

# Kansas Herpetological Society

## Newsletter

*JUNE 1998*



*NUMBER 112*

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# KANSAS HERPETOLOGICAL SOCIETY



## NEWSLETTER No. 112

JUNE 1998



### ANNOUNCEMENTS

## Kansas Herpetological Society Silver Anniversary Meeting

5–8 November 1998

Honorary Chairpersons of the Meeting &  
Distinguished Life Members of the  
Kansas Herpetological Society

**Robert F. Clarke**  
Emporia State University

**Henry S. Fitch**  
The University of Kansas

**Dwight R. Platt**  
Bethel College

**Hobart M. Smith**  
The University of Colorado

Theme

### GREAT PLAINS HERPETOLOGY

With the exception of the Evening Social on Thursday, the entire program for the KHS Silver Anniversary Meeting will be held in the Lawrence Holidome. The KHS has obtained a special room rate of \$67.00 per night (1 to 4 persons per room), making it quite inexpensive for four participants to attend and stay in the same room. You are strongly urged to call and make your reservations at the Lawrence Holidome. Their number is (785) 841-7077. Lodging arrangements will not be included on your registration form; please contact the Lawrence Holidome directly. Registration fees are \$20 for KHS members and \$30 for non-members.

#### **Thursday, 5 November 1998**

KHS Executive Council Meeting

Registration: Karen Toepfer (KHS Treasurer) at Union Pacific Depot from 6:30–7:30 pm

Evening Social at Union Pacific Depot, 402 North 2nd Street, Lawrence, from 7:00–10:00 pm. Refreshments, Snacks, Music & Announcements. Greetings from KHS President John Lokke.

**Friday, 6 November 1998**

Registration: Karen Toepfer (KHS Treasurer)  
Lawrence Holidome, 200 McDonald Drive

Scientific Paper Session 1 at Lawrence Holidome  
*Moderator:* Nancy Schwarting (Animal Care Unit, University of Kansas)

*Keynote Speaker:* **Andrew Holycross** (Arizona State University) Topic: TBA  
John Lokke (University of Nebraska at Omaha) An Artist/Naturalist's Search for the Timber Rattlesnake on the Missouri River in Southeastern Nebraska.  
Chris Sheil (University of Kansas Natural History Museum) Phylogenetics and Biogeography of the Snakes of the Tribe Nothopsinae (Colubridae).  
Nicole Gerlanc (Kansas State University) KS-GAP: Progress on the Amphibian and Reptilian Layers in Kansas.  
Dwight R. Platt (Bethel College, North Newton, Kansas) Population Trends in the Assemblage of Snakes on Sand Prairies in Western Harvey County, Kansas, Over a Forty Year Period.

Lunch: Noon to 1:00 pm

Scientific Paper Session 2 at Lawrence Holidome  
*Moderator:* David R. Edds (Emporia State University)

*Keynote Speaker:* **David Chiszar** (University of Colorado) Topic: TBA  
Calvin Cink (Baker University, Baldwin) Snakes of the Baker Wetlands, Douglas County, Kansas.  
David L. Hardy, Sr. (Tucson Herpetological Society) Predators of Silent Beauty: The Blacktail Rattlesnakes of the Chiricahua Mountains.

KHS General Business Meeting  
KHS President John Lokke presiding

Introduction of current KHS officers  
Introduction of all former Presidents of the KHS  
Election of KHS Officers for 1999  
Presentation of the Howard Kay Gloyd-Edward Harrison Taylor Scholarship by John Lokke (KHS President)  
Presentation of two KHS Bronze Salamander Awards by Joseph T. Collins (The Center for North American Amphibians and Reptiles)  
Report on Plans for the 26th Annual KHS Meeting at Pratt in 1999 by KHS President-Elect Chris Mammoliti (Kansas Department of Wildlife & Parks)

Evening Program

Refreshments, Snacks, Music & Announcements.

Larry L. Miller (Kansas Heritage Photography, Wakarusa) A History of the Kansas Herpetological Society With Color Slides: A Candid Look at the KHS Rite of Passage.  
Olin Karch (Lawrence, Kansas) A History of the Kansas Herpetological Society With Video Tape: A Candid Look at the KHS Rite of Passage in Motion.  
Eric Thiss & John P. Levell (The Serpent's Tale & ZooBooks) Featured Booksellers at the KHS Silver Anniversary Meeting, Eric and John will display their incredibly diverse selection of books throughout the evening.  
The University Press of Kansas (Lawrence, Kansas) will display a wide array of books and field guides on Kansas wildlife throughout the evening.

**Saturday, 7 November 1998**

Registration: Karen Toepfer (KHS Treasurer) Lawrence Holidome, 200 McDonald Drive

Scientific Paper Session 3 at Lawrence Holidome  
*Moderator:* Karen Graham (Sedgwick County Zoo)

*Keynote Speaker:* **Aaron M. Bauer** (Villanova University) Topic: The Reptiles of New Caledonia: Evolution of an Highly Endemic Herpetofauna.

Travis W. Taggart (Southeastern Louisiana University, Hammond) A Re-analysis of the Systematics of the *Plethodon glutinosus* Complex.

Emily Moriarty (Saint Mary's College, Notre Dame, Indiana) A Morphometric and Molecular Comparison of *Pseudacris triseriata* and *Pseudacris maculata* from Sympatric Populations in Douglas County, Kansas.

Kelly J. Irwin (University of Georgia, Athens) Herpetofaunal Community Response to Timber Harvest Practices in an East Texas Bottomland Hardwood Forest.

Lisa K. Irwin (University of Georgia, Athens) Reproductive Ecology of *Pseudemys concinna* in Southwestern Missouri.

KHS Group Photograph at 11:45 am, taken by Larry L. Miller (Kansas Heritage Photography, Wakarusa)

Lunch: Noon to 1:00 pm

Scientific Paper Session 4 at Lawrence Holidome  
*Moderator:* George R. Pisani (University of Kansas)

*Keynote Speaker:* **Richard A. Seigel** (Southeastern Louisiana University, Hammond) Topic: Effects of Floods on Massasaugas (*Sistrurus catenatus*) and Other Snakes.

William Busby (Kansas Biological Survey, Lawrence) The Crawfish Frog (*Rana areolata*) in Kansas.

Eric M. Rundquist (Animal Care Unit, University of Kansas) A Walk in Beauty: Observations of a Kansas Herpetologist.

Walter Meshaka (Everglades National Park, Florida) Exotic Herpetofauna on the Florida Landscape.

Randy Reiserer (University of California, Berkeley) A Rapid Evolutionary Change in the Stimulus Control of Caudal Luring in the Massasauga.

Banquet TBA

Introduction of KHS Distinguished Life Members

Robert F. Clarke

(introduced by Stanley D. Roth, Jr.)

Henry S. Fitch

(introduced by John E. Simmons)

Dwight R. Platt

(introduced by Robert Powell)

Hobart M. Smith

(introduced by Eric M. Rundquist)

Presentation of **The Suzanne L. & Joseph T. Collins Award** by James L. Knight (South Carolina State Museum)

*Banquet Keynote Speaker:* **David Grow** (Oklahoma City Zoo)

KHS Auction conducted by Joseph T. Collins, KHS Treasurer Karen Toepfer, Suzanne L. Collins, Ann Rundquist, and Carolyn Moriarty assisting.

**Sunday, 8 November 1998**

Scientific Paper Session 5 at Lawrence Holidome  
*Moderator:* William Busby (Kansas Biological Survey)

*Keynote Speaker:* **Christopher J. Raxworthy** (KU Natural History Museum) Topic: Great Plains and Pains: Herpetology of Madagascar.

Hank Guarisco (Kansas Biological Survey, Lawrence) Reptiles at the Jersey Wildlife Preservation Trust.

Allan Volkman (Wichita, Kansas) A Flint Hills Herpetological Survey in Cowley County, Kansas, Assessing a Decade (1989 to 1998).

Tom R. Johnson (Missouri Department of Conservation, Jefferson City) Rare and Endangered Amphibians and Reptiles in Missouri.

Corey L. Fincher (Oklahoma State University) The Effect of Hunting on Defensive Behavior in the Western Diamondback Rattlesnake in Western Oklahoma.

Lani Bures & Lynnette Sievert (Emporia State University) The Effect of Feeding on Thermoregulation in Woodhouse's Toad (*Bufo woodhousii*).

