup>3</sup>

The green ratsnake *Senticolis triaspis* has not been recorded from the Mexican state of Nuevo Leon (E. Liner, personal communication). We collected one alive-on-road (AOR) specimen and two dead-on-road (DOR) specimens in Santa Elena Canyon, on Federal Highway 58, in the municipalities of Galeana and Iturbide. The three specimens are in the preserved collection of the Museo de Historia Natural, Universidad Autonoma de Nuevo Leon (UANL). Localities are as follows: UANL #3914 male, collected DOR 2000 h 15 September 1990, 1 km west of Iturbide in Iturbide municipality, at 1390 meters; UANL #3916 male, collected DOR 2024 h 15 September 1990, 5 km east of Iturbide in Galeana municipality, at 1630 meters; and UANL #3919 male, collected AOR ca. 2100 h 22 August 1989, ca. 20 km west to Iturbide in Iturbide municipality. We observed one live specimen on the highway in Iturbide municipality at 1030 h on 17 September 1990, but we were unable to capture it. No elevation data were recorded for the latter two specimens. Mid-dorsal, ventral, and subcaudal counts were within those recorded for *S. triaspis* in Dowling and Fries (1987). Specimen UANL #3914 was 79.4 cm snout-vent length (SVL), 106 cm total length (TL); UANL #3916 was 66.2 cm SVL, 86.8 cm TL; and UANL #3919 was 79.2 cm SVL, 104 cm TL. The specimen we could not capture was ca. 100 cm long TL.

There is one recorded account for the Mexican lyre snake *Trimorphodon tau tau* in Nuevo Leon (Blody et al., 1987). We collected two DOR specimens in Santa Elena Canyon, on

Federal Highway 58, in the municipality of Galeana. (Although not stated, the specimens Blody et al. (1987) reported on were collected on the same highway in the same general area.) Localities are as follows: UANL #3917 female, collected DOR 2026 h 15 September 1990 near the 53 km marker; and UANL #3918 male, collected DOR 2145 h 15 September 1990 near the 47 km marker. Exact elevation data for these two specimens are not available; however UANL #3917 was ca. 1700 meters and UANL #3918 was ca. 1400 meters. UANL #3917 was 56.2 cm SVL, 66.6 cm TL; UANL #3918 was 39.8 cm SVL, 47.9 cm TL. Mid-dorsal, ventral, and subcaudal counts for these specimens, as well as UTACV-R 16145 in Blody et al. (1987), were within those reported for *T. tau tau* in McDiarmid and Scott (1970), with one exception. There is a north-south cline in ventral-subcaudal counts in the populations discussed in McDiarmid and Scott (1970), with northern counts higher than southern counts. The ventral-subcaudal count for UANL does not reflect the north-south cline seen within the closest population (population C) in McDiarmid and Scott (1970). This specimen's ventral-subcaudal count of 275 matches those of the southernmost specimens from population C from San Luis Potosi and Hildalgo.

### Acknowledgements

We thank Dwight Lawson, University of Texas at Arlington, for providing data on UTACV-R 16145.

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## Anuran Choruses and Species Numbers

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The phenomenon of anuran choruses has been the subject of popular and scientific writers alike. Such choruses vary in intensity of volume, that factor relative to the numbers of individuals and/or species involved. The loudest chorus I recall was one involving massive numbers of *Pterohyla dentata* 5.4 mi SE Tequila, Jalisco, Mexico, on 12 July 1972. The grating nasal quacks of frogs were so loud that my daughter Marilee and I could scarcely hear one another at shouting pitch although we were standing next to each other.

Numbers of species contributing to a given anuran chorus vary enormously. Parameters involved include 1) number of species present in the area, 2) calling stations preferred, 3) season of breeding, 4) breeding site selection, and 5) climatic conditions during the mating season. In view of the number of species inhabiting tropical habitats, the potential is for greater numbers of species making up a chorus than would be present in temperate localities. But such does not turn out to be the case, according to my observations.

One probable reason for the less than phenomenal increase in numbers of breeding species at one site in tropical locations is isolated breeding site selection of many species. Arboreal breeders such as *Centrolenella*, *Tomodactylus*, and many hylids, and isolated terrestrial choristers such as *Syrhopus* and certain *Eleutherodactylus* account for several of these.

Nevertheless, for sheer numbers it is difficult to find a list of more than four species in any breeding, singing aggregation. Choruses of three or four species are commonplace. Congresses made up of five or six species are unusual. I have no record of any assemblage of more than six species, and even six seems to be scarce. On 20 May 1965 I listed seven species singing around Government Ditch, Caddo lake, Texas, but there is uncertainty whether they were all at one location. On 22 May 1966 the same question obtains concerning a list of six species at Bouton Lake, Angelina National Forest, Texas. In many other cases, however, there was a list made wherein many species were among the chorus.

Numbers of species of choristers at a given breeding site have been found to be as high in central and southern Minnesota and northern Illinois as in tropical locations I have sampled (Table 1). Thus, there appear to be factors operating which bring about a limitation of numbers of species in a given chorus. It is suggested here that some such factors are: 1) differential development requirements for eggs and tadpoles of different species, 2) differential food requirements for tadpoles of different species correspondent with food-web changes in the community as the season progresses, 3) predation pressures which vary with season and species, and 4) possibly crowding and/or confusion.

Table 1. Localities and numbers of species of anurans in chorus at each locality.

Date	Location	Species
5/1/52	3 mi W Perryville, Winnebago County, Illinois — choruses in large pasture pond	<i>Bufo americanus</i> <i>Acris crepitans</i> <i>Pseudacris triseriata</i> <i>Hyla versicolor</i> <i>Rana pipiens</i> <i>Rana clamitans</i>
7/18/81	2.7 mi W Concordia, Sinaloa, Mexico — open pond with rather shallow end; much overhanging brush	<i>Pachymedusa dacnicolor</i> <i>Rana bertlandieri</i> <i>Bufo mazatlanensis</i> <i>Microhyla usta</i> <i>Hyla smithi</i> <i>Smilisca baudini</i>
6/14/80	2.3 mi NE Hokah, Houston County, Minnesota	<i>Acris crepitans</i> <i>Rana clamitans</i> <i>Hyla versicolor</i> <i>Pseudacris triseriata</i> <i>Bufo americanus</i>
7/26/72	18.1 mi N Cardel, Veracruz, Mexico	<i>Rhinophrynus dorsalis</i> <i>Rana bertlandieri</i> <i>Smilisca baudini</i> <i>Bufo valliceps</i> <i>Physalaemus pustulosus</i>
7/8/79	12.2 mi E Xpujil, Quintana Roo, Mexico	<i>Rhinophrynus dorsalis</i> <i>Phrynohyas venulosa</i> <i>Smilisca baudini</i> <i>Bufo valliceps</i> Microhylid sp.
6/30/80	Palenque, Chiapas, Mexico	<i>Leptodactylus melanotus</i> <i>Leptodactylus labialis</i> <i>Smilisca baudini</i> <i>Bufo valliceps</i> <i>Hyla microcephala</i>

tion pressures which vary with season and species, and 4) possibly crowding and/or confusion.

Other attendant factors relative to utilization of a given breeding site in anurans are simple available space, metamorphic period required, and suitable nutrition for larval development. Such factors as trophic spectra among tadpoles of given species, effects of competition for food sources in developmental sites, and potential effects of prolonged metamorphosis, for instance, continue to be rich areas for research.

\* Send requests to: The Organization for Tropical Research, MSA Laboratories, Rte. 2, Box 332, Stanchfield, MN 55080, U.S.A.

## The Mouthparts of the Tadpole of *Rana neovolcanica* (Amphibia: Anura)

Catherine P. Ortega<sup>1</sup>, H. William Peterson<sup>2</sup> and Hobart M. Smith<sup>1</sup>

### Abstract

The mouthparts are figured and some features of the body and tail of the Gosner stage 39 of the tadpole of *Rana neovolcanica* are described.

Many herpetologists have tended to neglect tadpoles, not only because they are difficult to identify, but also because they pass through many different stages in the development from egg to adult form (Conant and Collins, 1991). Tadpoles are identified partly by number and position of the spiracles and position of the vent but mostly by the mouthparts (Smith, 1978).

Several small tadpoles of *Rana neovolcanica* at Gosner stage 25 were collected by HWP on 4 November 1990 in a small stream on the Chapala Country Club grounds in Chapala, Jalisco, México. The water had a pH of 8.2 and the temperature was 28°C (83°F) at 1000 h. Adults of the species were also caught and identified but no other amphibian or reptile forms were observed in the area. One tadpole was kept alive to attain full maturation of the mouthparts until 28 January 1991, when it was preserved in 10% formalin. That specimen is now in the University of Colorado Museum (no. 56300).

The original description of *Rana neovolcanica* Hillis and Frost (1985: 2-5, figs. 1-2) includes a brief description and lateral view of a Gosner stage 35 tadpole. We here supplement that account with a few other notes on and a drawing of

the mouthparts of a Gosner stage 39 tadpole of the same species.

The tadpole's mouthparts, as perceived and depicted by CPO, are illustrated in Figure 1. Its labial tooth-row formula (anterior/posterior) is 2(2)/3(1), calculated using the method of Altig (1970: 182). Comparable illustrations for other members of the *Rana pipiens* complex, to which *R. neovolcanica* belongs, are woefully deficient. (The affinities of the species may be indicated by name-form "*Rana* (superspecies *pipiens*) *neovolcanica*", a designation suitable under the 1985 Code, Art. 6B examples, for members of what is commonly referred to as the *Rana pipiens* complex; all species of that group are essentially allopatric, although marginal sympatry occurs in some members.) There is no certainty, however, that discriminatively useful characters exist among the mouthparts in the *pipiens* superspecies, although a significant difference in number of denticle rows was found by Korky (1978: 458) in comparing juxtaposed populations of *R. pipiens* and *R. blairi*. Altig and Johnston (1986: 37, 39) could cite no difference in the mouthparts of the tadpoles of *R. bertandieri*, *R. blairi*, *R. sphenoccephala* and *R. yavapiensis* (sic, = *R. yavapaiensis*), all members of the *pipiens* superspecies. Nevertheless, the

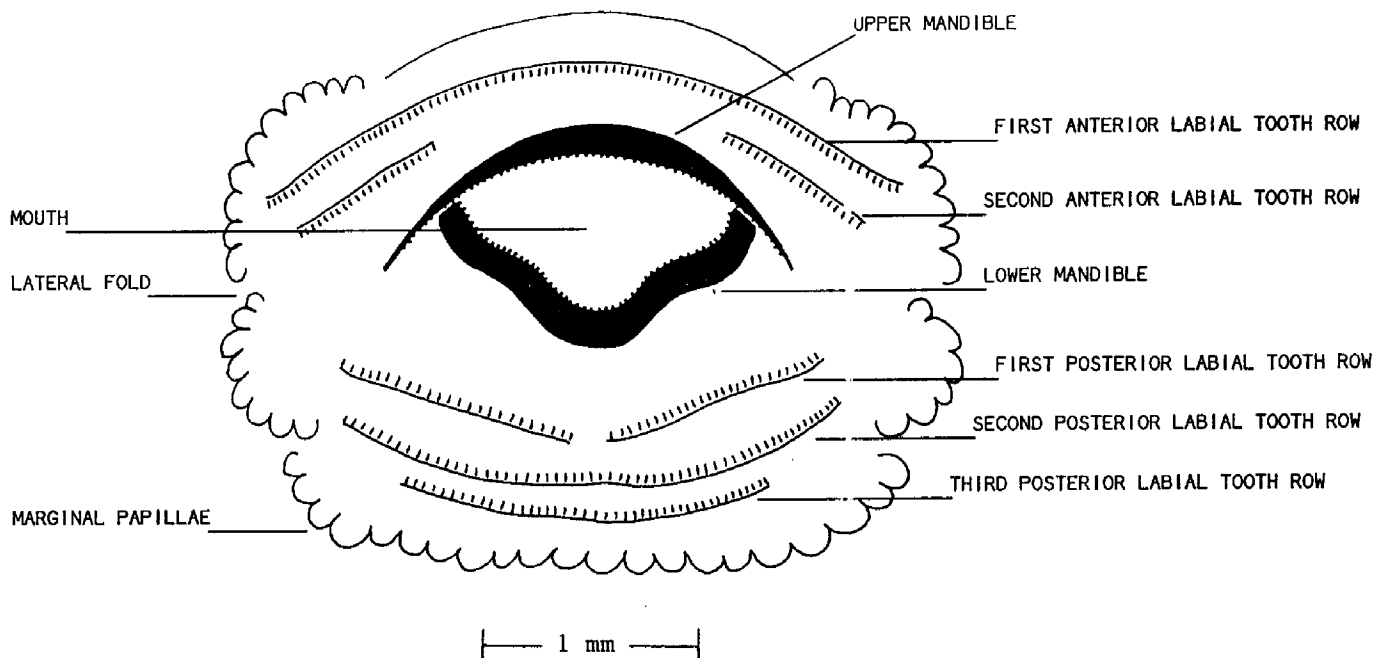


Figure 1. Mouthparts of a Gosner stage 39 tadpole of *Rana neovolcanica*, UCM 56300, from Chapala, Jalisco, México (see text).