Post-meeting Reception at 3:00 pm at the residence of Suzanne & Joe Collins.

Silver Anniversary Meeting Committee: Suzanne L. Collins, Ann Rundquist, Eric M. Rundquist, and Joseph T. Collins. Joseph T. Collins will serve as Master of Ceremonies for the meeting

## REQUEST FOR RINGNECK SNAKE TISSUE

*Diadophis punctatus* tissue is requested for a molecular systematic study of the Ringneck Snakes of California and the Western United States. Tissue from eastern subspecies is required for comparative analysis, but of particular importance is tissue from *California, Oregon, Washington, Idaho, Nevada, Utah, Arizona, Colorado, Texas, and Mexico.*

Most mail/courier services will not deliver live or dead snakes. Therefore only tissue can be sent. Organs or scales can be preserved in Ethyl Alcohol (ETOH) and stored in epitubes. Epitubes can be taped shut, packaged in padded envelopes and sent regular mail via U. S. Postal Service. Please include specific locality data and a copy of the collector's state permit. Please send tissues to:

Chris Feldman  
131 Hensill Hall (Spicer Lab)  
Department of Biology  
San Francisco State University  
1600 Holloway Avenue  
San Francisco, California 94123

Senders will be reimbursed. All collectors/donors will be graciously acknowledged in any publications regarding this work. If there are any questions, please call Chris Feldman at (415) 338-6417 or (415) 338-2497 or e-mail: varanus@sfsu.edu

## NEW TURTLE VOLUME AVAILABLE

*Proceedings: Conservation, Restoration, and Management of Tortoises and Turtles: An International Conference*

A remarkable group of ecologists, conservationists, land managers, governmental officials, and policy makers representing 25 nations gathered in July 1993 at Purchase, New York, to attend a conference devoted to the conservation, restoration, and management of tortoises and turtles. Offering just a glimpse of the troubled conservation status of the world's 270-plus species of

tortoises and turtles, the 77 papers and summary reports (as well as abstracts of presented posters) included in the proceedings represent the combined effort of more than 130 authors and 35 reviewers.

In the four years since the gathering of the 230 delegates and attendees at Purchase, this long-awaited proceedings volume has become more than simply documentation of that event. Nearly all of the 82 papers presented at the conference were submitted for inclusion in the proceedings, most have subsequently been updated by the authors to reflect current field data wherever possible, and all have been peer reviewed.

The material in this 494-page volume is organized by the major subject areas presented at the 1993 conference and roughly corresponds to the daily sessions of the meeting: Direct and Indirect Threats to Habitat; Direct Losses to Populations, Disease, Predation, and Human Exploitation; Breeding, Repatriation, and Relocation; Applications of Demography, Ecology, and Genetics to Conservation; Status Reports; Species Recovery and Management Strategies; Reserves and Programs; and Integrated Management Strategies and Public Policy. Abstracts of the presented posters appear in a separate section.

Of the conference and the proceedings volume, Peter C. H. Pritchard, author of the *Encyclopedia of Turtles*, makes the following observations: "Four years have passed since the epochal turtle conservation conference at the State University of New York in Purchase in July 1993. Since that time, as John Behler has observed, the moniker "Purchase" has entered the lexicon of cheloniology as a major event of lasting impact. Together the papers in this volume lay the groundwork for what one might call a theoretical basis for the science of chelonian conservation, an exercise that has never been attempted before."

The price for this volume is \$50, including postage within the USA. (Please add \$6 for Priority Mail.) Send check payable to NYTTS to: The New York Turtle and Tortoise Society, P.O. Box 878, Orange, NJ 07051-0878, USA. Inquiries concerning quantity discounts, foreign postal rates and other information may be submitted to Proceedings Inquiries.

## KHS BUSINESS

### KHS SILVER ANNIVERSARY FALL FIELD TRIP

The KHS Silver Anniversary Fall Field Trip will be held up on the Nebraska border in Marshall County, Kansas on 9–11 October 1998. KHS members will gather as early as Friday night (9 October) at the Big Indian Lake Recreation Area in Gage County, Nebraska, to camp and enjoy the evening.

Those seeking motels should contact the chambers of commerce in Fairbury (Jefferson County, Nebraska) or Marysville (Marshall County, Kansas).

Field herp counts will officially begin at 9:00 am on Saturday (10 October), and continue until noon on Sunday (11 October).

Any questions about this KHS field trip should be directed to Larry Miller. Enquiries may be in the form of email, a telephone call, or U.S. mail.

Larry L. Miller  
Field Trip Chairperson  
840 SW 97th Street  
Wakarusa, Kansas 66546  
Telephone 785-836-2119  
Email: wakarusa@cjnetworks.com

### GLOYD-TAYLOR SCHOLARSHIP

Nominations are now due for the annual KHS Howard K. Gloyd-Edward H. Taylor Scholarship in Herpetology. Nominations for this award are open to any student enrolled in any accredited educational institution in Kansas or any KHS member enrolled in any accredited educational institution outside of Kansas. Students from primary school through university are eligible. Nominations should include typewritten details, not to exceed two pages, of the nominee's qualifications, plus name and address of the nominee and nominator. Self-nomination is excluded.

All nominations should be sent to KHS President John Lokke at the address listed on the inside front cover of this Newsletter. The KHS Executive Council makes the final decision and announces the scholarship winner at the KHS annual meeting.

Those wishing to contribute to the scholarship fund should send contributions to KHS Treasurer Karen Toepfer and note that the contribution is specifically for the Gloyd-Taylor scholarship fund. All contributions are tax-deductible.

### KDWP HERP STING SO FAR NETS NINE ON KANSAS AND FEDERAL CHARGES

The Office of the District Attorney for the Eighteenth Judicial District of Kansas provided information on three recent pleas and/or convictions that resulted from a "sting" operation by the Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks, in cooperation with the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service, during 1995, 1996, and 1997.

Robert Hartnagel, Todd J. Montgomery, and Michelle Montgomery pled guilty or were convicted at the Sedgwick County Courthouse, Wichita, for wildlife violations involving Kansas reptiles.

Hartnagel (Florence, Kansas) was charged with possession and sale of an Eastern Hognose Snake on 18 August 1997, and the case went to trial on 27 March 1998. Hartnagel was found guilty on the charge of possession, was fined \$343.50, was given 30 days in jail (suspended), and was placed on probation until September 1998.

Todd Montgomery (Wichita) was charged with illegal commercialization of Kansas wildlife (involving three species of reptiles—Western Glass Lizard, Milk Snake, and Common Kingsnake) on 17 May 1996, pled guilty on 27 April 1998, was fined \$472.00, and was placed on probation until 27 January 1998.

Michelle Montgomery (Wichita) was charged with illegal commercialization of wildlife (reptiles), pled guilty on 1 July 1998, was fined \$200.00 plus costs, and was placed on six months probation.

Officials from appropriate governmental agencies and jurisdictions in Kansas also provided information on the convictions of six other individuals, all of whom were charged with wildlife violations on 19 August 1997, as follows:

Terry Stevens (Louisiana) pled guilty in Federal Court to two felony violations of the Lacey Act involving transportation and illegal commerce (i.e., selling Ornate Box Turtles), was fined over \$5000.00, was ordered to pay restitution of over \$7600.00 to KDWP, received one year probation, and received four months home detention.

Dan Newton (Elk City, Kansas) was convicted at the Montgomery County Courthouse of illegal commercialization of wildlife (i.e., selling Ornate Box Turtles), had his hunting and fishing license revoked for two years, received one year probation, and was ordered to pay restitution of \$765.00 to KDWP. In Federal Court, Mr. Newton was convicted of a Lacey Act felony violation, fined over \$1000.00, given eight months probation, three months home detention, and was ordered to pay restitution (amount not available yet) to KDWP.