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mouthparts will remain a potential site to seek interspecific variation until all species are well known.

Detailed comparisons of other features of tadpoles, however, have enabled workers to distinguish the larvae of closely allopatric (Hillis and Frost, 1985) or marginally sympatric (where syntopic; Hillis, 1982) species of this superspecies from each other (*R. neovolcanica* from *R. spectabilis*, of the former; *R. sphenoccephala* from *R. berlandieri*, of the latter). We accordingly add the following notes from the UCM tadpole, in part utilizing the characters outlined by Altig and Johnston (1986: 2-6) and Korky (1978: 457).

Measurements (all in mm): snout-vent, 21.5; tail, 31; total, 52.5; tail height (maximum), 10.5; dorsal fin height (maximum), 4; ventral fin height (maximum), 2.5; tail musculature (at level of maximum tail height), 4; interocular distance, 3; internarial distance, 2.5; oculonarial distance, 2.6. The tail is shaped exactly as depicted by Hillis and Frost (1985: 5), distinctly higher midcaudally than elsewhere, and the tail

length is the same, about 1.3 times body length. Pigmentation is sparse, especially on tail and snout, not forming spots or other patterns, densest over abdomen, although the intestine remains clearly visible. The oral disc is subterminal, the eyes dorsolateral, spiracle sinistral and on a level with the body axis, vent dextral. The dorsal fin extends a short distance onto the body. In shape of fins, body-tail proportion and patterning, our specimen agrees in detail with the one figured in Hillis and Frost (1985: 5) for *R. neovolcanica*, and differs from the figured tadpole of *R. spectabilis*, the mouthparts of which are unknown.

#### Acknowledgements

We are much indebted to HWP's host in Chapala, Mr. Arthur J. Canfield III, and to his gardener, Salvador, who gave a guided tour to collecting sites; to Dr. Shi Kuei-Wu for curation of the Museum material; and to Dr. William M. Lewis for the privilege of access to working facilities.

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### Notes on the Captive Breeding of the Smooth Earth Snake *Virginia valeriae valeriae*

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Smooth earth snakes, like many other fossorial, secretive, worm-eating snakes, are not often maintained in captivity. They are not highly sought after by herpetoculturists, and therefore little is known about their requirements in captivity.

Unfortunately, pollution and habitat destruction do not discriminate and are having a major impact on populations of small snakes as well as large ones. Therefore, the captive requirements of small snakes need to be studied.

Two gravid female smooth earth snakes were captured in northern Virginia in July of 1989. The two snakes were housed separately in ten-gallon aquariums with approximately

one inch of cypress mulch as the substrate. A rock, a water bowl and several plastic plants completed the cage. No ventral heat was provided and no special lighting was provided. The snakes were exposed to filtered natural light.

Two large earthworms were added to each enclosure twice per week. All worms were either purchased as "red wigglers" at the local bait shop or collected in a moist area in Duval County, Florida. No other food items were offered. This observation and others described below have implications for the dietary requirements of this species and the "completeness" of earthworms as a diet for small snakes (Rossi and

Rossi, in preparation).

One female aborted 8 young in early August 1989 while the other delivered 8 young late in the month. It is interesting to note that the female which aborted the young had been handled the day before, while the other had not been disturbed. Neither snake was observed to eat prior to delivery of the young. Both of the adults resumed feeding afterwards.

The young snakes were offered small worms free choice (worms were available at all times and were restocked twice weekly). No other food items were offered. They were housed in plastic "sweater boxes" with cypress mulch on one side and soil on the other. The soil side was lightly misted with water daily. This cage design has been referred to as the wet/dry cage for small fossorial snakes and is discussed in more detail in Rossi (in press).

The snakes were rarely observed on the surface except occasionally at night. Actual feeding observations were very rare, but regular shedding and growth were presumed to be indicative of feeding.

Several escapes, a death of unknown cause and an accident reduced the number of young to three females, which reached a average total length (TL) of 23.3 cm (9.2 in) by one year of age. No data have been found on the size of one-year-old smooth earth snakes in the wild, but this is comparable to what is reported in the literature for TL of wild rough earth snakes, *V. striatula*, at one year of age (Clark, 1964).

The yearling snakes were allowed to brumate by placing them (in their cages) into an uninsulated room, where they were exposed to natural temperature and lighting fluctuations occurring in Jacksonville, Florida, during the period from October 1990 through March 1991. Temperatures near the cages were measured with an electronic indoor/outdoor thermometer during this time and ranged from 3.9 to 23.9°C (39–75°F). Feeding was reduced to two worms per snake per week during this time.

These three females were placed in with a Florida male

(brumated in the same manner) from 28 March to 6 April 1991. Nighttime low temperatures ranged from 13.7 to 23.0°C (56.7–73.4°F) with an average of 19.6°C (67.3°F), while daytime highs ranged from 19.1 to 30.2°C (66.4–86.4°F) with an average of 24.8° (76.7°F) during this time.

At the end of this period they were again separated and placed in their regular cages.

Once again, observation of these fossorial snakes was extremely difficult, and no copulation was observed, but it was presumed to have occurred because young were produced approximately 90 days later by all three females and parthenogenesis has not been described for this species. The first female died in dystocia on 30 June 1991. She contained six dead nearly full term babies (n=6, average snout-vent length (SVL)=36.6 mm, average TL=77 mm). The second female gave birth to five slightly larger young (2 dead, 3 live) on 1 July and the third female gave birth to 4 young (1 dead, 3 live) on 2 July 1991. These fragile juveniles were not measured because it was our intention to raise them and the stress of the restraint necessary to obtain accurate measurements was considered unjustified.

The cause of the mortalities is unknown, but a high natal mortality has been observed in a number of wild caught females of this species, both by the authors in previous instances and by other herpetologists (Morris and Walsh, 1991). Captive stress has been suggested as a possible cause. The litter sizes were similar to those reported for wild populations of this species (Anderson, 1965; Minton, 1972; Smith, 1961; Collins, 1982; Dundee and Rossman, 1989).

The juveniles were placed in plastic "shoebox" size containers utilizing the same cypress mulch/soil design mentioned above and are being offered free choice earthworms as the sole diet. The two adult females reached an average SVL of 22.0 cm (8.6 in) with an average TL of 25.0 cm (9.8 in) by 2 years and 2 months of age.

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## HerPET-POURRI

by Ellin Beltz

### Biblical Herps

The Newsletter of the North Carolina Herpetological Society is among the most humorous and interesting newsletters received by the CHS. I like it so much that I've bought a subscription for myself now that I won't be on the mail tree for the CHS exchange newsletters. (As a note to other editors: if there's something you'd like mentioned in this column, please be sure to send it to me. Phone messages about stuff in your publications won't get you quoted anymore!) In the most recent issue, NCHS reworked a 1974 Utah Herp. League article about reptiles in the Bible. Apparently there are 140 references to reptiles in the Bible—103 in the Old Testament and 37 in the New. Most references are to snakes, but several are to lizards and crocodiles. The most widely disputed passage, "The voice of the turtle is heard in our land" (Song of Solomon 2:12), is believed to refer to a turtle-dove, and a word that appears as "tortoise" in Leviticus 11:29 was translated from the Hebrew "tsav," which actually means "lizard." If you'd like to join the NCHS, write them at the N.C. State Museum of Natural Sciences, P.O. Box 27647, Raleigh, NC 27611. Membership is \$10 per calendar year.

### Wildlife Wars Workshop

Special Agent John Brooks, Division of Law Enforcement, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, will lead an illegal wildlife products workshop at Lincoln Park Zoo, Sunday, February 23, 1:30 – 3:00 pm. Participants will learn the difference between legal American alligator products versus poached crocodile products through hands-on experience with confiscated items. Agent Brooks has been on the front lines of the wildlife wars, experiencing the powerful and the poignant every day. Adults only, LPZ members \$5, non-members \$7. Call the zoo's Education Department, (312) 294-4649, for registration information.

### Eggs-cuse Me!

A keeper at the Shedd Aquarium was surprised early one Sunday morning as he surveyed the Cayman Island rock iguana exhibit and found a small clutch of eggs strewn around the enclosure. Four of the 3-inch-long eggs were flattened; one had been laid under a heat lamp and was boiled; the last was in good shape and was placed in an incubator, but it was infertile. The iguanas are captive-bred and are a little young for this sort of thing, but the Aquarium has high hopes for next year. The exhibit will be fitted with nest boxes soon. [WaterShedd, September, 1991, contributed by Nina Saulic]

### British Lizard Rustlers

The sand area in Dorset, England, is home to the sand lizard, recently popular in pet shops. The only other areas in the U.K. where they are known to breed in the wild are small areas in Merseyside and the New Forest. Ashley Leftwich, a biologist working on Dorset Heath said, "As rare creatures, they are highly collectable, especially all the black ones, known as melanics." The lizards (*Lacerta agilis*) can grow up to six inches and can live 20 years; the males have emerald

green bellies, making them even more attractive as pets.

Under British law, persons collecting illegally can be fined up to £2,000. The lizards can sell for up to £300. Lizard wardens have been posted on Canford Heath in a special effort to stop the reptile rustling. [The Guardian, London, England, June 7, 1991, contributed by Robert Sprackland]

### Gopher Tortoise Shirts

For every \$100 donated to the Upland Habitat Protection Plan, supporters will receive a gopher tortoise 50/50 shirt (long or short sleeves), ash-colored with two-color design. For more information, contact the Gopher Tortoise Council, 1018 Tomasville Road, Suite 200-C, Tallahassee, FL 32303.

### BBC Shows Snakes as Dinner

Dr. Frederic L. Frye contributed an interesting article from *Turning Point* magazine (Summer ?, 1991). "Snakes as TV Dinners. [Rattlesnake] Roundups are quite disgusting but conceivable when you consider some attitudes endemic to the American South. You might think and hope that such atrocities would never be accepted by the people of Britain. But if a popular BBC TV programme presented by one of our country's most renowned comedy actors is anything to go by, you'd be way off the mark. In episode five of the BBC TV series 'Around the World in 80 Days,' Michael Palin enters a restaurant in Canton which specializes in snake meat. He chooses a live snake and then watches as the gall bladder is ripped out of the living animal, the snake is then skinned alive and its head is ripped from its body. Palin then eats the cooked meat and comments, 'It's great, lovely'.... As part of a campaign to persuade the BBC to remove the snake restaurant scene before a repeat showing of the series (on the grounds of unjust depiction of cruelty to snakes) the Reptile Protection Trust and many of its supporters asked the BBC repeatedly whether such a sequence would have been presented had the animal concerned been a cat or a dog. To date, the BBC has evaded this and many other important questions.... Despite over a hundred letters of protest to the BBC's Director General, from MPs [Members of Parliament], animal welfare organizations, naturalists, celebrities, and the public, not to mention several articles in the press and an Early Day Motion in the House of Commons, the BBC went ahead with a repeat screening on August 11, 1991.... A formal complaint has now been registered with the Broadcasting Complaints Commission. Judging by the number of letters of concern, it seems people in this country are not all prepared to accept as entertainment a programme entailing extreme cruelty to an animal." If you'd like more information write The Reptile Protection Trust, College Gates, 2 Deansway, Worcester, WR1 2JD, United Kingdom.

### Nobody's Always Politically Correct

Naturalists have long revered Izaak Walton (1593-1683) for his outlook on the wild and conservation thereof. However, this quote from *The Compleat Angler* goes to show that even our idols can err: "Thus use your frog: put your hook, I mean

the arming wire, through his mouth, and out at his gills, and then with a fine needle and silk sew the upper part of his leg with only one stitch to the arming wire of your hook, or tie the frog's leg above the upper joint to the armed wire; and in so doing use him as though you loved him. [Contributed by P. L. Beltz]

### Reptile Repellent Tested

Dr. M. J. McCoid of the Division of Aquatic and Wildlife Resources on Guam writes: "Gordon Rodda sent me a photostat of a page from the October 1991 issue of the Bull. Chicago Herpetol. Soc. On this page, was an article extolling the virtues of Dr. T's Snake-A-Way. As you may have heard, there is a substantial problem with the introduced brown tree snake (*Boiga irregularis*) on Guam. The product was brought to Guam late last year by a pest control company and has subsequently been touted by this company to be highly effective in repelling brown tree snakes. This claim was also made by the manufacturer in a press release. We embarked on a series of tests to evaluate the product. The net result being that the product is totally ineffective in repelling brown tree snakes...." He enclosed the details of the testing. The Division knew of and cited Harvey Lillywhite's report that was the basis of my last mention of this stuff, and concluded: "In light of previous behavioral investigation, this conclusion [that the gunk doesn't work on *Boiga*] is not surprising as the product is highly volatile and *B. irregularis* has been demonstrated to be visually oriented and does not respond to volatile cues." More information on the alleged repellent will probably appear on these pages, but let me state that personally it is highly unlikely that I would ever buy or tout this product for purchase by others. If anything, I'm hoping someone will develop a snake attractant!