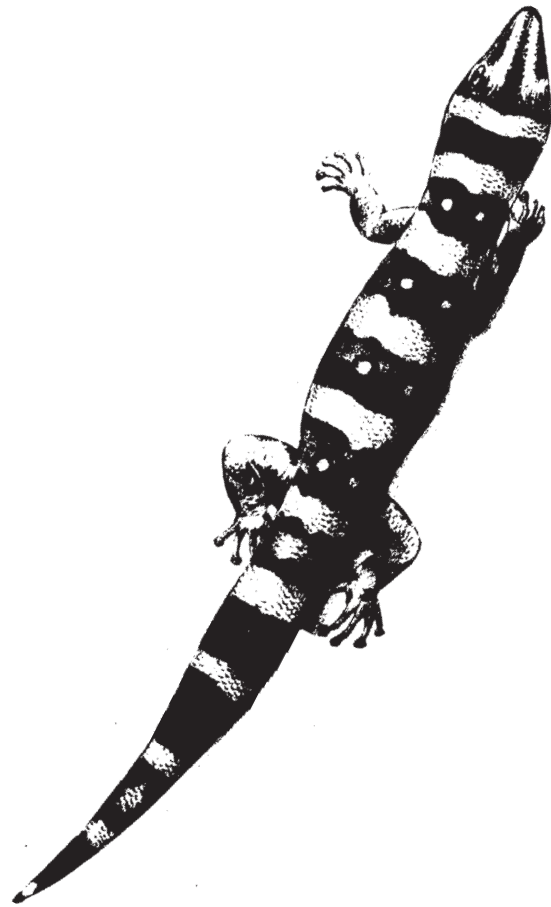
Ted Adams (Topeka) pled guilty in Federal Court to a felony violation of the Lacey Act involving purchase (i.e., Eastern Collared Lizard) and attempted purchase (i.e., Gila Monster), was fined \$500.00, was ordered to pay restitution of \$375.00 to KDWP, and received one year probation.

Casey Earp (Joplin, Missouri) pled guilty in Federal Court to a misdemeanor violation of the Lacey Act involving the following species of reptiles: Five-lined Skink, Six-lined Racerunner, Western Slender Glass Lizard, Eastern Collared Lizard, Rough Green Snake, Prairie Kingsnake, Common Kingsnake, Great Plains Rat Snake, Common Garter Snake, Lined Snake), and was fined \$710.00.

James Zumwalt (Joplin, Missouri) pled guilty in Federal Court to a misdemeanor violation of the Lacey Act involving the species in the Earp violation (above), and was fined \$370.00.

Sandi Pratt (Dodge City) pled guilty in Federal Court to a misdemeanor violation of the Lacey Act involving illegal purchase of the following species of reptiles: Common Kingsnake, Common Garter Snake, Rough Green Snake, and Western Hognose Snake), and was fined \$370.00.

Three of these cases may be appealed. More cases developed through the KDWP “sting” operation are pending for state offenses, and will be reported to KHS members as they are settled. We will also report on the result of additional federal charges for violations that occurred in Kansas or involved Kansas reptiles and amphibians, as they are processed and become available.



### AMPHIBIAN AND REPTILE COUNTS IN SOUTHEASTERN OHIO

Joseph T. Collins & Suzanne L. Collins  
*The Center for North American Amphibians and Reptiles*  
 1502 Medinah Circle  
 Lawrence, Kansas 66047

From 21 to 24 June 1998, we had an opportunity to visit and conduct counts of amphibians and reptiles observed in southeastern Ohio. We were accompanied by Jerry Collins and Kay Collins (Cincinnati). Results of our observations are listed below. For the four days, under extremely hot conditions ( $\pm 90-95^{\circ}\text{F}$ ), we observed 29 specimens of amphibians and reptiles consisting of 8 species. Common names are those standardized by Collins (1997).

Ohio: Athens, Hocking, Morgan, Perry and Vinton Counties: all observations made using Burr Oak State Lake and Lake Hope as hubs. 21–24 June 1998.

American Toad ( <i>Bufo americanus</i> ) .....	1
Gray Treefrog ( <i>Hyla versicolor</i> ) .....	1
Bullfrog ( <i>Rana catesbeiana</i> ) .....	3
Painted Turtle ( <i>Chrysemys picta</i> ) .....	11
Eastern Box Turtle ( <i>Terrapene carolina</i> ) .....	8
Eastern Rat Snake ( <i>Elaphe obsoleta</i> ) .....	3
Milk Snake ( <i>Lampropeltis triangulum</i> ) .....	1
Common Garter Snake ( <i>Thamnophis sirtalis</i> ) .....	1
8 species .....	29 specimens

#### Literature Cited

Collins, Joseph T. 1997. *Standard Common and Current Scientific Names for North American Amphibians and Reptiles. Fourth Edition.* SSAR Herpetol. Circ. 25: 1–40.



## KHS BRINGS YOU GREAT NEWS OF THE WORLD

### **PUBLIC DISCOVERS BAKER WETLANDS**

Amidst ringing songs of redwinged blackbirds, area residents strolled along gravel roads and dirt paths learning about a biologically rich area south of town on Sunday.

"The main thing is that people find out what wetlands are all about," says Roger Boyd, professor of biology at Baker University, host of the seventh annual Baker Wetlands Field Day.

"A lot of people think it's stinky water and mud. This gives people an opportunity about the role of wetlands and rivers... and to see some of the wildlife."

An estimated 300 people walked along trails, stopping at several display sites along the way on Sunday.

In all, there were about 16 information stations, including displays of live reptiles, amphibians, and birds, canoe trips, and edible and medicinal plants.

"How do you catch a snake?" asked Tom Crice of Lawrence, after holding a live 4 1/2-foot black rat snake.

"You reach down and pick it up," said Alexis Powell, a member of the Kansas Herpetological Society who had several reptiles and amphibians on display.

Several people handled snakes at the information site, which was one of the most crowded on the tour.

"I think with reptile - snakes in particular - people have a fascination with them," Powell said. There's a lot of mythology and a lot of fear with them."

Michelle Knoll, Baldwin, and her daughter, Kayla, 8, said Sunday was the first time they had been to the Baker Wetlands.

"We're interested in wildlife and we wanted to learn about the wetlands," Ms. Knoll said.

"We like animals," Kayla said.

"We've driven by on 31st Street," said Susan Ludwick, who brought her son, Michael, 9.

"I've always wanted to do this," she said.

Students from Baker and representatives of several environmental organizations outlined how the wetlands help keep water supplies clean and provide a haven for hundreds of species of animals and plants.

— Lawrence Journal World 20 April 1998  
(Submitted by Suzanne L. Collins, Lawrence)

### **SNAKE ROUNDUP PUTS SHARON SPRINGS ON THE MAP**

Mike Sheridan spread a sleeping bag at a Wallace County Fair Grounds pavilion but he wasn't planning to nap. Not when his buddies were stuffing about a dozen live

prairie rattlers, several making ominous noises, into the bag with him. Remaining prone and absolutely motionless, Sheridan kept up a continuous banter with fellow members of the Fangs and Rattlers exhibition team as about 50 persons watched. After 15 minutes, the snakes were removed. The Granbury, Texas, showman crawled out of the bag to a round of applause. "We'll do it again in about an hour," he said. "Folks get a kick out of it." Did it give him the willies? "I'd a lot rather be in that bag full of snakes than a clerk in some big-city convenience store after midnight." And people grouse that western Kansas is dull. Not at least during the weekend of the seventh annual Wallace County Rattlesnake Roundup and Festival. By Sunday night, 2,000 people had wandered through town and down to the fairgrounds to see the Fangs and Rattlers show and sample the rattlesnake meat, and buy everything from Indian jewelry to funnel cakes to folding chairs. "People around here are real pleased how it went," said Jackie Walker, editor of the local paper, The Western Times.

That the actual roundup of rattlesnakes had been a bust didn't seem to bother a soul. With temperatures hovering at plus or minus 50 degrees, the snakes had stayed in their dens. No sun, no sunning. No sunning, no catching. And no matter. To guard against just such an eventuality, scores of snakes had been stockpiled from earlier hunts. And since the weekend theme was snakes, several people showed up toting their own reptiles - from small garter snakes to good-size boa constrictors. The weekend was a success, also, because a group of protesters - called "herps" by people here - hadn't shown up, "They didn't make a peep," said Walker. "Those herps," snorted Meg Walker, Jackie Walker's mother-in-law and one of the founders of the roundup. "They've been here a couple of times with their signs. Follow you around and try and get you to say something inflammatory so they can blow it up in their publicity. 'Course, you know where they're all from, don't you? Why, eastern Kansas." The Kansas Herpetological Society has denounced the Wallace County roundup and similar events as environmentally destructive, cruel and inhumane, dangerous to participants and encouraging exploitation. "I think we had somebody out there undercover, just checking on what was going on," said Larry Miller, a society member. He teaches at Topeka Collegiate Middle School, where his students protest the roundup by e-mail and the Internet as "barbaric."