### Zoovival—One Reader's View

Recently, this columnist received a letter from Greenville, Texas. I found it so interesting (and so sad) that I'm reprinting it complete: "Dear Ellin, Enclosed is additional information on Zoovival, note the \$35.00 fee. I did join, fortunately I didn't take advantage of the three year reduced fee. I bought snakes from them, overpriced if condition is considered. The pair of ratsnakes was 2 females, the pair of boas were in really poor health, the male was emaciated. I was supposed to get a partial refund and keep the snakes. They'd had them six weeks after receiving my check, the female was supposed to have had a cold and the male was eating up a storm. He was not only emaciated but regurgitated the first few meals. It was touch and go for a while but I'm happy to say that they're both doing well now. I've had them over a year and needless to say I never saw a refund. I never spoke to Cunningham [the director], but to the man that was in charge of the reptiles. He said he had his own collection at home, so I believed him when he claimed the pair of boas was in good shape. I do know his name, but who's to say he was "that employee"? [One Zoovival employee allegedly stole money and animals which allegedly led to Zoovival's bankruptcy. eb] I do know that during the six months I was in touch with them, they moved several times. They kept the same P.O. Box number and phone numbers, but had different street

addresses. Those that lost deposits could be fortunate. It could have been worse, they might have received animals that looked like mine. I thought about shipping them back, but after what I went through over the phone, I was afraid I'd never see my \$850 refund. I know now, but I wouldn't have since the animals were sent to me in the fall of 1990. I wish I could say Zoovival was the only outfit that took advantage but they aren't. There's services and publications that you receive an issue or two, which are a big disappointment, and you never hear from them again. I've had that twice. I won't subscribe to anything now unless I check it out first. Club memberships are the best investment possible. I was not aware Zoovival split or that Biosurvival Inc. went under, too. I now know I'll never see a refund. I'd given up looking for it anyhow. Thanks for printing 'Zoovival extinct.' Sincerely, Janice V. Mead."

### Horrible Wetlands Bill

House Resolution 1330 is considered by most environmentalists to be a disaster in the making. Some members of Congress are beginning to hear from wetlands supporters. Five recently withdrew their cosponsorship from H.R. 1330, sending a clear signal to their colleagues that something is not right with the bill. Representative James Hayes (D-LA) originally entered the bill, titled "Comprehensive Wetlands Conservation and Management Act." Anti-wetlands groups have lobbied lawmakers to support the bill through "horror stories" that purport to show that overzealous application of current wetlands protection is terrorizing farmers, oil tycoons, small business owners and agribusinesses. Write your Congresspeople! U.S. House of Representatives, Washington, D.C. 20515. Ask them to withdraw cosponsorship (if applicable) and ask them to oppose H.R. 1330. Currently, Illinois has 1,254,500 acres of wetlands. If the tougher definitions of wetlands are passed, Illinois will lose 800,000 acres of wetlands (63%) at the stroke of a pen. Wisconsin will lose 79% and Missouri 65%. Interestingly enough, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service was unable to provide figures of acreages affected for well-known environmentally aware states such as Arizona, California, Hawaii, Iowa, Michigan, New York, and Vermont. Do you smell a wet rat? I sure do. [Developed from *EnviroAction*, National Wildlife Federation, November 1991, and *USA Today*, December 3, 1991, contributed by Jill Horwich]

### And Now, a Message from the Columnist...

As you can read, this column is significantly shorter than those of recent months. Why? Not because I don't want to write nice, long columns, BUT because this column incorporates everything I received up to the moment I wrote it that hadn't been used before. This is a reader supported column. What you send is what I use. Please, if you see an article send it along with the date, the publication and your name attached to: Ellin Beltz, 1647 N. Clybourn Avenue, Chicago, IL 60614. Thanks to the folks that contributed this month. And thanks to Bill Burnett, Bea Briggs and Mary Johnson for articles that had been used previously or elsewhere in the *Bulletin*. I'm looking forward to hearing from more of you!...

## HerpWatch by David Lawrence

**Paleontological plundering for profit.** Modern day rustlers are striking it rich in some unusual places. Fossil digs in the western U.S. are the haunts of a new breed of pirate—the bone rustler. Dinosaurs are hot items with skeletons worth up to \$500,000 or more. West European collectors and wealthy Japanese are willing to pay top dollar for the fossilized remains of prehistoric reptiles and in large part are responsible for the ravaging of the American West's remaining fossil beds. The West's fossil scavengers come in two forms: outright thieves such as the ones that followed a Harvard University paleontology crew all day and then raided their site at night while they slept, removing most of the dinosaur that the crew had uncovered; and commercial fossil hunting enterprises.

According to an article in the November 10, 1991, *Chicago Tribune* there are at least 50 commercial companies and many more roving bands of fossil hunters that are digging up the relatively few exposed fossils that remain. "Sadly," said Michael Woodborne, a University of California paleontologist and a leading critic of commercialization of the West's remaining fossil beds, "these resources, which mean so much to science if properly investigated, are being ripped out of the ground by people who see them not as the gateway to knowledge but as mere trophies." A sea turtle fossil at the Denver Museum of Natural History that was purchased for \$2,500 in the 1930s today is appraised at \$100,000. A privately owned quarry near Kemmerer, Wyoming, mines fossilized fish and sells them for as low as \$25 to as much as several thousand dollars apiece. Where money is concerned, all the rest be damned.

I reported on the find of an intact, 18-foot, *Allosaurus* skeleton in northern Wyoming in the October 1991 issue of this *Bulletin*. This *Allosaurus* was thought to be one of the oldest intact dinosaur skeletons ever found in the U.S. At that time I did not know the find was made by Siber & Siber Inc., a fossil hunting enterprise based in Switzerland, and that the skeleton was slated to be sold for over \$500,000 to any of a number of "specimen-hungry European museums." This important find did not slip through our fingers, for the second time, for one simple reason, it was made on federal land. Let me explain. Siber & Siber is a company that markets fossils all over the world. They sent researchers to the U.S. Geological Survey in Washington, D.C., and to the American Museum of Natural History in New York City. There the commercial paleontologists obtained maps and directions to a dig conducted near Greybull, Wyoming, in the 1920s by a great pioneering paleontologist, Henry Fairfield Osborne. The paleontologists from Siber & Siber found something that Osborne had failed to uncover, the intact *Allosaurus* skeleton. Shades of "Raiders of the Lost Ark." The Siber dig was discovered by a federal Bureau of Land Management ranger flying over in a small plane. The prospectors from Siber & Siber claimed that they thought the dig was being conducted on private land. They had paid a rancher a fee for digging privileges on his land which just happened to be adjacent to

the federally owned land containing the *Allosaurus* skeleton. Maybe they made an honest mistake, maybe not. That isn't the point. We came very close to losing an extremely important fossil to commercial prospectors. No matter that it may have provided a few more pieces to the puzzle that we call life. It was worth more than \$500,000 and it was on its way outta here. The federal government immediately sealed off the site and the allosaur was turned over to the Museum of the Rockies in Bozeman, Montana.

What can be done about invaluable bits of history being whisked off to the trophy cases of the highest bidders? Many paleontologists advocate legislation that would prohibit commercial prospectors from digging on publicly owned land and regulate digs on fossil sites located on privately owned land in much the same way as the laws protecting threatened or endangered wildlife currently do. This may sound a bit extreme but these fossil creatures are past the point of being threatened. Would we rather they be lost forever?

**Saurian sweetens a deal gone sour.** '91 Inventory Clearance Sale—Factory Rebates up to \$2,000 or 1.9% Financing—Additional \$1,000 Rebate for Current XYZ Owners Who Trade in '86-'90 Models! Sound familiar? The December 9, 1991, *Chicago Tribune* provided us with a new chapter in the annals of "Let's Make a Deal." John Philippi of Buffalo Grove, Illinois, needed a car and decided that a GEO Storm would fill the bill. Philippi visited his local Chevy dealer, picked out a little black hatchback, came to an agreement on the price and drove the car home. Then the dealership called and said GMAC (the General Motors finance branch) needed an additional \$700 before they would finance the purchase. Philippi didn't have an additional \$700 and couldn't borrow the money. The dealership agreed to allow Philippi an additional \$500 on his trade-in if he could come up with \$200. He couldn't. However, he *did* have a pet iguana that he was trying to sell for \$200. The dealership agreed (after some convincing by Philippi) to take the iguana in trade and close the deal. Barbara Nelson, the saleswoman at Larry Faul Chevrolet in Palatine said, "He (Philippi) is the one who convinced my boss to take it. Actually the thing was kind of sweet looking-for a lizard. I'd never taken a living thing in trade before. Until this, the most unusual item I've taken in trade was an engagement ring after a couple became disenchanted with each other." Nelson completed the required paperwork for a trade-in which included an odometer statement which read, "Make—Iguana, Model—Green, Year—1990, Body Type—4 Legs, Odometer now reads—Unknown." The iguana, named Juan, now resides with a relative of one of the dealership's employees, a recent graduate in zoology. Perhaps one of you Illinois residents could pass this next bit of information on to the señorita who now owns Juan. That is, if Juan is really a Juan and not a Juanita.

**Menstruation, women and the male iguana.** I'm exposed to a wide variety of herp-related material as the result of my writing this column. From hard science and semi-technical

articles to myths, fabrication and fantasy—the clippings and xeroxes I receive from you run the gamut. Particularly in the popular press, when the subject matter deals with reptiles and amphibians, fantasy rather than fact often predominates. Other times the bizarre tales are true. This was the case in an article I read in the premier issue of the *Bulletin of the Association of Amphibian and Reptilian Veterinarians*, (Volume 1, Number 1).

"Interspecific (Lizard:Human) Sexual Aggression in Captive Iguanas (*Iguana iguana*): I. A Preliminary Compilation of Eighteen Cases." A title such as that would prompt you to turn the page and look for something a little more down to earth or readable. Wouldn't it? I'm glad this article was brought to my attention or I too might have passed it by for lighter fare. Fredric L. Frye, D.V.M., M.S., Douglas R. Mader, M.S., D.V.M., and Bernard V. Centofanti, D.V.M., authored this study and came up with some interesting results after compiling a number of reports on overt aggression by mature green iguanas, *Iguana iguana*, upon their owners.

What they found was that the aggressive behaviors exhibited by the iguanas had many features in common. The victims of the unprovoked lizard attacks were always women. The sex of the iguanas was always male. The attacking iguana was a long-term, captive reared pet and always the sole iguana in the household. The attacks all occurred during the months that breeding would normally take place for the iguanas in the northern hemisphere, and the highest incidence of attacks in different geographical regions of the U.S. was the same at like latitudes. For example: "...in northern California and Massachusetts, the majority of attacks were observed in the late spring or very early summer months, with peak incidences in late May; in southern California and Florida, most attacks occurred in December through April, with peak incidences in February and March." The iguanas were treated in much the same manner as a typical mammalian pet would have been treated: the iguanas often ate with their owners and shared the same foods; some iguanas were permitted to sleep and even shower with their owners. My recently departed miniature dachshund, Fritzie, was afforded this same treatment: she loved cheeseburgers, though one of us was usually too filthy to consider sharing the bath with the other. So, I don't consider this type of behavior abnormal. Children of either sex weren't attacked if present in the household. The women who were attacked were of child-bearing age, from late teens to late forties, and they were either menstruating or just about to at the time of the attack. The attacking iguanas often exhibited head bobbing, dewlap displays, and open-mouthed lunging towards their owners. Some owners were chased and bitten. Confinement of the offending iguanas during their owners' menstrual periods was sufficient to control the attacks and allowed the iguanas to remain in the household as pets.

The authors inferred that since the attacks were by mature male iguanas upon their female owners during their menstrual periods that the attacks were initiated by a similarity in human sexual pheromonal cues to pheromonal cues occurring naturally in iguanas. It isn't known whether these cues ini-

tiate sexual courtship or serve as a releaser of inhibitory courtship behavior.

I've only briefly summarized this article. For a more in depth look at this topic I would suggest you seek out the original literature. Based upon first impression I would recommend that you enroll your vet in the Association of Amphibian and Reptilian Veterinarians. Do yourself a favor and subscribe too. Annual dues are \$20. If you aren't a veterinarian your \$20 check won't entitle you to membership in this professional organization, but it will allow you to receive their bulletin. Send a check payable to: Association of Amphibian and Reptilian Veterinarians - c/o Michelle Frahm, D.V.M. - Gladys Porter Zoo - 500 Ringgold Street - Brownsville, TX 78520.

### Reptiles on the Go

The November 21, 1991, *Commercial Appeal* (Memphis) contained a report on the recent sighting of a giant green snake with the head of a sheep patrolling the local lake of a remote Siberian village. The Siberian "Nessie" was spotted by villagers according to the Tass news agency.