The goal, he said, is to stop the roundup and "then do some real science" to ascertain what damage such activity is doing to the environment and the ecosystem of western Kansas. "The animal rights people were here from the first," said Virgil Pugh, a Colwich, Kan., speech patholo-

gist who likes to hunt snakes. "Talking to them doesn't work. Ask them about the snakes killed in those Flint Hill burns every spring and they don't answer. Or snakes run over on the road or crushed during hay baling." He noted that 300 of Wallace County's 900 square miles are off limits to snake catchers. "Farmers and ranchers just don't want people tromping around. And even in a good years, only about 300 snakes are taken. That's a piddling number. "But, you know, I think every time those herps make some noise, it just brings more people to see what the fuss is. And pretty soon they're enjoying the roundup." In the early 1990s Meg Walker; her niece, Sarah Walker; Judie Withers; Sheila Gebhards; and Debbie Fisher starting thinking about Sharon Springs and Wallace County and how to attract tourists to help the economy. The 1980s had been tough. The sugar beet industry, once the mortgage lifter for local farmers, had gone belly up. Cattle prices were in the tank. There were forced auctions. A figure floating around seemed to have a modicum of truth - seven failed farmers meant one local business going broke. Plus, America had bypassed this part of Kansas. Interstate 70 was 30 miles north. Traffic on U.S. 40 - that mythical road from Atlantic City to San Francisco that went through Sharon Springs - had become a ghost of its former self. The population of Wallace County was 1,900, roughly the same as Westwood, that tiny Johnson County suburb of Kansas City - one time zone to the east. "We thought about what we had," said Meg Walker. "Frankly, not a whole lot. Pretty country. Mount Sunflower, the highest point in the state. Nice people. "What we did have was snakes. Lord, did we have snakes!" So many in fact that locals here still give any gate the once over before opening it. A rattler may be basking on it. There are snakes in the roads, snakes on tumbleweeds, snakes in the pastures. Farm wives don't gasp here when they see a snake. They get a shovel or hoe and kill it. The five women proposed a rattlesnake roundup along the lines of similar events in Texas, Georgia and Oklahoma. They remember that people looked at them as if they were crazy. But they forged ahead, testifying in Topeka for a bill that made the roundup legal. The community came around. The first roundup was in 1992. Now Wallace County is on the map for people such as David Ayres, who drove the 400 miles from Ottawa, Kan. "The only thing I can compare to hunting rattlesnakes is back when I flew Huey gunships in Vietnam," said Ayres. "It's a rush."

Miller admitted no scientific studies to prove that such roundups are harmful to the ecosystem. He added he does worry that the taking of such snakes who feed on rats and mice may cause an explosion in rodent numbers. And rodents, he said, have been identified as carriers of hantavirus, blamed for several deaths in the Southwest.

"I hunt and fish," said Miller. "But I don't like the idea of promoting the killing of creatures just to do it. I don't think it's good for kids to see such creatures butchered."

Miller, however, is the first to admit that opponents have a long pull to stop such roundups. Most of it, he said, is tradition and image. "They're snakes," he said. "They aren't baby seals."

— Kansas City Star, 24 May 1998  
(submitted by Larry L. Miller, Wakarusa)

**Editor's Note:** *The Executive Council of the Kansas Herpetological Society did not send or authorize anyone to go "undercover" at this event.*

## RESIDENT OF LEOTI WORKING TO LIMIT INHUMAN PRACTICES AT COUNTY FAIR TURTLE RACES AND OTHER EVENTS

"Slow and steady wins the race," wrote Aesop, a famous teller-of-tales in the sixth century B.C.

In more modern times, Leoti resident Sarah Reeb has observed the hard-shelled reptiles literally running for their lives at county fair-sponsored box turtle races across western Kansas — trying to escape a potentially deadly combination of searing heat and a burning summer sun.

"What you don't see is how many of them are cooking in the sun, how many are starving," Reeb said Saturday, "And how many have died."

Reeb, who lives and works at a Wichita County ranch near Leoti, has spent the last two years attempting to convince turtle-race sponsors to consider the summertime plight of the lowly tortoise.

One tactic, Reeb says, is for sponsoring groups to hold turtle races in shaded areas, instead of open rodeo arenas, where full exposure to the sun can quickly spell trouble for reptiles.

"As with other cold-blooded animals, turtles' body temperature is not self-regulating," Reeb said. "Protection from high heat is critical if turtles are to avoid stewing in their own juices in the shell."

Reeb, 45, has identified 20 communities in the western half of Kansas where turtle races are a standard activity, especially for young children at local fairs and Independence Day events.

Next month's Wichita County Fair will feature a box turtle race for the 67th consecutive year — a longstanding tradition that has entertained generations of children who have entered as many as 500 reptiles, sponsors said.

"We're just trying to do the best we can, and I'm sure there's also a million dogs in the world, and some aren't being treated right," said Gary Kreutzer, fair board president. "Maybe some of these turtles aren't being treated right. I don't understand it. I guess you should never use a trap on a mousetrap."(sic)

But Reeb insists she isn't trying to lead a one-person crusade to ban turtle-racing, a summertime event as Ameri-

can as Mark Twain's famous account of frog-jumping contests in Calaveras County, Calif.

"Let me assure you that I am not an activist nor a radical," she said, "just a regular working person who believes in the use of (natural) resources without abuse."

During the last year, Reeb apparently has succeeded in persuading most race sponsors to cease the practice of painting the turtles' shells, frequently in loud, psychedelic colors that may inhibit the creature's ability to remain camouflaged when re-released in its home range, she says.

"The paint can also have a toxic effect on the shells, and can deform the shell," Reeb said.

Reeb also recommends race organizers limit entries to one turtle per child or family.

Finally, Reeb suggests race organizers require competitors to pick up their turtles after each race, rather than let them lie abandoned for hours in sun-baked grandstands or the beds of pickup trucks.

Although most western Kansas turtle races attract far fewer than 100 animal entries, a handful of the larger events will draw as many as 700 reptiles.

Kreutzer disputes Reeb's charge that turtles can die after only 20 minutes in the sun on a hot afternoon.

"In western Kansas today, it's about 100 degrees," he said. "(Turtles) don't wear that shell around for nothing."

Although Reeb hasn't listed annual turtle races in the eastern half of the state, several upcoming events are scheduled in northeast Kansas communities, including Oskaloosa, Richmond and at the Pottawatomie County fair.

— Topeka Capital-Journal, 5 July 1998  
(submitted by Larry L. Miller, Wakarusa)

## LIZARDS MAY BE KEY TO DEFEATING LYME

Scientists think they've discovered why Lyme disease that menaces the eastern United States is so much less common in California: lizards.

Robert Lane, a University of California, Berkeley insect biologist, said ticks with the disease can be cleaned of the infection when they feed on the blood of the common western fence lizard.

The lizard's blood apparently contains an unidentified heat-sensitive protein that kill the Lyme diseases bacteria.

The newly published findings may explain why there is less tick-borne Lyme disease in California than in north-eastern states.

— Lawrence Journal World, 18 April 1998  
(Submitted by Suzanne Collins, Lawrence)

## POISONOUS SNAKES KEPT AS PETS BY SLOW LEARNER

In the basement of his Prince William County, Va., home, Kevin Lee Stotler was trying to milk his Indian cobra by maneuvering its razor sharp fangs through a rubber sheath on a plastic vial - the way he had done hundreds of times before. This time, the snake wriggled loose. The cobra sunk a fang into Stotler's pinkie, injecting lethal venom.

The poison pulsed through Kevin Stotler's veins. Soon, he had no feeling in his arms and legs. He could hardly breathe. At the hospital, a nurse had to hold open his paralyzed eye lids so he could sign paperwork allowing authorities to take away his 10 venomous snakes. He was on a gurney wondering if he would live, unsure if the doctors would find the needed antivenin.

The recent cobra attack was the sixth time Stotler had been bitten by a venomous snake. He was hospitalized two years ago for a life-threatening bite, and on the other occasions, weathered the symptoms at home. But despite the constant danger posed by his hobby, and a county ordinance forbidding it, Stotler has repeatedly returned to his basement to milk and breed deadly snakes.

Stotler, a 29-year-old computer maintenance worker from Triangle, Va., is one of the hundreds of breeders across the county who fuel an international market that specialists describe as an "underground zoo," where rare poisonous snakes are bought and sold as pets and mates for other snakes. Milking snakes for venom is a more-risky endeavor pursued by fewer people, specialists said.