Further south, a 10-foot American crocodile, *Crocodylus acutus*, spotted far north of its usual environs, relaxed at a gator farm in the town of Christmas, Florida, after being pulled from a nearby lake by a trapper. The November 27, 1991, *Daily Commercial*, (Leesburg, FL) contained the account of the free-ranging croc. Robert Greene, a trapper, usually catches and relocates, or kills, alligators that wander too close to humans. But this time Greene was called to remove a 10-foot-3-inch female crocodile from a small lake on the Brevard County Sheriff's Farm, where inmates grow food for the county jail. Paul Moler, biologist with the state Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission, said it was unusual to see the endangered American crocodile so far north because of their small numbers in South Florida and their dislike of colder weather. American crocs in the U.S. are found in Southern Florida, primarily in the Everglades and Florida Keys.

The October 23, 1991, *Sarasota Herald-Tribune* documents the capture of an 8-foot reticulated python, *Python reticulatus*, from underneath a flower stand at the Bradenton, Florida, home of Augusta Forshey. Forshey pulled out her 30-year-old snake reference book (purchased at a time when snakes were a common sight in her neighborhood because of the ditches being dug there) and identified the python as a non-venomous species. Andrew Gritt of Sarasota was called to the scene by Animal Control and was rewarded for his response with an attractive, seemingly healthy, 15-pound male retic.

Contained in the November 22, 1991, edition of an unidentified Florida newspaper was the chronicle of a 110-pound, 12-foot Burmese python, *Python molurus bivittatus*, on the loose in the parking lot of the Kash n' Karry supermarket in Sarasota's Midtown Plaza. The 8-year-old python escaped after its owner, John Vega, cleaned its cage in his backyard. After exiting a cage that more than likely wasn't securely locked, the

python squeezed under a gate in the back yard and nestled itself in the engine compartment of Vega's wife's car. Vega's mother-in-law, Blanca Medina, drove the car later on that same evening to the supermarket. After she parked the car at the market the snake began to unwind and dropped onto the pavement. Greg Michael, a stock clerk at the market, spotted the snake and an announcement was made over the store's public-address system for the owner of the car to come forward. Medina didn't hear the announcement and learned of the snake's appearance in the parking lot about a half hour later. By that time two passers-by had spotted the snake, stuffed it into a garbage can, and driven it to a friend's place. The Vega's learned of the snake's whereabouts the following day and were trying to arrange for the safe return of their pet. "He's everything to my husband," said Michelle Vega. "It sleeps with him in his damn bed sometimes." I don't consider that odd, only stupid.

The Midwest entry in the "Reptiles on the Go" section comes from the "Chicagoland" section of the *Chicago Tribune*, November 1, 1991. Clarence Pendleton, a "shuttler" for a rent-a-truck firm was transporting a truck between the Illinois towns of Des Plaines and Libertyville on Halloween night when he noticed an air-vent cover missing. Pendleton saw a snake's head sticking out of the open space where the air-vent cover should have been. He thought it was a Halloween prank until the head moved. He was surprised to say the least. He immediately pulled the truck into a shopping center parking lot and ran out of the truck. He called his boss who told him to

call the police who in turn called the local snake expert. The snake expert turned out to be our very own Steve Barten, D.V.M., owner of the Vernon Hills Animal Hospital. I can attest to Steve's reptile expertise. On a snake hunting trip in North Carolina I saw Steve locate an eastern glass lizard, *Ophisaurus ventralis*, by following its track through the sand. On that same trip he demonstrated a surefire technique for extracting irascible eastern cottonmouths, *Agkistrodon p. piscivorus*, from their swampy log burrows: insert the soft rubber handle of your snake hook into the snake's lair, prod it into biting the handle and holding on, then pull it out, no problem. Steve knows herps.

But back to Halloween—I think the hard part was for the police to convince Steve that this wasn't a prank and that they could see the snake in the truck's dash. "If you can't see the snake, I'm not coming down there," said the snake expert to the police. They could see the snake, so Steve journeyed to the scene and extracted a 3-foot ball python, *Python regius*, in a matter of minutes. The ball python wound up being returned to its original owner after he read the account of Steve's rescue in the paper and convinced him that he was the rightful (if not responsible) owner.

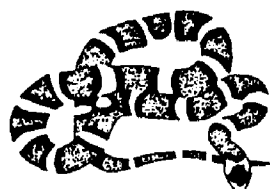
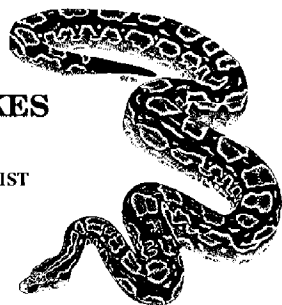
The moral of this section is that herps are gifted as escape artists. Act responsibly and cage yours securely or someday you may be prevented from legally keeping herps because one too many "giant green snake with the head of a sheep" is running amok in your neighborhood. See you next month.

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## Herpetology 1992

In this column the editorial staff presents short abstracts of herpetological articles we have found of interest. This is not an attempt to summarize all of the research papers published during the year. It is an attempt to increase the reader's awareness of what professional herpetologists have been doing and publishing. The editors assume full responsibility for any errors or misleading statements regarding the results of the abstracted research. JCM

### A NEW *LIMNOSCELIS* AMPHIBIAN

D. S. Berman and S. S. Sumida [1990, Ann. Carnegie Museum 59(4):303-341] describe a new species of diadectomorph limnoscelid, *Limnoscelis dynatis*, from a disarticulated skeleton collected in the Sangre de Cristo Formation of central Colorado. The fossils are from the Late Pennsylvanian. Limnoscelidae was originally considered to be a family of primitive cotylosaurian reptiles, but has been reassigned to the amphibian order Diadectomorpha. Despite the reclassification, the limnoscelids are considered very close to the reptilian grade of organization, and for this reason are important in studies on the origin and early evolution of reptiles. A recent cladistic study has shown the Diadectomorpha and amniotes (synapsid mammal-like reptiles) as sister groups. The etymology of *dynatis* comes from the Greek *dynatos*, meaning strong, powerful or able, referring to its probable role as a formidable predator.

### A NEW NEW CALEDONIAN SKINK

I. Ineich and R. A. Sadlier [1991, Mém. Mus. nat. Hist. nat., (A) 149:343-347] describe *Leiolopisma tillieri* on the basis of the single holotype from southern New Caledonia. In appearance it most closely resembles the endemic New Caledonian genus *Tropidoscincus* but it lacks the key diagnostic features for inclusion in that or any other monophyletic New Caledonian genus. For this reason the authors tentatively place the new species in the catchall genus *Leiolopisma* until further specimens become available. The holotype was collected in February 1987 with a Malaise trap, designed to catch flying insects. The vegetation consisted of bushes with a few scattered *Agathis montana*. The area was in a state of secondary succession because of fire, but the authors note that the location is probably close in floristic composition to the primary maquis which once covered large areas in southern New Caledonia.

### HIGH DEATH RATE OF LARVAL RINGED SALAMANDERS

C. L. Peterson et al. [1991, Herpetologica 47(1):96-100] report premetamorphic mortality of the ringed salamander, *Ambystoma annulatum*, was 99.9% in two ponds in southwestern Missouri. Mortality was greatest during the first two months and during the metamorphic period. The premetamorphic pattern of survival is intermediate between Type II and Type III. Assuming identical annual recruitment, the authors estimate that the breeding population is replaced in 3 to 6 years. They estimate the premetamorphic production at 75 g/m<sup>2</sup> and 142 g/m<sup>2</sup>. The extremely high mortality was associated with pond contraction. Fish are not in the ponds, but predatory insects are present year round.

### CHANGES IN COBRA HORMONES DURING HIBERNATION

R. Wu and J. Huang [1990, Asiatic Herpetol. Research 3:46-51] study the variation of the serum thyroxine, triiodothyronine and cortisol in the cobra *Naja naja*, in prehibernation, hibernation and posthibernation. The variations were compared in those three periods with the changes of indexes of cobra metabolism, such as oxygen consumption, serum glucose, serum triglyceride, glycogen content of liver, and triglyceride content of fat bodies. From prehibernation to hibernation the change of metabolic indexes of the cobra indicated that the metabolic rate tends to decline because of the very low levels of the three serum hormones in prehibernation and falling temperatures. Low temperature during hibernation limited the activities of the three serum hormones which were rising at higher levels during hibernation. From hibernation to posthibernation, the rising temperature allowed the three serum hormones to increase markedly, stimulating metabolism gradually. Therefore the metabolic rate of the cobra during posthibernation tended to rise again. The metabolic indexes of the cobra in posthibernation showed a significant increase in metabolic rate, which had close relation with the high levels of the three hormones. The indexes of cobra metabolism suggest that it is hepatic glycogen and not fat that hibernating cobras use as their main source of energy.

### ABUNDANCE OF A MEDITERRANEAN LIZARD

J. A. Díaz and L. M. Carrascal [1991, J. of Biogeography 18: 291-297] study the distribution of a common Mediterranean lacertid lizard, *Psammotromus algirus*, on 19 sites within a regional gradient of homogeneous yet contrasted habitats. This scale was large enough to allow line-transect estimates of lizard abundance, which were related to quantitative, and when possible multivariate, measurements of the structure and floristic composition of vegetation, the abundance of arthropod prey, the relative density of other lizard species, and the climatic data obtained from nearby meteorological stations. Neither the climate nor the abundance of other lizards seem to condition the quantitative distribution of the species. The positive influence of broad-leaved forests on the abundance of this lizard appeared to be a consequence of structural attributes more directly related to the ecology of lizards than floristic composition per se. Thus, population levels were most highly correlated with the cover of shrubs over 20 cm in height, and once this structural requirement was met, the lizards increased with the abundance of potential prey. The authors suggest the results be interpreted in the context of thermoregulation, predator avoidance and movement minimization strategies which influence survival, and hence abundance.

## The Tympanum (Letters to the Editor)

For the first four years of the CHS (1966-1969), letters to the editor of the *Bulletin* were published in a regular feature known as "The Tympanum," presumably a reference to the external eardrum found in frogs and toads. Volume 4, Number 1, was the last issue to use this name for the letters column. With this issue we hereby revive "The Tympanum," both because it is too clever a name to waste and because we like getting letters and hope to stimulate more of you to send them.

I thank the editor of the Chicago Herpetological Society for the opportunity to respond to Mr. Ottley's rebuttal [Bull. Chicago Herp. Soc. 26(11):257-259] of my July 1991 article [Bull. Chicago Herp. Soc. 26(7):153-156]. In my article, I dealt with the literature pertaining to the genus *Lichanura* and my direct interpretation of it. I will steadfastly adhere to the article's contents. Mr. Ottley's comments present the opportunity to strengthen my argument.

It should be apparent, Mr. Ottley disagrees with me on the interpretation of the scanty and wanting literature published by early researchers on *Lichanura*. The quantity of my publications, and where they were published, is (therefore) not the issue. I believe my bibliography is thorough. I advise interested and concerned readers to ignore what Mr. Ottley and I have said, review all of the literature for themselves, and arrive at their own conclusions.

It is unfortunate that there is no way to ascertain (beyond doubt) the evenness of the dorsal stripe for the holotype of *L. myriolepis*. Nothing conclusive can be found in the related published materials. Due to the scantiness of such literature, we are forced to extract all we can from what is available. At the same time, we must not read into literature that which is not there. It will be evident throughout my response that Mr. Ottley appears to quote only certain papers to support his interpretations and ignores others.

Mr. Ottley interprets the holotype of *L. myriolepis* as having a uniform stripe, because Cope and Stejneger did not say that it was not. Employing a negative approach to solving a problem is scientifically unsound. He underlined "...pertinent portions." I do not question the evenness of the dorsal stripe of *L. t. trivirgata* since the locality of the type specimen is clear. However, the locality of the holotype of *L. myriolepis* "...the northern part of Lower California" is absolutely unclear, and it is inconclusive whether the three rusty red bands are even or uneven. If Mr. Ottley would have continued his underlining to include "...but very indistinct on the anterior half of the body," he would have disclosed that the holotype could not have come from the mid Baja region. No matter how even or uneven the dorsal stripe may be, no *Lichanura* from the mid Baja region has an indistinct anterior HALF of the body. Mr. Ottley accurately quoted, in part, Cope's description of *Lichanura roseofusca*. Why did Mr. Ottley avoid a reference to the lack of mention of striping for this holotype?

We obviously concur on the type locality of the holotypes of *L. t. roseofusca* and *L. t. myriolepis* since both have the same one "...the northern part of Lower California." However, for some reason, Mr. Ottley assumes *L. t. roseofusca* is from the San Diego vicinity, while *L. t. myriolepis* is from at least 200 miles south of the border. I question his interpretation. In

fact, I see this as further evidence that both specimens came from the same area. This locality could be in Mexico, or I could argue that it could simply mean just what it says, Lower California (meaning the southern part of the state of California).

After further analysis, I think it refers to neither. I noted in my paper that Cope divided the U.S. into six geographic areas. He recognized the Lower Californian region as one which included both vicinity of San Diego and Baja California, Mexico. I think he selected the region because of the locality of the holotype, and to support Cope and Stejneger's notations that *L. t. myriolepis* came from the vicinity of San Diego. I suggest that Mr. Ottley did not realize Cope considered the San Diego area to be part of the Lower Californian region, or he overlooked the possibility.