In 1996, there were 24 reports to poison centers of moderate to life-threatening bites from exotic, venomous snakes. Many bites reported nationally involve snakes kept in homes.

How Stotler got involved in this business helps illustrate what leads breeders and milers to ply their trade even after suffering life-threatening bites. Stotler said his case should also serve as a warning.

"This is a horror story," said Stotler, a lanky man with a goatee and a cobra tattooed on his left arm. "If someone had come to me years ago and told me their horror story, I might have gotten out of it. I might have listened to reason."

Stotler did it partially for money—a factor that often drives people to get onto the exotic-snake business, according to animal control officials. Poisonous snakes can sell for hundreds of dollars apiece, depending on the breed. And milking the venom can net \$45 to \$6,000 per gram. Venom is used by researchers to study its potential medicinal uses and to make antivenin.

What Stotler and some others in the field share is a deep fascination with snakes and a desire to control an animal that sends most people fleeing in terror.

"The adrenaline situation of me catching something

that potentially could kill me was an aspect of gratification and satisfaction,” said Stotler.

Stotler said he became obsessed with collecting and studying snakes at age 8. His fascination escalated as a teen-ager, when he built cages and got a rattlesnake and an anaconda. Stotler read every snake book he could find, including a biography of Florida snake enthusiast William Haast, who is an idol to Stotler and many other snake milkers.

Haast, 86, runs a serpentarium and said he has collected venom and said he has injected himself with small doses to try to protect against snakebites. Stotler has called Haast, and sent him a photo of a king cobra - one of the most deadly snakes - that Stotler had kept in his basement for several weeks.

After high school Stotler’s involvement with snakes grew. He acquired cobras and outfitted the basement of his mother’s home with cages and a heater.

Stotler said his goal was venom research. Even though he had no college education or formal training, conducted what he called experiments on rats.

Stotler started getting bitten, which snake specialists say is inevitable for anyone who milks regularly. He kept careful records of each bite and how much venom he thought was injected.

But Stotler didn’t go to the hospital most time. He was worried that his snake collection would be seized, a concern authorities said often keeps underground breeders from seeking medical attention.

Instead, Stotler consulted a book of case studies to determine how serious his symptoms were. Doctors said Stotler could have died before realizing he had serious symptoms.

“I think it’s like playing Russian roulette,” said Barry Gold, a Baltimore poison consultant who has helped treat more than 300 snakebites and has advised Stotler’s doctors.

In 1995, a Chinese cobra wrapped itself around Stotler’s right hand and bit his left hand twice. Stotler ultimately called 911 and said he was suffering from heatstroke to try to conceal his snake collection. The doctor thought Stotler needed his appendix removed and was ready to begin surgery when Stotler finally told the truth.

Animal-control officials took his poisonous snakes, and he promised to breed only non-poisonous varieties, which he continues to do today.

Stotler returned to Triangle, Va., earlier this year because his mother, Peggy Scott, was suffering from cancer, he said. In November, Stotler said he obtained snakes to milk for their venom to help pay bills, which mounted after his mother’s October death. “I was in trouble and needed money fast,” Stotler said.

When Stotler was bitten on Dec. 3, he thought he was going to die. He was put on a respirator. After an all-night

effort, Gold turned up eight vials of antivenin from New York and 10 more from Baltimore.

By the next day, the antivenin had worked. Stotler, who is uninsured, was released from the hospital after racking up \$11,000 in bills, not including doctors’ fees or the cost of the antivenin and its transportation. He’s also been issued a \$500 citation for violating the county code on poisonous-snake possession.

Stotler’s sister, Cynthia Spurlin, 41, of Triangle, said “He’s going to have another hobby now. Maybe stamp collecting. Something safe!”

Asked about his plans, Stotler said he’s going to stick to non-venomous snakes. But then he paused. “If I ever did get into it,” Stotler said, “it would be with the king cobras. I am addicted when it comes to kings.”

— Lawrence Journal World 13 January 1998  
(Submitted by Suzanne L. Collins, Lawrence)



# FEATURE ARTICLES

## RESULTS OF THE TENTH ANNUAL KHS HERP COUNTS FOR 1998, HELD 1 APRIL–31 MAY

ERIC M RUNDQUIST  
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*University of Kansas*  
*Lawrence, Kansas 66045*

The tenth series of KHS-sponsored Kansas Herp Counts, a controlled census of amphibians and reptiles held annually during the months of April and May by members of the Kansas Herpetological Society, once again took place this spring. A total of 25 counts were conducted this year and are reported herein, demonstrating various approaches to censusing amphibians and reptiles. One count was sponsored by the Society and held in May. Common names are those standardized by Collins (1997).

Following my previous position statement (Rundquist 1994), where state and endangered and threatened species, species in need of conservation, and commercially valuable taxa are reported, exact localities are not listed. Persons with a legitimate interest in accurate locality data may contact me with a request for such information. In addition, some species reported herein may appear to be new county records. Without preserved voucher specimens or officially catalogued photographs, such listings here are not valid county records nor are they valid literature records. Although I understand that, in many cases, it is not possible to have additional verifiers available, I cannot accept self-verification of such records without the existence of these voucher specimens or photographs.

### CHEROKEE COUNTY HERP COUNT

A herp count was led by Joe Collins in Cherokee County at various localities in the Ozarkian Region only on 4 April from 1100–1700 hrs. Conditions were cloudy and cold. Observers were Suzanne L. Collins, Joseph T. Collins, Susan Eubanks, Jason Lee, and students in Collins' KU Regents Center Kansas Herpetology Course, as follows: Rebecca J. Carttar, E. Michael Eubanks, Brendan D. Greening, Rebecca J. Hill-Larsen, Monica Marak, Edward J.

May, T. Michael McRoberts, Daeyun Park, Michael R. Rochford, and David T. Stineman.

Longtail Salamander .....	±10
Cave Salamander .....	2
American Toad .....	1
Northern Cricket Frog .....	±10
Southern Leopard Frog .....	1
Ground Skink .....	±10
Five-lined Skink .....	5
Six-lined Racerunner .....	1
Western Worm Snake .....	1
Ringneck Snake .....	1

TOTAL

10 species ..... 42 specimens

Verifier was Joseph T. Collins.

### FIRST BARBER COUNTY HERP COUNT

Eric Rundquist conducted a herp count at the Alexander Ranch, Barber County on 4 April from 1000–1600 hrs. Skies were partly cloudy with strong north winds and a high temperature of 58°F. Eric was the only participant and verifier.

Prairie Lizard .....	2
Great Plains Skink .....	2
Lined Snake .....	1

TOTAL

3 species ..... 5 specimens

COWLEY COUNTY HERP COUNT

Al Volkmann led a herp count south of his annual survey site in Cowley County on 18 April from 1230–1530 hrs. The sky was mostly sunny with south winds at 5 mph. Midsurvey air temperature was 66° F and water temperature was 55° F. The area had been recently burned and intermittent streams on the area were flowing and the small pond was full. Participants were Todd and Al Volkmann.

Northern Cricket Frog .....	37
Plains Leopard Frog .....	7
Bullfrog .....	1
Great Plains Skink .....	6
Western Slender glass Lizard .....	4
Ringneck Snake .....	14
Flathead Snake .....	5
Prairie Kingsnake .....	1
Common Garter Snake .....	2

TOTAL

9 species ..... 77 specimens

Verifier was Al Volkmann.

10TH ANNUAL SUMNER COUNTY HERP COUNT

A herp count was held in Sumner County on 18 April from 1000–1330 hrs south of Caldwell near the the Oklahoma line. The weather was warm and the ground was slightly moist. Methods included searching the prairie, searching around streams and ponds, and turning rocks. Participants were Chelsea Armstrong, Anne Marie Bireta, Alexandra Bixler, Stephanie Meador, Derek Moeller, Sarah Sellers, Breana Tutuska, Allison Viola, Mary Kate Baldwin, and Larry L. Miller.

Northern Cricket Frog .....	2
Plains Leopard Frog .....	4
Bullfrog .....	3
Ornate Box Turtle .....	1
Racerunner .....	1
Lesser Earless Lizard .....	2
Prairie Lizard .....	5
Southern Prairie Skink .....	5
Great Plains Skink .....	1
Racer .....	1
Ringneck Snake .....	51
Common Kingsnake .....	1
Ground Snake .....	9

TOTAL

13 species ..... 86 specimens

Verifiers were Mary Kate Baldwin and Larry L. Miller.

DOUGLAS COUNTY HERP COUNT

Led by Larry Miller, a herp count was conducted in Douglas County at Lone Star Lake on 22 April from 1000–1330 hrs. The weather was warm and sunny with temperatures in the 60's to 70's F. during the count. The soil was slightly moist to dry under some rocks. Methods included searching along the shore of the lake and rock turning. Participants were Chelsea Armstrong, Allie Atwood, Laura Bixler, Abby Brownback, Robyn DeLacy, Pere Garlinghouse, Ashley Giroux, Nick Guffy, Mike Hall, Whitney Hamilton, Kaity Heflin, Jonathan Herrera-Thomas, Rebecca Holmes, Becky Kopp, Allie Kossoy, Ben Leifer, Ben Lapse, Scuber Martin, Zeke Nance, Katie Nichols, Jonathan Sargent, Tyler Schmidt, Julia Schwinn, Sarah Sellers, Alex Straus, Breana Tutuska, Scott Hamilton, and Larry L. Miller.

Northern Cricket Frog .....	15
Great Plains Narrowmouth Toad .....	1
Painted Turtle .....	13
Slider .....	1
Western Slender Glass Lizard .....	3
Five-lined Skink .....	8
Racer .....	2
Ringneck Snake .....	17
Eastern Rat Snake .....	2
Northern Water Snake .....	1
Brown Snake .....	1
Common Garter Snake .....	1
Copperhead .....	1

TOTAL

13 species ..... 66 specimens

Verifier was Larry L. Miller.

BARTON COUNTY HERP COUNT

A herp count was held at Cheyenne Bottoms on 25 April from 0900–1800 hrs. Skies were clear and temperatures ranged from 75–80° F. Participants were Curtis Schmidt, Greg Farley, Matthew Bain, Sean Cordill, Karen Wolfe, Donnie Shubert, Kelli Whitney, Trent van Eaton, Lisa Tholen, Mike Jay, Jamie Timson, Shawna Paulin, Michelle Schroeder, Derek Wilson, and Julie Kimpel.

Northern Cricket Frog .....	2
Western Chorus Frog .....	5
Bullfrog .....	± 20
Common Snapping Turtle .....	2
Painted Turtle .....	2
Slider .....	3
Common Kingsnake .....	1
Common Garter Snake .....	1

Diamondback Water Snake .....	>30
Massasauga .....	3

TOTAL

10 species ..... 69 specimens

Verifier was Curtis Schmidt.

TENTH ANNUAL HERP COUNT FROM COWLEY COUNTY

Al Volkmann conducted his annual Cowley County herp count at a location east of Winfield on 25 April. This was the ten-year anniversary for surveying this Cowley County site. The survey occurred between 1000–1330 hrs, and primarily consisted of rock turning. The mid-survey temperature was 88° F. The stream water temperature was 73° F. The sky was clear and the wind was from the south at 25–30 mph. This year the area was completely burned. The intermittent streams on the area were flowing and the pond was full. Participants were Joyce Lent, Jenny Previtara, Robert Previtara, Mike Unruh, Al Volkmann, Todd Volkmann, and Stan Wiechman.

Northern Cricket Frog .....	2
Plains Leopard Frog .....	5
Ornate Box Turtle .....	1
Eastern Collared Lizard .....	1
Texas Horned Lizard .....	1
Great Plains Skink .....	1
Ground Skink .....	1
Western Slender Glass Lizard .....	6
Ringneck Snake .....	44
Flathead Snake .....	18
Racer .....	13
Prairie Kingsnake .....	1
Common Kingsnake .....	1
Northern Water Snake .....	2
Graham's Crayfish Snake .....	1
Western Ribbon Snake .....	1
Plains Garter Snake .....	2
Common Garter Snake .....	4
Lined Snake .....	2

TOTAL

19 species ..... 136 individuals

Verifiers were Al Volkmann and Stan Wiechman.

McPHERSON COUNTY HERP COUNT

Joe and Suzanne Collins held a herp count in McPherson County at the Maxwell Game Reserve on 25 April from 0930–1045 hrs. Conditions were sunny and warm. The count methods consisted of road cruising and binocular observation.

Painted Turtle .....	9
Slider .....	23
Common Garter Snake .....	2

Total

3 species ..... 34 specimens

Verifier was Joseph T. Collins.

SECOND BARBER COUNTY HERP COUNT

A herp count was held at various sites in Barber County on 25–26 April. Work was conducted between 1100–2330 hrs and 0900–1030 hrs. The count methods consisted of rock turning, trap sampling, and road cruising. Skies were clear with strong southwest winds and temperatures ranged from 60–80°F. Participants were Karissa Lofton, Ann Rundquist, and Eric Rundquist.

Eastern Collared Lizard .....	4
Great Plains Skink .....	1
Ringneck Snake .....	1
Plains Blackhead Snake .....	2
Lined Snake .....	6
Massasauga .....	3

Total

6 species ..... 17 specimens

Verifier was Eric Rundquist.

LINN COUNTY HERP COUNT NO. 1

Kansas: Linn Co: Marais des Cygnes National Wildlife Refuge. Overcast with intermittent hazy sun; ±65°F. 26 April 1998. 9:30 am to noon. Observers: Suzanne L. Collins, Joseph T. Collins, students in Collins' KU Regents Center Kansas Herpetology Course, as follows: Rebecca J. Carttar, E. Michael Eubanks, Franks Finks, Georgia Finks, Brendan D. Greening, Rebecca J. Hill-Larsen, Edward J. May, Matthew May, Mace McRoberts, T. Michael McRoberts, Michael R. Rochford, David T. Stineman, and Patrick Wakeman, and Robert Powell and John Parmerlee and the students in Powell's Avila College Herpetology Course, as follows: Charles Cole, Andy Schmidt, and Rodney Wittenburg.

American Toad (chorusing) .....	±5
Northern Cricket Frog .....	3
Bullfrog .....	11
Southern Leopard Frog .....	11
Painted Turtle .....	5
Eastern Box Turtle .....	3
Ornate Box Turtle .....	1

Slider .....	2
Five-lined Skink .....	3
Ringneck Snake .....	166
Racer .....	1
Eastern Rat Snake .....	5
Diamondback Water Snake .....	2
Western Ribbon Snake .....	1
Common Garter Snake .....	3
Smooth Earth Snake .....	2

Total

16 species ..... 224 specimens

Verifier was Robert Powell.

LINN COUNTY HERP COUNT NO. 2

Kansas: Linn Co: Marais des Cygnes Wildlife Management Area. Overcast with intermittent hazy sun; ±65°F. 26 April 1998. 1:00–3:30 pm. Observers: Suzanne L. Collins, Joseph T. Collins, students in Collins' KU Regents Center Kansas Herpetology Course, as follows: Rebecca J. Carttar, E. Michael Eubanks, Franks Finks, Georgia Finks, Brendan D. Greening, Rebecca J. Hill-Larsen, Edward J. May, Matthew May, Mace McRoberts, T. Michael McRoberts, Michael R. Rochford, David T. Stineman, and Patrick Wakeman, and students in Robert Powell's Avila College Herpetology Course, as follows: Charles Cole, Andy Schmidt, and Rodney Wittenburg.

American Toad (chrousing) .....	2
Northern Cricket Frog .....	1
Southern Leopard Frog .....	4
Common Snapping Turtle .....	1
Painted Turtle .....	15
Eastern Box Turtle .....	1
Slider .....	6
Spiny Softshell .....	1
Prairie Kingsnake .....	1
Plainbelly Water Snake .....	9
Diamondback Water Snake .....	7
Western Ribbon Snake .....	1
Common Garter Snake .....	4

Total

13 species ..... 53 specimens

Verifier was Joseph T. Collins.

OSAGE COUNTY HERP COUNT

A herp count was made in Osage County on 5 May at Osage County State Lake from 1030–1400 hrs. The weather was quite warm and very humid. It was sunny with no wind. Methods of collecting included searching along the

lake and spillway and turning rocks. Participants were Rachele Anderson, Nathan Bammes, Brandon Barnett, Sonja Brooks, Brianne Burnett, Jenny Clinton, Emily Einspahr, Owen Ferguson, Eddie Fonner, Lisa Green, William Mansfield, Wyatt Naramore, Brad Nolde, Suraj Parulkar, Betsy Wanless, Chris Wolfe, Larry L. Miller, Kevin Freed, and Becky Wolfe.