Cope wrote, "It was on a specimen of this variety from the same locality (San Diego) that I proposed the species *L. myriolepis*." I feel this is very significant. He does not mention the holotype "per se," but Mr. Ottley draws his conclusion through a misconception. He believed the quote was taken from a posthumous 1900 article. In reality, this quotation was reprinted from a paper written by Cope in 1891, well before his death. Interestingly, I am chided for using the posthumous 1900 literature, but Mr. Ottley cites that same reference in his evaluation of the color pattern of *L. t. roseofusca*.

The holotype of *L. t. myriolepis* has been preserved for over 120 years. I had this specimen (ANSP 6700) on my desk for over two weeks and carefully inspected it several times. There is no doubt, the specimen is totally devoid of pattern, excepting what might be interpreted as a few bruise marks. The same is true of the ventrals. In 1891 Stejneger wrote about the "slight difference in coloration" of the holotype "...now entirely obliterated, is hardly worth mentioning...." If Mr. Ottley can discern "uniform" stripes today certainly Stejneger would have seen them more clearly a hundred years ago. Would he not have invalidated *L. t. myriolepis* for *L. t. roseofusca* if the pattern on the former were noticeably different?

I refute his criticism that my recent research has a "substantially different conclusion." The only divergence is choosing the name *L. t. gracia* for the population from N.W. Arizona. Early in my work with principal component analysis, I was able to identify unique individuals from this population. At that time, I did not feel that my sample size was adequate for more formal recognition. Currently, I have gathered enough data to conscientiously limit this subspecies to N.W. Arizona.

I find it of special interest that Mr. Ottley questions my southern limit for *L. t. roseofusca*, for he unknowingly helped me

derive the southernmost limit of intergradation with *L. t. saslowi*. The El Socorro specimen, to which he is referring (SDSNH 15511), is definitely a *L. t. saslowi*. I cannot explain why it was on record from El Socorro. Neither could Klauber in 1931. It is problematical.

Let me clarify the area of intergradation between *L. t. saslowi* and *L. t. roseofusca*. The northernmost limit for an intergrade is represented by a specimen preserved at the San Diego Society of Natural History (LMK 7696). It appears to be monochromatic, and was captured 10 miles north of El Rosario. The southernmost limit was supplied by a specimen collected by Mr. Ottley (BYU 37027). The locality is given as, "21.9 mi. (via Hwy 1) So. El Rosario, Baja Norte, Mexico." Mr. Ottley claims this animal is an intergrade. He does not elaborate, but I agree. The specimen has an uneven pattern of the dorsal stripe. This provides an area of 32 miles as a zone of intergradation. On my map I filled in the area between the known intergrades and the "pure" *L. t. roseofusca* of San Jose. Perhaps future collectors will disprove my hypothetical range.

It may be conjecture, but it appears Mr. Ottley does not fully grasp statistical analysis beyond means and standard deviation statistics. As a point in question, let me define my description of *L. t. roseofusca*. Univariately, *L. t. roseofusca* has a lower means for ventrals, body scale rows, infraoculars and oculars than *L. t. myriolepis* of southern California. Preoculars are larger than the postoculars in all specimens examined ( $n > 35$ ). In 63% of the specimens examined, the preoculars are fused into an enlarged preocular. Multivariately, these characteristics easily isolate the N.W. Baja California population from the southern California population (*L. t. myriolepis*).

Some years before I began gathering data on *Lichanura* for my thesis, Mr. Ottley was at BYU working with the same genus. When I became aware of his research I was concerned that he might have been well ahead of me, and that I would be wasting my efforts. After speaking with him and several of his colleagues I evaluated his findings and direction, and decided to continue with my project. I felt his technique of attempting to show intergrades between *L. t. roseofusca* and *L. t. trivirgata* could be gotten through captive breeding was less than pure science. Among his questionable results, he completely ignored the mid-Baja population (my *L. t. saslowi* which he incorrectly calls *L. t. myriolepis*). In reality, it is the population contiguous with *L. t. trivirgata*.

I have observed the preserved *Lichanura* at the BYU museum. My observation disclosed two curious and disturbing subspecific names for *Lichanura*, ("microcephalus" and "san-felipe"). All were collected and labeled as such by Mr. Ottley. No description appears in the literature. He also introduced *L. t. "intermedia"* (captive bred intergrades between *L. t. saslowi* and *L. t. trivirgata*) that have been available for sale by breeders as yet another distinct subspecies.

I believe that Mr. Ottley is frustrated. He has been counting scales longer than I. I venture to guess, he is overwhelmed by all the numbers, and is at a loss with what to do with them. Since he is most familiar with means and standard deviations, I suggest he will never publish his "lengthy" report, because it takes more than univariate statistics to solve the taxonomic

dilemma of the *Lichanura*. Biology doesn't work in a univariate mode. It works in a multivariate mode. It takes multivariate analysis and more, such as electrophoretic analysis and field study, to fully comprehend and clarify serious taxonomic problems.

I further suggest, instead of criticizing my efforts and contributions to solving the *Lichanura* problem, he simply publish his long awaited "lengthy" article. He told me that it was ready for publication... ten years ago!

Regardless of whether or not he published the "lengthy" article, I would have continued with my work. As for his acceptance of the validity of my revision, blame the editors and the reviewers who accepted my papers. Blame Bayard Brattstrom, Hobart Smith, Lee Grismer and many others who have taken the time to discuss with me my point of view, and now agree with me.

Again, thank you for the opportunity to respond to Mr. Ottley's comments. David E. Spiteri, Chaffey College, 5885 Haven Avenue, Rancho Cucamonga, CA 91701.

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Yesterday, we received our exchange copy of the November 1991 *Bulletin* (Vol. 26, No. 11). As usual, I read it with great interest until coming to the "Letters to the Editor" section and John Ottley's diatribe about (against?) David Spiteri's July 1991 *Bulletin* article.

In several places Ottley characterizes Spiteri's publication of papers as "... not ... published in a reviewed, professional journal," and "... circumventing the accepted system of peer-reviewed research by having his articles appear in fringe publications."

The bone of contention notwithstanding, namely taxonomy of *Lichanura*, let me set the record straight on at least one count. David Spiteri's paper, "The Geographic Variability of the Species *Lichanura trivirgata* and a Description of a New Subspecies," was published in the *Proceedings of the Conference on California Herpetology* (CCH), Southwestern Herpetologists Society (SWHS) Special Publication No. 4, published in 1988. Let me assure you that David Spiteri's paper, as well as those written by such shining lights of herpetology as Dr. Robert L. Bezy of the Los Angeles County Museum of Natural History; Dr. Bayard H. Brattstrom of California State University, Fullerton; Jeffrey M. Howland, presently Arizona State Herpetologist; Dr. Mark R. Jennings of the California Academy of Sciences; Dr. Glenn R. Stewart of California State Polytechnic University at Pomona; L. Lee Grismer of San Diego State University and many other well-known and respected herpetologists, were all peer-reviewed in the accepted manner utilized in American scientific publications

The CCH was held in October, 1987. Since we had planned to publish proceedings (which, by the way, CHS sells), we could have published them immediately instead of waiting the year it took for peer review, revision, further review, etc. We object strenuously to John Ottley's characterization of the CCH *Proceedings* as "a fringe publication." Ottley may be upset with Spiteri's premises and his research into the taxonomy of *Lichanura* but he should do his own research before spouting off about so called fringe publications.

Besides Special Publications, SWHS also issues other publications. *Herpetology*, our general interest, non-refereed journal, is published thrice-yearly. *Herpeton*, devoted to the publication of original, scientific manuscripts which are peer-reviewed in the normal manner, is published when acceptable manuscripts become available. John Ottley is invited to submit his in-process paper to SWHS for publication in either of the two abovementioned publications. **Jerrold J. Feldner, Treasurer, Southwestern Herpetologists Society, P.O. Box 7469, Van Nuys CA 91489**

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The members of the Board of Directors of the International Herpetological Symposium, Inc. were surprised to read the review by David Lawrence [HerpWatch, Bull. Chicago Herp. Soc. 26(11):251-252] of the Seattle (15th) IHS meeting, in which it was stated that "Off-color jokes, slides of nude women, and men, homophobic displays, and sexual innuendos do not have a place at these meetings and should no longer be tolerated." The Board of Directors is unaware of any such material presented at this meeting, or any meeting since 1988, when the current Board assumed responsibility for the IHS. The entire 1991 IHS meeting was videotaped. The Board of Directors is gravely concerned about the ramifications of the inaccurate and potentially damaging effects of these statements and request a retraction be printed immediately. **Brian P. Backner, M.D., President, IHS, Inc., 17 Margaret Road, Sharon MA 02067.**

*Obviously, Dr. Backner's letter requires a response. The response will appear in the February Bulletin.*

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I am sure you are probably aware of the popularity of "professional wrestling." You may have heard of one of the participants in this so-called sport by the name of Jake "The Snake" Roberts. This individual is known for bringing large pythons into the ring where he proceeds to swing them around and generally handle them in a rough manner.

Apparently this is no longer sensational enough, for Mr. Roberts has now begun to do the same things with cobras. Judging from the way in which these cobras are handled, I would tend to think that they have been rendered harmless in some way; however, this is irrelevant. A recent episode involved a large King Cobra. This snake was dumped into the center of the ring where it rose up and spread its hood for a moment before Mr. Roberts picked it up and thrust it in the direction of his rival. The snake bit and began to chew the arm of Mr. Roberts' opponent. Viewers were treated to a lengthy close-up of this. Meanwhile, the announcers made comments such as, "It better be de venomized!" and "Oh my God, it's biting him!" and generally added to the sensationalism of this deplorable act. When the snake released its grip, the bitten man got up and attempted to retaliate, staggering, falling, and behaving in a manner to suggest that he had been envenomated. Mr. Roberts continued to brandish the snake as if it were a weapon, at one point stepping on its dragging tail. Close-up views of the bitten man's bleeding arm and crying children in the audience further enhanced the shock value.

These programs are enormously popular and when they feature snakes in this way can undermine the effectiveness of educational efforts by herpetological societies. I feel that a handful of letters from one organization or another is not sufficient to bring an end to this sort of problem. It is for this reason that I am sending copies of this letter to over 50 different regional herpetological societies. I urge you to bring this matter to the attention of your membership. Please encourage them to write letters of protest to the World Wrestling Federation. Perhaps a concerted effort can bring an end to this. Thank you for any assistance you may provide. **Barry Hammer, Hoosier Herpetological Society, P.O. Box 40544, Indianapolis IN 46240-0544.**

PS. Address protest letters to: Titan Sports, Inc., 1055 Summer Street, Stamford CT 06906.

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First, let me commend you on the outstanding publication you produce. Of the hundred-odd society newsletters of which I'm aware, it is one of the few to which I chose to subscribe. Also, I must congratulate you on your ability to get your members to contribute so much to the *Bulletin*. You must be very lucky or very persuasive.

I'm generally too busy to write letters to the editor, but I just had to comment on a few things I read in the *Bulletin* recently. I'd like to thank Ellin Beltz for letting people know about Prudential Insurance Company cancelling her homeowner's insurance due to her keeping herps [Bull. Chicago Herp. Soc. 26(9):203]. That should be of interest to many people, especially in my area: Boston—the home of Prudential. I'd also like her to know that I had an experience, similar to hers, at the SSAR meeting [Bull. Chicago Herp. Soc. 26(11):256]. I was not "ripped into" by any Ph.D.s (actually, at six-foot-two, two hundred pounds, I hardly ever get "ripped into" by anyone), but I did experience the professional/amateur prejudice. In my case, it came from the zoo people, while the academics were at least polite, if not friendly. Personally, I find this even more annoying than the reverse, since the zoo people should be more aware of, and concerned with, the many advances in husbandry the private sector has made. Of course, people are people, and we have to expect to meet educated morons, as well as uneducated geniuses, and remember that fools come in all guises, and from all walks of life.

The other matters I wanted to address relate to the CHS's finances. I noticed in the "Unofficial Minutes of the CHS Board Meeting, October 18, 1991," [Bull. Chicago Herp. Soc. 26(11):264] that the treasury stands at \$44,477.16, as of September, and yet the Board voted to change, and presumably raise, the dues. At the same time, they created a paid position, with a salary of \$20,000 per year plus incentives. This may come as a surprise to you, but I, for one, am deeply offended by these actions, and disgusted by the apparent greed involved. I can't see any possible way they can justify this. If your book sales volume won't support the \$20,000/year + salary they approved, then they shouldn't have approved it. If it will, how could you need more money, and for what?

All the "Unofficial Minutes" said was that a motion to retain

the current dues structure was voted down, but I have to assume that this means dues will be going up, not down. Admittedly, the *Bulletin* is a high quality publication, and the dues may not cover the publishing costs, but what is all that money doing sitting in the treasury? Where did it come from?