Northern Cricket Frog .....	14
Plains Leopard Frog .....	5
Bullfrog .....	3
Five-lined Skink .....	6
Ringneck Snake .....	9
Racer .....	1
Plainbelly Watersnake .....	3
Common Garter Snake .....	2
Copperhead .....	1

TOTAL

9 species ..... 44 specimens

Verifier was Larry L. Miller.

SHAWNEE COUNTY HERP COUNT

A herp count was held in southeast Shawnee County at Camp Creek Marsh on 7 May from 1030–1400 hrs. The weather was warm and sunny. Methods of collecting included turning rocks near the wetlands, searching for animals along an abandon railroad right-of-way near the wetlands, searching along the shore of the wetlands, and seining in the wetlands. Participants were Claire Adams, Anne Marie Bireta, Alexandra Bixler, Alex Bleiberg, Natalie Bonebrake, Adam Brown, Jacqueline Castel, Kathleen Daughety, David Duniven, Katie Farmer, James Frager, John Freeman, Julie Freese, Rachael Green, Hannah Gatlin, Howard Johns, Kyle Keller, Esther Kennedy, Matt Leifer, Stephanie Meador, Derek Moeller, Jonathan Schmidt, Allison Viola, Wesley West, Blake Whitaker, Jonas Wilson-Leedy, Chris Yorke, Larry L. Miller and Chuck Blasi.

American Toad (calling) .....	1
Plains Leopard Frog .....	9
Northern Cricket Frog .....	19
Bullfrog .....	3
Gray Treefrog .....	32
Tadpoles (various species) .....	+500
Racer .....	2
Ringneck Snake .....	31
Eastern Rat Snake .....	1
Northern Water Snake .....	4
Common Garter Snake .....	11

TOTAL

12 species ..... 614 specimens

Verifier was Larry L. Miller.



SHAWNEE COUNTY HERP COUNT

Larry Miller conducted a herp count on 2 May in western Shawnee County from 1600–1630 hrs. The weather was quite warm, sunny, and windy. The ground was moist under the rocks. Most of the rocks were limestone, but there were a variety of deposits from glaciers in the area too. The rock outcrop were all of the animals were found was west facing. Method of collecting was rock turning along the Shawnee County side of the county line road located north of Dover, Kansas. Participants were Larry L. Miller, Suzanne L. Miller, Allison Viola, Nick Kleiger, and Austin Gideon.

Ringneck Snake .....	9
Racer .....	2
Common Garter Snake .....	1
Eastern Collared Lizard .....	2
Brown Snake .....	1

TOTAL

5 species ..... 15 specimens

Verifiers were Larry L. Miller and Suzanne L. Miller.

ATCHISON COUNTY KHS SILVER ANNIVERSARY HERP COUNT

The annual KHS Spring Field Trip herp count was conducted at various sites in eastern Atchison County on 8–10 May. Count methods consisted of rock turning and observations. Fifty observers, as follow, were present: Robert Acuff, Robert Acuff, Jr., Mary Kate Baldwin, Lucia Baldwin, Aaron Bennett, Andrew Bennett, Megan Bennett, Sheila Bennett, Jill Capron, Marty Capron, Keith Coleman, Joseph T. Collins, Suzanne L. Collins, George Cunningham, Danitra Cushinberry, James Gubanyi, Roy Herrera, Jonathon Hickert, Ray Hickert, Valerie Hickert, Susanne Hickey, Dan Johnson, Dustin Johnson, Nate Juhl, Olin Karch, John Lokke, Monica Marak, Meco Misceo, Larry L. Miller, Suzanne Miller, Andrew Moriarty, Annie Moriarty, Carolyn Moriarty, Michael Moriarty, Kirk Mullen, Dan Murrow, Brandon Purcell, Alison Reber, David Reber, Tabitha Reber, James Reimer, Jill Reimer, James Root, Will Root, Eric M Rundquist, Mike Walter, David Wickell, Gretchen Wilbur, Tim Wray, and Samuel Vasquez.

American Toad .....	1
Woodhouse’s Toad .....	3
Northern Cricket Frog .....	60
Gray Treefrog .....	12
Plains Leopard Frog .....	35
Bullfrog .....	21
Ornate Box Turtle .....	2
Painted Turtle .....	25
Slider .....	7

Five-lined Skink .....	2
Great Plains skink .....	2
Western Worm Snake .....	1
Ringneck Snake .....	56
Racer .....	5
Eastern Rat Snake .....	2
Milk Snake .....	3
Common Garter Snake .....	2
Northern Water snake .....	10
Copperhead .....	4
Timber Rattlesnake .....	11

TOTAL

20 species ..... 264 specimens

Verifiers were John Lokke, Larry L. Miller, and Joseph T. Collins.

DONIPHAN COUNTY HERP COUNT

A brief herp count was conducted by Eric Rundquist at several sites in the herpetologically depauperate and habitat-challenged Doniphan County on 9 May. Count methods consisted of road driving and visual observation. EMR was the only participant and verifier.

Slider .....	1
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TOTAL

1 species ..... 1 specimen

WABAUNSEE COUNTY HERP COUNT

A herp count was held in Wabaunsee County on 12 May from 1745–1815 hrs from Wilmington to Harveyville. Conditions were sunny and warm. The count methods consisted of road cruising and searching under debris and rocks and around a pond. Participants were Suzanne L. Collins, Joseph T. Collins, Allie Kossoy, Larry L. Miller, and Derek Moeller.

Plains Leopard Frog .....	1
Bullfrog .....	1
Ornate Box Turtle .....	1
Northern Prairie Skink .....	1
Eastern Rat Snake .....	1
Gopher Snake .....	1
Massasauga .....	1

TOTAL

7 species ..... 7 specimens

Verifier was Larry L. Miller.

WYANDOTTE COUNTY HERP COUNT

A herp count was conducted in Wyandotte County at Secs. 2 & 3, T11S, R23E on 23 May, 0900–1200 hrs. It was sunny and warm. The count methods consisted of visual observation and searching under debris. Participants were Suzanne L. Collins, Joseph T. Collins, and Mitchell Emig.

Bullfrog .....	1
Ringneck Snake .....	1
Ornate Box Turtle .....	1
Five-lined Skink .....	1
Prairie Kingsnake .....	1
Common Garter Snake .....	1

TOTAL

6 species ..... 6 specimens

Verifier was Joseph T. Collins.

ELLIS COUNTY HERP COUNT

A herp count was conducted in Ellis County at T15 S, R18W, Sec. 26 and T15S, R17W, Sec. 26 on 15 May from 1330–1700 hrs by Curtis Schmidt, Jason Werth, and Russ Toepfer.

Woodhouse's Toad .....	10
Northern Cricket Frog .....	5
Plains Leopard Frog .....	3
Plains Narrowmouth Toad .....	2
Unknown Tadpoles .....	+1000
Ornate Box Turtle .....	2
Eastern Collared Lizard .....	+20
Six-lined Racerunner .....	1
Ringneck Snake .....	61
Racer .....	3
Gopher Snake .....	2
Milk Snake .....	3
Plains Garter Snake .....	3
Lined Snake .....	1

TOTAL

14 species ..... 1,113 specimens

Verifier was Curtis Schmidt.

SHAWNEE COUNTY HERP COUNT

A herp count was conducted on 10+ acre area located northeast of 97th and Jordan Road in Shawnee County on 16 May from 1300–1900 hrs. The count included observing animals during a hike along Colby Creek, looking under four large pieces of plywood that had been placed in

a variety of places during the past three years, and during yard work and mowing nature trails on the property. Habitat included wooded areas with a west-facing rocky hillside, four to five acres of native grass, floodplain along Jordan Road, and a small pond. The temperature ranged from 70–85° F during the count. The day was sunny with very little wind. Humidity was around 50%. The ground was moist. Participants were Larry L. Miller and Suzanne L. Miller.