I'm pleased, and amazed, that a herp society has done so well, financially, but what good is the money if it sits in the bank? The 1992 Grants Program could account for up to \$8,000 of it, but that still leaves \$36,477. What do you plan to do with this money? Why isn't it being used to defray the costs of publishing the *Bulletin*, lowering the subscription cost, and making membership more attractive to more people who need the information you offer? Why isn't it being used for conservation projects? Why isn't it being used for public education projects? *Why isn't it being used???* And, why do you want more? It seems as though you've forgotten that CHS is a non-profit organization.

My opinion is, and my policy, when I was President of the New England Herp. Society (NEHS), was, that any money a non-profit organization takes in should be used either to benefit the members or to further the goals of the organization. Simply put, any income a non-profit organization has should be put to good use, not hoarded. This does not seem to be happening at CHS, and, as a member, I feel I'm entitled to know why. And, why you need to raise the dues.

I apologize if I've misinterpreted what happened, based on the limited information available. I suppose it's possible that some of the money is in the form of a trust, which can't be spent. I hope you will publish an explanation. I'm sure I'm not the only member who is wondering what's going on, although, being familiar with the finances of the NEHS, I may be more shocked than some other CHS members, since I know that \$44,000 is probably more than the NEHS's total income in the entire seventeen years of its existence. **David G. McNeill, 41 Webster Street, Apt. 1, Malden MA 02148**

*In attempting to answer the questions raised by Mr. McNeill, I cannot presume to speak for the entire CHS Board of Directors. However, as Publications Secretary I am a Board member and have regularly attended meetings. I think I can present a reasoned and fair response, even if I am a self-appointed spokesman. The Tympanum, of course, will remain open to anyone wishing to present a divergent viewpoint.*

*First, a little historical background: As recently as 1986 the CHS was on shaky financial ground. That year our expenses exceeded our income by more than \$1000. Although we had nearly \$6000 in the bank at the close of the year, in several months our cash dropped below the amount that would be required to pay the following month's bills. At this time also we were contemplating switching over from a quarterly Bulletin-monthly newsletter format to a monthly Bulletin. We could not be sure, but we expected the annual printing and mailing costs for the new Bulletin to run about \$12000. With the dues structure then in effect, this meant that Individual Membership dues would not cover production and mailing costs for the Bulletin. Our principal source of nondues income up to then had been the live animal shows we put on at area shopping malls. But*

*because of the sharply escalating cost of liability insurance, we could no longer count on much in the way of income from that source. Therefore, early in 1987 we raised the dues, with an Individual Membership going from \$12.50 to the current level of \$17.50 per annum.*

*However, it was clear to the Board that the dues increase was not going to cure all of our financial ills. Thus, the decision was made to expand our sales of herpetological books, and more importantly to attempt to make some profit off those sales (prior to then I was handling the book sales and—having at the time a mind-set very similar to that expressed by Mr. McNeill—I was running the operation as a break-even enterprise). I enthusiastically supported the idea of a profit-making book service because I anticipated benefit both to the CHS and to myself. I expected the venture to be profitable and I welcomed relief from a job that was onerous even when our offerings included only about a dozen titles.*

*That relief proved to be Joan Moore and over the past five years, under her more than capable management, it has been the book service that has filled our coffers to the tune of \$44000.*

*This brings us to the present and to the situation that confronted the Board this past fall. Once again we had reached a point where dues income alone would soon no longer cover the cost of supplying an Individual Member with 12 issues of the Bulletin. This time, however, we had a substantial source of non-dues income. Or did we? We recognized how much we depend on the volume of book sales for this income. We also realized that the present level of activity is attributable to the unstinting efforts of a volunteer, Joan Moore, who has essentially been doing a full-time job free of charge. Should the CHS really be dependent for its financial well-being on the volunteer efforts of just one individual? The obvious solution was to create a paid position for a Director of Sales who would be responsible for marketing all CHS merchandise. A committee was set up by the CHS President to investigate this idea and make recommendations to the Board. Jack Schoenfelder, Steve Barten, Joan Moore, John Murphy and I comprised the committee. Our recommendations were implemented at the October Board meeting.*

*The committee without exception thinks that it will be possible to expand the sales of books and other merchandise to a point where the CHS derives as much net income from these sales under the new system as it did under the old. The important difference is that we are no longer dependent on the altruism of a single individual. Although the committee recommended Joan Moore as being uniquely qualified to fill this new position, once the concept proves itself it should be no problem to hire a new Director of Sales whenever that becomes necessary or desirable. If the plan does not prove viable, we will know it within a year and we can always retreat to our former situation.*

*As to the change in dues, Mr. McNeill misunderstood the wording and intent of the motion. The motion actually proposed that the CHS "retain the current dues structure and rates for the calendar year January 1–December 31, 1992." Such a motion disregards the power vested in the Board by the bylaws to increase the dues at any time. The motion was defeated. Personally, I oppose a dues increase and will speak against it, but many on the new Board favor such an action and it would not*

surprise me to see a dues increase sometime in 1992.

Why is the money in our treasury not being used? This money represents considerably less than one year's worth of ordinary expenses for the CHS. Besides the \$8000 in grants mentioned by Mr. McNeill, we anticipate having to pay approximately \$6000 to the Field Museum for rental of a meeting facility (yes, the Academy of Sciences is free but we have completely outgrown the facility there). To get an idea of our other expenses see our annual statement of income and expense in next month's Bulletin. In my opinion, given the unsettled state of our future income, it is not only reasonable but also essential to have a one-year cushion in our treasury. Anything less would be irresponsible.

I cannot expect to convey a detailed picture of the CHS financial position within the scope of this brief reply to Mr. McNeill's letter. The point I am trying so hard to make is simply that our organization has grown to the point that it must be run like a business. We are no longer a couple of dozen friends getting together once a month to share a common interest. Of necessity, we are handling large amounts of money. The Bulletin costs plenty; so does putting out a bound membership list and our "Care in Captivity" booklet. The "apparent greed involved" is no more than an earnest effort by a group of dedicated people to make the CHS the best regional herpetological society it can be. MAD

*Bull. Chicago Herp. Soc.* 27(1):19, 1992

### 1992 CHS Herpetological Grants Program

The Chicago Herpetological Society is pleased to announce that the CHS Herpetological Grants program to award financial support for herpetological research, education, and conservation will be continued and expanded in 1992. The deadlines for application and distribution of awards have been moved up so that funds will be available for summer research projects, and the application process has been simplified. Eight awards of up to \$1000 each will be available. Interested parties may apply for grants in any one of the following categories:

1. Herpetology in Illinois
2. Graduate Student Research in Herpetology
3. Undergraduate Research in Herpetology
4. Field Studies in Herpetology
5. Conservation
6. Captive Management, Husbandry, and Propagation

An attempt will be made to award grants in each category, but depending on the applications received, not all categories may receive awards. Some categories will receive more than one award. The Grants Committee reserves the right to reassign the category under which a given proposal is submitted. If applications are lacking, fewer than eight awards may be distributed.

Applicants must be members of the Chicago Herpetological Society. In accepting a grant, the recipient agrees to abide by all state and federal laws, to submit a written summary of the project for publication in the CHS *Bulletin*, and to acknowledge the Chicago Herpetological Society in any publications that result from the subsidized research. Recipients are encouraged to submit their work in article form for the CHS *Bulletin*, or to present a program at a CHS monthly meeting.

Applications should include the following:

1. Statement of the objectives of the proposal.
2. Description of materials and methods.
3. Complete budget, not to exceed \$1000.
4. Brief resumé of the applicant, if an individual. If the applicant is an organization, background information on that organization should be included.
5. A completion date for the project.

Applications must be typed, double spaced, and submitted in duplicate. Applications should be kept brief and simple, and proposals longer than three to five pages are discouraged. All applications must be received by 1 March 1992, and awards will be announced by 1 May 1992.

It is the goal of the Grants Committee to award grants to a variety of applicants, and enthusiastic amateurs will receive equal consideration with professional herpetologists and graduate students. The Committee also has biases which favor topics of interest to our membership. These topics include Illinois herpetology, captive husbandry and propagation, and those which might translate into quality CHS *Bulletin* articles or monthly meeting programs.

Submit applications or questions to:

CHS Herpetological Grants  
Chicago Herpetological Society  
2001 North Clark Street  
Chicago, IL 60614

Or contact Stephen L. Barten, D.V.M., Grants Committee Chairman, at (708) 367-4070 or FAX (708) 367-0347.

CHS Herpetological Grants are funded primarily through income derived from the CHS Book Service. Your tax deductible donation to the grants program would increase the funding available to support valuable herpetological research.

## Advertisements

Announcing: *Reptile & Amphibian Magazine* is a full-color, bimonthly magazine for all herp-lovers. It's the complete journal that covers all levels of the hobby. Each issue has articles on the natural history, captive care and breeding, and ecology of herps. We also have technical/veterinary articles, book reviews, photo tips, club & conservation news, and a large classified ad section. Filled with color photos. From novice to expert, there's something for everyone! \$12/year—\$22/2 years. *Reptile & Amphibian Magazine*, RD #3 Box 3709A, Pottsville PA 17901. Call (717) 622-6050. We need writers and photographers—send a S.A.S.E. for our guidelines.

Attention: Ed Shirley & Sons Sports is offering a 10% discount to CHS members on live and frozen bait—nightcrawlers; redworms; leafworms; waxworms; maggots; leeches; small & large fathead minnows; medium, large & extra-large golden roach minnows; crickets; and more. Bulk amounts at more savings are available too. Locations in Markham, Countryside, Morton Grove and Palatine. For info call Gary, (708) 705-8707.

Fauna classifieds: monthly classifieds publication for reptiles, amphibians, food items & supplies, literature and more. Excellent information source, worldwide circulation. Subscription \$14/year. Free sample & info. Write: FAUNA, 555 Vista Rio Court, Woodbridge CA 95258.

For sale: *WILLARD'S RODENT RANCH*—tell 'em Ben sent ya! Live or fresh-frozen mice and rats—mice; pinks to hoppers \$.35 each or 3/\$1.00; weanlings to adults \$.50 each; jumbos \$.75 each—rats; pinkies to chubbies \$.50 each; fuzzies \$1.00 each; small \$1.50 each; medium \$2.25 each; large \$3.00 each; jumbo \$4.00 each. Discounts available on large one-time orders. Prices subject to change without notice, availability may vary. Pick-up or delivery at the CHS meeting, shipping available for large frozen orders. Contact Mike Miller (days) at (708) 974-2600, or Eric Richter (evenings) at (708) 863-7418.

For sale: highest quality frozen feeder animals, raised on the best diets available. Seven years in the production and supply of frozen feeders. Specializing in various sizes of mice: 1- to 2-day-old pinks; 4- to 5-day-old large pinks; 8- to 10-day-old extra large fuzzies; and adults. Prices start at \$25/100. Also available, pink rats, baby chicks and quail chicks. Write or call for a free price list. Kelly Haller, 4236 S.E. 25th, Topeka KS 66605, (913) 234-3358.

For sale: top quality *fresh* frozen rats, \$1.50 each. Price includes packing and dry ice. Freight is collect to you. Our rats are fed the highest quality laboratory formulated diet and are *flash frozen* for maximum nutritional value. Minimum order \$75. Attn: 30% discount on standing orders and orders of 300 or more rats. Steve Hammond, c/o Exceptional Exotics, 12319 Steedland, Louisville KY 40229, (502) 955-8705.

For sale: jumbo rats, 95¢; small rats, 65¢; in lots of 200+. No shipping. Karen Ellett, Box 78, Rt. #1, Greenville NY 12083, (518) 966-8192.

For sale: *THE GOURMET RODENT*: rats and mice—pinkies, fuzzies and adults. Quantity discounts. Please send a SASE for pricelist or call Bill Brant, 3496 State Road 346A, Archer FL 32618, (904) 495-9024.

For sale: frozen chicks, four for \$1. Will bring to CHS meetings. Bryant Capiz, (312) 725-4773.

For sale: rats, small and medium, 75¢. Dan, (708) 584-2865, call after 4 pm.

For sale: top quality mice, rats and Chinese dwarf hamsters. All sizes at competitive prices. Gary W. Allison, 919 Wyandotte Street, Bethlehem PA 18015, (215) 974-8975.

For sale: murine-pathogen-free rats and mice available in all sizes, live or frozen: pinkies, fuzzies, crawlers, small, medium and large. Frozen crawler mice in lots of 2000, \$.17 each. Also available, full grown hairless mice. FOB shipping point. Master Card accepted. Call (518) 537-2000 between 8:00 am and 5:00 pm or write SAS Corporation, 273 Hover Avenue, Germantown NY 12526 for prices and additional information.

For sale: *THE RAT SHACK*: all colors, sizes & quantities of domestic rats. Call Keith or Shannon Allen in Alabama, (205) 536-3081, evenings.

For sale: *MISSISSIPPI MICE*: frozen mice, fuzzies, pinkies—quantity discounts. Rob Screws, 130 Calhoun Ave., Yazoo City MS 39194, (601) 746-8336.