American Toad .....	2
Northern Cricket Frog .....	7
Eastern Gray Treefrog .....	4
Western Chorus Frog .....	1
Plains Leopard Frog .....	12
Bullfrog .....	5
Plains Narrowmouth Toad .....	1
Ornate Box Turtle .....	2
Painted Turtle .....	3
Five-lined Skink .....	3
Ringneck Snake .....	7
Racer .....	5
Eastern Rat Snake .....	1
Northern Water Snake .....	2
Common Garter Snake .....	3
Western Ribbon Snake .....	1

Total

16 species ..... 59 specimens

Larry and Suzanne Miller were verifiers.

2ND BARTON COUNTY HERP COUNT

Russ Toepfer and Curtis Schmidt held a herp count at Cheyenne Bottoms in Barton County on 17 May from 1030–1600 hrs.

Northern Cricket Frog (calling) .....	~ 20
Plains Leopard Frog .....	13
Bullfrog .....	10
Common Snapping Turtle .....	1
Painted Turtle .....	~ 20
Slider .....	~ 15
Plains Garter Snake .....	1
Common Garter Snake .....	1
Graham's Crayfish Snake .....	1
Diamondback Water Snake .....	13
Northern Water Snake .....	3

TOTAL

11 species ..... 98 specimens

Verifier was Curtis Schmidt.

5TH ANNUAL CHISHOLM CREEK PARK HERP COUNT

This survey was conducted within Chisholm Creek Park in Wichita, Kansas on May 23, 1998 from 0930–1245 hrs. There was an overcast sky, with a beginning survey air temperature of 80° F. The water temperature was 82° F in the wetland and the pond. Areas of the park included in the survey were grasslands bordering rails, a wetlands area, and a small pond.

The primary activity consisted of walking shorelines and areas adjacent to bodies of water and trails. Areas of higher ground would be described as prairie habitat.

Chisholm Creek Park is now the site of the Great Plains Nature Center. The development of the Great Plains Nature Center has resulted in modifications in the wetlands area that have created more shoreline. This increases the time required for the survey by about 45 minutes, and probably influences the count. Participants were Liz Erickson, Jean Gengler, Joyce Lent, Al Volkmann, and Stan Wiechman.

Northern Cricket Frog .....	40
Bullfrog .....	39
Plains Leopard Frog .....	2
Common Snapping Turtle .....	3
Yellow Mud Turtle .....	2
Painted Turtle .....	3
Slider .....	5
Unidentified Turtle .....	7
Racer .....	2
Eastern Rat Snake .....	1
Diamondback Water Snake .....	14
Graham's Crayfish Snake .....	4
Common Garter Snake .....	2

TOTAL

12 Species ..... 124 specimens

Verifiers were Al Volkmann and Stan Wiechman.

BROWN COUNTY HERP COUNT

Eric Rundquist conducted a herp count in various areas of Brown County on 26 May from 1500–1620 hrs. Skies were partly cloudy with a moderate south wind. Temperature was 80°F. Search methods included rock turning (all 7 rocks observed) and visual observation. EMR was the only participant and verifier.

Northern Cricket Frog .....	7
Plains Leopard Frog .....	2
Ringneck Snake .....	1

TOTAL

3 species ..... 10 specimens

FRANKLIN COUNTY HERP COUNT

A herp count was conducted primarily southwest of Ottawa, Franklin County, on 26 May 1215–1245 hrs. Atmospheric conditions were as for the previous count and temperature was 75°F. Count methods included surface cover turning and visual observation. Eric Rundquist was the only participant and verifier.

American Toad (tadpoles) .....	+1620
Plains Leopard Frog .....	1
Ornate Box Turtle .....	1
Eastern Rat Snake .....	1

TOTAL

4 species ..... 1,623 specimens

PAWNEE COUNTY HERP COUNT

Led by Curtis Schmidt, a herp count was done at Fort Larned and Sec. 32, T21S, R17W in Pawnee County from 1100–2300 hrs. Curtis and Mark Van Doren were the only participants.

Barred Tiger Salamander .....	1
Great Plains Toad .....	1
Woodhouse's Toad .....	~ 100
Western Chorus Frog .....	~ 20
Plains Leopard Frog .....	15
Bullfrog .....	15
Plains Narrowmouth Toad .....	6
Ouachita Map Turtle .....	3
Painted Turtle .....	9
Six-lined Racerunner .....	1
Racer .....	1
Plains Garter Snake .....	1

TOTAL

12 species ..... 158 specimens

Verifier was Curtis Schmidt.

THIRD BARBER COUNTY HERP COUNT

The last herp count of the year was held at various sites in Barber County on 30–31 May. Work was conducted from 1030–1400 hrs, 2000–2230 hrs, and 0900–1030 hrs. Count methods consisted of rock turning, trap sampling, road cruising, and visual and aural searches. Skies were clear with strong S winds on 30 May and strong N winds on 31 May. Temperatures ranged from 68–103°F. Participants were Larry Zuckerman and Eric Rundquist.

Northern Cricket Frog .....	230
Bullfrog .....	5
Plains Narrowmouth Toad .....	1
Eastern Collared Lizard .....	11
Great Plains Skink .....	1
Southern Prairie Skink .....	1
Ringneck Snake .....	3
Plains Blackhead Snake .....	1

TOTAL

8 species ..... 254 specimens

Eric Rundquist was verifier.

A grand total of 56 species and 5,196 specimens were observed during the KHS counts for 1998.

Literature Cited

Collins, Joseph T. 1997 Standard Common and Current Scientific Names for North American Amphibians and Reptiles. SSAR Herpetol. Circ. 25: iv + 40 pp.  
 Rundquist, Eric M. 1994. Results of the Sixth Annual KHS Herp Counts held 1 April–31 May 1994. Kansas Herpetol. Soc. Newsl. 97: 5–14.

RATTLESNAKE DEFENDS ITSELF IN JOHNSON COUNTY

A rattlesnake bit a 16-year-old boy Thursday night outside his western Shawnee home, sending him to a hospital. Firefighters killed the 3-foot-long serpent. (*Editors Note:* The Timber Rattlesnake is currently classified by the Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks as a *Species in Need of Conservation*. Now we know why.)

The teen-ager saw the Timber Rattler in a window well outside his house in the 5000 block of Locust Street, according to fire and ambulance reports. When he tried to pick it up, it sank its fangs into the back of his right hand. (*Editors Note:* The snake was merely defending itself against a much larger predator. In addition, deliberately attempting to pick up a venomous snake is extremely dangerous, because the snake may be traumatized by the experience.)

Someone called for help at 10:31 p.m. An emergency crew took him (the teen) to the Overland Park Regional Medical Center. The teen was treated and released. (*Editors Note:* Pretty typical case. After all, there is no record of anyone ever dying from a Timber Rattlesnake bite in Kansas.)

Rattlesnake-bite cases in Johnson County are rare, an ambulance worker said. (*Editors Note:* The major reason these beautiful creatures are rarely seen in Johnson County stems from the massive habitat destruction that has occurred in that area.)

— Kansas City Star, 18 July 1998  
 (Submitted by Suzanne Collins, Lawrence)



# The Kansas Herpetological Society

The KANSAS HERPETOLOGICAL SOCIETY is a non-profit organization established in 1974 and designed to encourage education and dissemination of scientific information through the facilities of the Society; to encourage conservation of wildlife in general and of amphibians and reptiles in Kansas in particular; and to achieve closer cooperation and understanding between herpetologists, so that they may work together in common cause. For up-to-date information about the Society and its activities check the KHS home page on the World Wide Web at <http://eagle.cc.ukans.edu/~cnaar/khs/khsmain.html>

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All interested persons are invited to become members in the Society. Membership dues per calendar year are \$10.00 (U.S., Regular), \$15.00 (*outside* North America, Regular), and \$15.00 (Contributing) payable to the KHS. Send all dues to: KHS Secretary-Treasurer, 303 West 39th Street, Hays, Kansas 67601.

All members are entitled to participate in Society functions and have voting privileges. They receive copies of Society publications, which include KHS NEWSLETTERS, as well as other publications of interest or those co-sponsored by the Society.

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The KANSAS HERPETOLOGICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER, issued quarterly, publishes manuscripts and notes of interest dealing with the biology of amphibians and reptiles. Manuscripts should be submitted to the Editor no later than the 15th of the month prior to the month of issuance. All manuscripts become the sole possession of the Society, and will not be returned unless special arrangements are made with the Editor.

Pen and ink illustrations and photographs are also welcomed. These should be sized accordingly as no reductions can be made. Illustrations and photographs will be returned to the author only upon request.

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