For sale: frozen mice, pinkies to adults, \$.40 to \$.50 each. Chicago area only. Will deliver to herp meetings; please call in advance. Scott Michaels, (815) 363-0290.

For sale: large selection of captive born reptiles and amphibians, books and supplies. Send S.A.S. business-size envelope for complimentary price list or \$5 for a 1 year subscription (bi-monthly), to Twin Cities Reptiles, 540 Winnetka Avenue North, Golden Valley MN 55427, (612) 593-0298.

For sale: *HERPETOLOGICAL DIRECTORY*. A valuable information source containing private and commercial breeders, U.S. and foreign herp societies, wholesalers, and sources for rodents & other food items, supplies & equipment and publications. Send \$19.95 to *Great Valley Serpenterium*, 2379 Maggio Circle Unit C, Lodi CA 95240.

For sale: books on reptiles and amphibians, used, out of print and rare. Over 3400 titles listed. List sent free upon request. *Herpetological Search Service & Exchange*, 117 E. Santa Barbara Road, Lindenhurst NY 11757.

For sale: large selection of herpetological literature—new and used books, and reprints. Send S.A.S.E. for a complete list to: Michael Blanford, 1943 Cromwell Dr., Wheaton IL 60187.

For sale: professional reptile feeding/growth charts. Protect your valuable reptiles by keeping good records. Record feedings, weight, length, shedding, breedings, etc. 3 x 5 card stock, 20 pack, \$3; 50 pack, \$6; 100 pack, \$10. Prices include shipping and handling! Economical—one card lasts 3-8 months. Dealers wanted. West Texas Reptiles, 6401 University, Lubbock TX 79413.

For sale: the finest quality reptile cages built in this country. Custom made from over 25 years experience—we've worked out all the bugs! All the best features have been incorporated into one design, a finely honed performance cage which is better than the old "plywood box" design. All cages are stackable, front opening, extremely functional, durable and lightweight, while retaining an enjoyable simplicity. Call Paul Edwards at Creative Caging Systems, (402) 330-4381, for prices and for photos. [Omaha NE]

For sale: 75-gallon tank (4' x 1½' x 1½') with 2½' stand, fluorescent lighting and top, \$100. Call anytime at (708) 381-0672.

For sale: window ornaments and stained glass panels with herp themes. Will adapt your animal's coloration to one of my patterns, or supply me with a clear photograph and I will make a new pattern for you. Immortalize your favorite animal in stained glass! For each one sold, I will make a donation to HEART. Call for more information. Paul (219) 464-8778. [northern IN]

For sale: c.b. giant day geckos, *Phelsuma madagascariensis grandis*, \$30. Dennis Caldwell, 4521 N. Paseo Pitiquito, Tucson AZ 85716, (602) 299-2193.

For sale: captive born boa constrictors—1991—feeding very well on rat fuzzies, \$150. Call Jim, 7:30 am - 5:30 pm at (813) 787-6326. [Palm Harbor FL]

For sale: adult and baby ball pythons—docile and handleable, \$80 each; feeder mice, \$1.75 each; crickets, mealworms, and king mealworms available. Delivery to CHS meetings possible. Call Rob at (219) 663-3732 or Jim at (219) 769-6779. [northern IN]

For sale: one male and one female Argentine boas, *Boa constrictor occidentalis*, 4-5', \$3750/pair; one male and one female Madagascan tree boas, *Sanzinia madagascariensis*, 1990 or 1991 babies, \$3500/pair; four male and six female central Baja rosy boas, different ages, \$225-275 each; one male and four female Kenyan sand boas, *Eryx colubrinus loveridgei*, yearlings, \$100 each. Tom Burke, (516) 586-2515. [Long Island NY]

## Advertisements (cont'd)

For sale: 4½' male boa constrictor, aggressive feeder, healthy, \$200. Chris Siddall, 2513 Marlboro Street, Lubbock TX 79415, (806) 744-5949.

For sale: 6' female Indian python, *Python molurus molurus* [permit required]; green iguana, 3'. Call Dusty Showers (815) 748-5059, Dekalb IL.

For sale: one male reticulated python, 15–17", tame, \$500; two juvenile c.b. Kenya sand boas, \$75 each; one male c.b. Pueblan milksnake, 24", \$150; one male c.b. western hognose snake, 20", mouse feeder, \$75, one male green cat-eyed snake, 4–5", long term captive, \$50; four c.b. juvenile elongated tortoises, \$50 each; two male and three female adult black-knob map turtles, \$35 each. Call Tom at (602) 967-6265 (answering machine after fourth ring. [Tempe AZ]

For sale: five c.b. red-footed tortoises, lots of red, \$75 each; one male and one female 18-month-old rubber boas, excellent feeders, \$250 for the pair; one male and one female albino Sonoran gopher snakes, well started, \$150 for the pair, one male and female hetero albino California kingsnakes, \$60 for the pair; one male and one female c.b. Taiwan beauty snakes, 2–3', yearlings, \$200 for the pair. Allen Anderson, P.O. Box 166, Norwalk IA 50211, (515) 981-0402, evenings.

For sale: the following specimens are offered for sale to help thin out my collection; all are "keepers." One adult male *Lampropeltis triangulum arcifera*, \$200; one subadult male *Pituophis m. melanoleucus* (NE Alabama—F<sub>1</sub> from w/c), \$100; one adult male *P. m. lodingi* (SW Mobile Alabama—F<sub>1</sub> from w/c), \$150; one male and two female juvenile *P. m. lodingi* (same stock—unrelated), \$100 each; one male and one female adult *Lampropeltis getula "goini"* (aberrant patterns), \$225/pair; one female yearling *Lampropeltis t. annulata*, \$90; two male and two female juvenile *Elaphe g. guttata* (anerythristic motley strain, parents from Dr. Bechtel), \$90 pair; one male and two female adult/subadult *Lampropeltis g. nigrita* (Arizona/Sasabe stock), \$175 for the group; one male and one female *Lampropeltis pyromelana woodini* (juveniles—feeding), \$220/pair; two male and two female *Elaphe g. emoryi* (locality: Val Verde, Texas), \$25 each. Looking for breeding stock? Call—I've probably got it—too much to list. The collection capped 250 and I'm burnt. Still have a handful of juvenile *alterna*. Gerry Salmon, 2 Violet Hill Road, Rhinebeck NY 12572, (914) 876-5951.

For sale: four Gulf Coast box turtles, \$30 each; seven assorted eastern box turtles, \$20 each; one male ornate box turtle, \$25. Also, two 20-gallon-long tanks, excellent condition, \$15 each. Norman, (708) 520-1338, after 7 pm.

For sale: reservations now being accepted for the following very exceptional bloodlines—Argentine rainbow boas, from adults with high contrast, extremely intricate patterns, \$350; Brazilian rainbow boas from iridescent, red/orange adults, \$225–250; Colombian boa constrictors from very select gold, black and tan strains, \$125–175; Dumeril's (Madagascan) boas from adults with intricate patterns and pink/orange highlighting, \$350; blood pythons from red/orange adults, \$750; carpet pythons (Queensland and New Guinea) from distinctly patterned adults, \$150; Guyanan rainbow boas from very iridescent adults, \$100; Mexican boas from adults with connecting saddles and extreme iridescence, \$125. All animals are captive born and bred here and, are 100% guaranteed to be flawless, healthy and correctly sexed. Get your reservation in now! They sell out fast. A 20% deposit is required. Make payable only to Steve Hammond. Steve Hammond, C/O Exceptional Exotics, 12319 Steedland, Louisville KY 40229, (502) 955-8705.

For sale: one male and two female southern pines, '91, \$150; two male black pines, \$100 each; one male and one female hetero San Diego gophers, '91, well started, \$100/pair. Jim, (314) 892-6605 or (314) 845-2038. [St. Louis]

For sale: lizards and other herps. Call or write for our free price list. Ray's Reptiles, P.O. Box 4732, Lincoln NE 68504-0473. Call Mon–Sat (402) 477-1975, eves are best.

For sale: for Chicago pickup only—c.b. 9/91 normal/Okeetee corn snakes (possibly heterozygous for amelanism), feeding on dead fuzzy mice, \$15 each; male c.b. '91 banded California kingsnake, feeding on chubby mice, \$30. Also, as available, TAME, cute and spunky Egyptian spiny mice (for pets—not feeders! Much more fun than hamsters or gerbils), \$6 each. Also, 55-gallon tank (holds water), \$80 or best offer. Call Janice, (312) 736-9781, 11:00 am–10:00 pm, leave message where you can be reached evenings.

For sale: one adult pair of northern pine snakes, \$275; baby Borneo blood pythons, eating, \$250. Phil, (718) 468-8009. [NYC]

For sale: one pair of 4-year-old Sonoran gopher snakes (male albino, female hetero), \$350/pair; one pair of 3-year-old Honduran milksnakes, \$250/pair; one male and two female 4-year-old albino striped California kingsnakes (bred last year), \$325 for the group; one male and one female desert California kingsnakes, c.b. '90, \$75 each; one female black & white California kingsnake, c.b. '90, \$100. Ed Scott, (815) 756-6703. [DeKalb IL]

For sale: 3½' male green iguana, excellent health and color, very impressive, \$50 or best offer. Rob, (708) 689-4126.

For sale: two red-eared sliders and 30-gallon tank set-up, make an offer. Call Kathi Brady at (513) 988-9157. [southern OH]

For sale: 4' royal (ball) python, as wide around as my forearm, sex unknown, originally wild-caught from West Africa, has never bitten anyone but has rarely been handled—python alone, \$125—with 35-gallon-long, lid and strip light, \$175. Cheri, (313) 479-2759. [metro Detroit]

For sale: rare reptiles and amphibians. Write Frank Fast, 2701 S. 11th, Lincoln NE 685502 or call (402) 477-4831 or (402) 477-9310.

For sale: five male c.b. 1991 Mexican rosy boas, *Lichanura t. trivirgata*, \$75; one male c.b. 1991 mid Baja rosy boa, *L. t. saslowi*, \$125; one male and one female c.b. 1990 tricolor Honduran milksnake, *Lampropeltis triangulum hondurensis*, \$175. Entire group of animals \$500. Kenneth Farrow, 2400 Riverfront #632, Little Rock AR 72202, (501) 664-3785.

For sale: one c.b. emerald tree boa, \$500; two male and two female bog turtles [permit required], \$1500 for the group; four Egyptian spiny-tailed agamas, \$75 each; four pancake tortoises, \$55 each. Call Ed or Cindy at (606) 429-9828. [KY]

For sale: pancake tortoises, 5½", with radiated scute patterns, all very healthy, \$75 each; 5' x 2' x 2' reptile cage with front sliding glass doors and fluorescent light fixture, \$125. Call Jeffrey Dundek at (708) 371-4232.

For sale: two male c.b. blood pythons, the female parent of these babies is a gorgeous tangerine orange, the male parent is blood red in color, \$700 each. Anyone purchasing one of these males will automatically be at the top of my list for a female hatchling next year. David Lawrence, 4504 Glenn Ridge Road, Roanoke VA 24017, (703) 563-2954.

Want to breed snakes? Join the United States' only Cooperative Breeding Coordination Program! Network with others in your state who own snakes of the opposite sex! We provide informational support throughout the breeding process to help you achieve success. We can even help you sell the offspring! Send a SASE for free information to: Snake Charmer, P.O. Box 385, Dearborn Heights MI 48127.

Wanted: —currently breeding 15 species of *Phelsuma*; 2 species of *Rhacodactylus*; 2 species of *Bavayia*; 2 species of *Oedura*; plus various other terrestrial and arboreal lizards. I would greatly appreciate any help you could provide concerning breeding info or acquisition of new animals. Frank Fast, 2701 S. 11th, Lincoln NE 68502, (402) 477-4831 or (402) 477-9310.

Wanted: I am interested in hearing from anyone who has personal/inside information on keeping Egyptian tortoises, *Testudo kleinmanni*, in captivity. Christina M. Serrone, C/O Pops & Associates, 225 Broadway, Suite 2001, New York NY 10007, (212) 732-3355 or eves after 8 pm at (718) 351-9657.

Wanted: adult sexable pairs and also hatchlings of Cagle's and Texas map turtles. R. Bugeya, 273 Coachlight, Montrose NY 10548, (914) 736-3066.

## Advertisements (cont'd)

Wanted: postcards from members' trips to foreign or local zoos, reptile parks, state parks etc. Preferably with a herptile theme. Only reimbursement my heartfelt thanks. Please mail to: Brian Bankowski, 16 Oceanic Drive, Stoney Creek, Ontario L8E 4H5, Canada.

Wanted: Turks Island boas, *Epicrates chrysogaster*, of any size and sex—to be used in a breeding project. Arthur Nohlberg III, 2015 W. Wabansia, Chicago IL 60647, (312) 486-0799—10:00 am to 10:00 pm.

Wanted: one or two adult female Russian tortoises. Dave Lee, Rt 1 Box 358A, Raleigh NC 27614, (919) 848-8117.

Wanted: adult male brown house snake, *Lamprophis fuliginosus*. Prefer proven breeder. Will buy or trade for adult male red phase. Jim, (314) 892-6605 or (314) 845-2038. [St. Louis]

Wanted: one adult female ball python (3 to 5'), must be healthy and eating. Wanted for breeding. Or will breed my male ball python with your female in the spring. He is healthy, eating and very tame. Mike, (312) 296-6539.

Wanted: female coastal rosy boa(s), *Lichanura trivirgata roseofusca*, and female Brazilian rainbow boa, *Epicrates cenchria cenchria*. Will buy or trade for 1½-2' male coastal rosy boa from Winchester, California, parents. Breck, (801) 752-0297. [UT]

Wanted: West Florida herp collector would like to correspond with other herp collectors, from all parts of the U.S., as well as foreign countries, who are interested in trading, buying and, selling reptiles of all types. Tony Picheo, 11080 Lillian Hiway 98, Pensacola FL 32506, (904) 453-8133.

Wanted: newborn to yearling Solomon Island skink, *Corucia zebrata*, must be captive bred; juvenile Brazilian rainbow boa. Call Corey Richter (616) 429-7685.

Wanted: *Trachydosaurus rugosa/asper*; *Tiliqua scincoides/nigrolutea*; *Egernia stokesii/cunninghami*; and *Uromastyx acanthanurus*. Kenneth Farrow, 2400 Riverfront #632, Little Rock AR 72202, (501) 664-3785.

Wanted: the CHS Book Service is always in need of styrofoam "peanuts" for packaging shipments. Don't discard them; recycle by bringing them to Joan Moore at any monthly meeting.

Line ads in this publication are run free for CHS members - \$2 per line for non-members.  
Any ad may be refused at the discretion of the Editor.  
Submit ads to: Michael Dloogatch, 6048 N. Lawndale Ave., Chicago, IL 60659, (312) 588-0728.

## AN ANNOUNCEMENT FROM THE HERPETOLOGISTS AT THE MOSCOW ZOOPARK

If any persons would be interested in a herp tour of selected portions of what used to be the USSR, they should contact Ray Pawley at P.O. Box 218, Hinsdale IL 60522 or at 400 E. Randolph Street, #2919, Chicago IL 60601. Although circumstances in the former Soviet Union are far from resolved, and the possibility of a cancellation is quite real, nevertheless they are quite optimistic that an expedition could be undertaken for either the Central Asian deserts and/or the Far East Maritime Tiger Reserve. An ideal number of persons would be three, possibly four. The time would be spring or fall of either 1992 or 1993, preferably the earlier. Please respond, if interested, before January 31, 1992. Extensive planning would be required.

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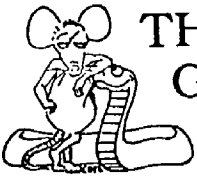


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## Unofficial Minutes of the CHS Board Meeting, December 6, 1991

The meeting was called to order by President Jack Schoenfelder at 8:00 p.m. A quorum was not present until the arrival of Ron Humbert at 8:06 p.m. Board members not present were Ellin Beltz, Phil Drajaska, Scott Henrie and Ken Mierzwa.

### Officers' Reports:

The minutes of the November board meeting were approved as read.

A treasurer's report was not available as the November bank statement had not yet arrived.

Steve Spitzer reported membership to be 1872.

### Standing Committee Reports:

**Programs:** John Murphy reported that a partial list of 1992 speakers appears in the December *Bulletin*. Bill Love will speak at the December general meeting.

**Shows:** Joan asked the board's opinion regarding purchase of a large container for transporting sizeable herps for shows.

Members are asked to look around. Joan will research some options and present a report.

**Merchandising:** Ron Humbert will contact Howard Weiner to facilitate transition of merchandising responsibilities. Joan wishes to have a physical inventory of merchandise by 12/31/91. Members were asked to forward all merchandise, reports of merchandise and/or assets to Joan by the December 26 general meeting.

**Raffle:** Ways to expedite the raffle were discussed.

**Turtle Group:** The next meeting will feature a pot-luck at the Emmerson Park Field House on December 29.

**Snake Group:** Members are looking for a name for their group.

**Lizard Group:** Jim Rowan will speak at the December 10 meeting.

A motion was made by Ron Humbert and amended by Mike Dloogatch to state that any and all merchandise purchased by anyone other than the CHS Director of Sales in the name of the CHS, or any affiliated group of the CHS, must be cleared in advance by the CHS Board of Directors. John seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

**XYZ:** No report.

**Adoption:** No report.

### Ad Hoc Committee Reports:

**Elections:** approximately 100 voting members were present for the elections.

**Meeting Facility:** Board members had a tour of the Field Museum of Natural History's (referred to hereafter as FM or FMNH) facilities prior to the board meeting. John Murphy reported having emphasized to the FM that CHS use of their facility was on a trial basis. The January 10 board meeting will be held at the FMNH. John credited Harold Voris for his work in facilitating the arrangements with the museum. Jack suggested holding a final decision until the February board meeting. Ron Humbert thanked John for all his work and effort.

**Awards Recognition:** Gery Herrmann reported that Express Awards in Palatine produced the plaques. The awards were presented at the November general meeting. The sergeant-at-arms and the members-at-large make up the awards committee.

### Old Business:

**Future Board Meetings:** Mike Dloogatch will set proposed dates for 1992.

**Insurance:** Ron Humbert has received copies of the new policies and will have a report at the January board meeting.

**Reptile Show:** John has spoken with the Field Museum's education department regarding CHS participation in a herpetological weekend put on by the FMNH. The museum's media connections should work to the CHS's advantage.

### New Business:

**Conservation Groups:** Jack expressed a need for an individual to help handle responses to conservation groups and to keep an eye on legal matters pertaining to conservation.

**Care Inquiries:** Written responses to care inquiries should be limited to a copy of the pertinent Care-in-Captivity page.

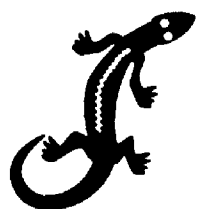
**Herpetological Postage Stamp Publication:** Mike Dloogatch presented a letter from Dr. Kraig Adler of Cornell University proposing the publication of a list of herpetological postage stamps from around the world. The publication would be in booklet format with lists and color plates. The CHS was asked to consider financing the undertaking. Mike will contact Dr. Adler for further information.

### Round Table:

Dottie pointed out the potential need to move the answering machine and change the phone number in the event of a move of operations to the FMNH.

Ron Humbert moved to adjourn and John Murphy seconded. The meeting ended at 10:14 p.m.

*Respectfully submitted, Stacy L. Miller, Recording Secretary*



**Sunday**



Feb. 2, Mar. 8, Apr. 12, May 10

# **REPTILE SWAP**

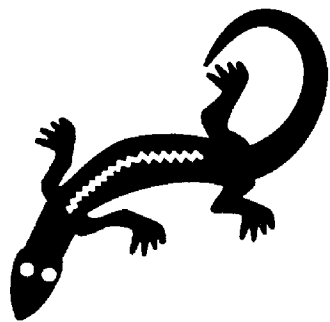
**10:00 am - 4:00 pm**

*Come to Buy or Sell • Bring your surplus*

or

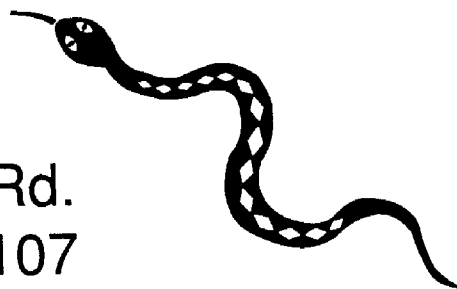
*Come to find that Special Animal*

Call to reserve indoor tables  
(708)837-4005



at

**Market Hill Farm**  
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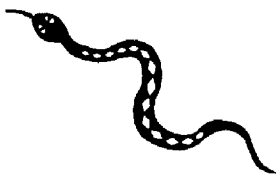
Schaumburg Road is 1 1/2 miles south of I-90.  
We are 1/2 mile east of Rt. 59.

**Lots of parking**  
**A good time will be had by all.**

All transactions between buyer and seller.  
We assume no liability for injuries or damages.  
NO venomous or permitted animals, please.

For further information  
Call (708) 837-4005

**\$3.00 Admission Per Person**  
**Under 12 Free**



## UPCOMING MEETINGS

The next meeting of the Chicago Herpetological Society will be held at 7:30 P.M., Wednesday, January 29, in the James Simpson Theater at the Field Museum of Natural History, Roosevelt Road at Lake Shore Drive, in Chicago. Dr. Aaron Bauer of Villanova University will speak on the geckos of New Zealand and New Caledonia.

The Simpson Theater is at the extreme western end of the museum. We are expected to use the entrance on the west side of the building. The main entrances at the north and south ends of the building will not be open. We have permission to use the staff parking lot to the west of the museum. Entrance to this lot is from McFetridge Drive, the wide street just to the south which lies between the museum and Soldier Field. If this west parking lot fills up, there is ample free parking available in the lot to the north of the museum. There is also metered parking available on McFetridge Drive, but be sure to note that the meters are in force until 9:00 P.M.

Those of you who use public transportation can take the #146 bus directly to the museum. Unfortunately, this bus does not operate after 9:00 P.M. Therefore, after the program we will provide a car pool to ferry CTA users to a convenient bus or rapid transit stop.

### Lizard Group

The February Lizard Group meeting will be held at the home of Bryant Capiz, 4147 W. Fletcher, Chicago IL, (312) 725-4773, on Tuesday, February 11, at 7:30 P.M. The presentation for the evening has yet to be determined.

### Turtle Club

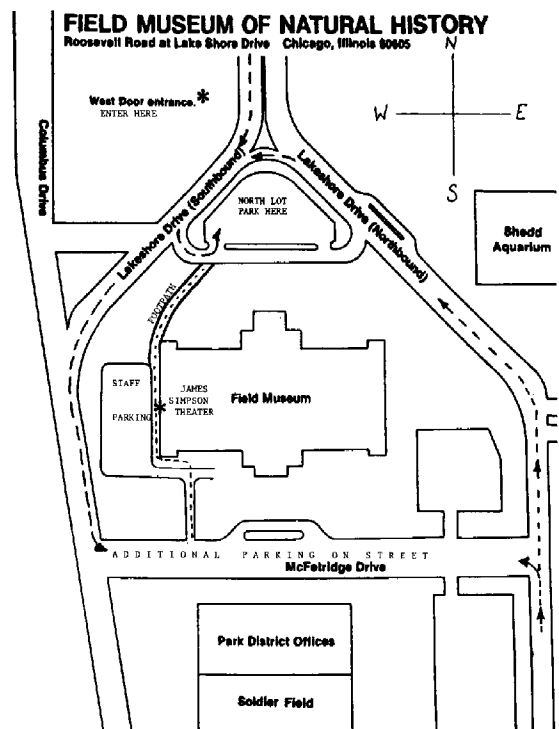
The next Chicago Turtle Club meeting will be held Sunday, January 26, 1:00-3:30 P.M., at the Emerson Park Fieldhouse, 1820 W. Granville Avenue, Chicago.

### Snake Group

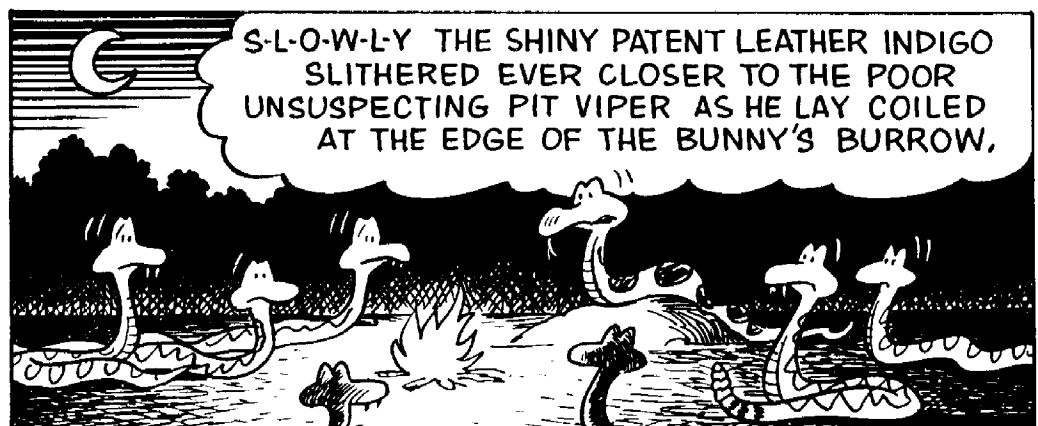
The February Snake Group rendezvous will be at the home of Bryant Capiz, 4147 W. Fletcher, Chicago IL, (312) 725-4773, on Thursday, February 20, at 7:30 P.M.

### XYZ Club

The next meeting of the XYZ (eXceptional Young Zoologists) Club will be Saturday, February 15, 1992. Call Eloise Beltz-Decker at (312) 642-8290 for time and location.



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