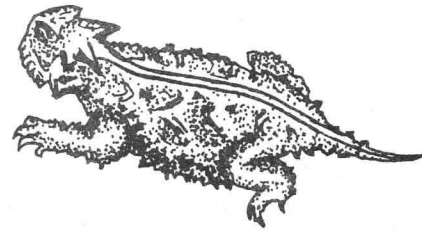


KANSAS  
HERPETOLOGICAL  
SOCIETY  
NEWSLETTER



Number 12

April 1976

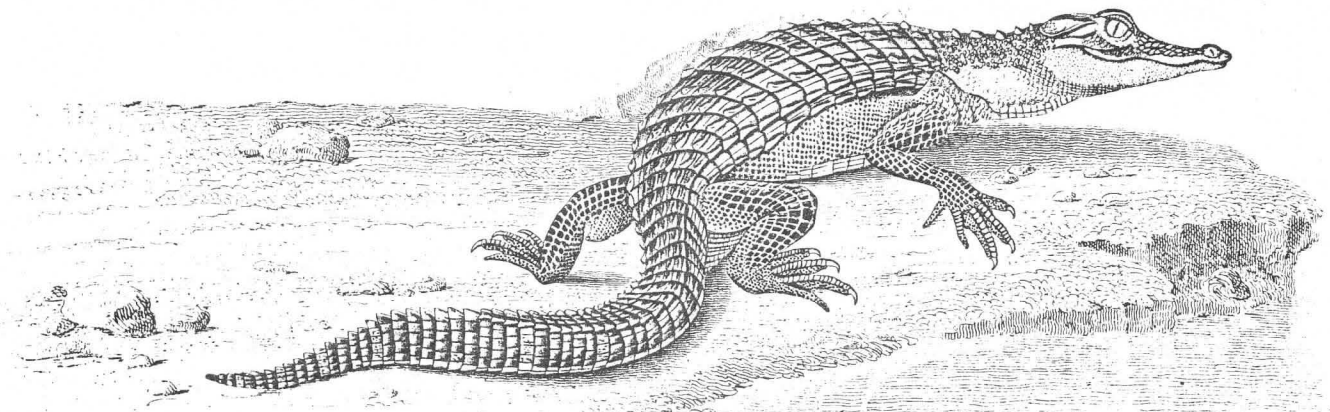
CALDWELL MEETING WELL ATTENDED

Thirty-one KHS members and friends attended the March meeting and field trip at Caldwell, Kansas. Our host, Larry Miller, spoke on the amphibians and reptiles of the Caldwell area, and supplemented his talk with excellent slides of the local herpetofauna. Distinguished guests at the meeting included Dr. Alberto Veloso, professor at the University of Chile currently visiting the KU museum of Natural History to do research on frogs. Also, Richard Lardie, one of the founders of the new Oklahoma Herpetological Society and an active KHS member, visited with us and displayed the latest OHS publication. Martin Capron and Larry Miller also exhibited interesting live amphibians and reptiles at the meeting. Delicious refreshments were available through the courtesy of Marty's parents--to them we extend our sincere appreciation and thanks.

After the talk at Caldwell, many of those in attendance traveled to a park northeast of Arkansas City where camp was set up. Participants dispersed to the wilds to hunt for critters, but the weather was against them all. Cold temperatures (and no rain) at night followed by rain (and no sun) the following day made it difficult to locate specimens. So goes Kansas weather, but we all had a good time anyway.

FIELD TRIP TO SOUTHEAST KANSAS PLANNED

The next KHS meeting will be a weekend field trip to southeast Kansas. The field trip is scheduled for 22-23 May, but participants are encouraged to arrive on Friday evening (21 May) if they so desire. We will meet (and camp) in the park south of US Rt. 166 due West of Chetopa. The park adjoins the east bank of the Neosho River, and can be seen easily from the bridge leading west out of Chetopa. There are numerous aquatic areas (roadside ditches, swamps, sloughs, and river edge) in which to look for amphibians and reptiles. Species of particular interest known to occur in the area are the crawfish frog and various interesting turtles (Graptemys and Chrysemys). Please plan to attend and bring friends. Food and camping gear are each individual's own responsibility.



GLOYD HONORED BY KHS HONOR

Dear KHS Membership:

It pleases me greatly to be an honorary member of the Kansas Herpetological Society.

I was born in Kansas and my deep interest in natural history began there when I was very young. I consider Ottawa my "home town" for it was there I lived during my early youth, attended Ottawa University, and from 1924 to 1928 was an instructor in biology at that school. It was in Ottawa that I began serious work in Herpetology. During my years in graduate school I had some hope of returning to Kansas to continue studies initiated there, but this desire was not to be realized.

I wish the KHS great success and shall always be interested in its activities and progress.

Sincerely yours,

Howard K. Gloyd  
Professor Emeritus,  
University of Arizona



PESTICIDES KILL FISH AND OTHER ANIMALS

The last half of February and the first week or so in March 1976 proved very disastrous for many animals in southern Kansas and northern Oklahoma. Countless numbers of fish, amphibians, birds and other animals died during that period of time. The reason for many of these deaths was the careless use of certain pesticides in this area by a few people.

Army cutworms and green bugs were a problem to the many wheat farmers, so to kill these little fellows thousands of acres of farm land was sprayed. Chemicals such as endrin, toxaphene, and parathion were used. The careless use of these chemicals and high winds caused them to drift great distances contaminating streams, ponds, and pasture lands.

Several farm ponds and streams in southern Kansas and northern Oklahoma showed some sign of a fish kill. Several ponds had hundreds and even thousands of dead fish in them. Many of the fish were quite large. Dead and dying leopard frogs have been observed in

several ponds. Also observed were a few dead birds. Some people reported dead rabbits, deer, and other animals.

The Environmental Protection Agency has found amounts of endrin in water samples they tested. The amounts were enough to be fatal to fish. Endrin has also been found in raw milk and signs of parathion has been found in a few human blood samples.

If the use of pesticides is to continue it would surely be advisable to have them used with a little more caution.

--LARRY MILLER, Science Teacher, Caldwell, Kansas

#### CURRENT LITERATURE

This current literature section has been compiled by Mary E. Dawson and Joseph T. Collins, and contains articles and books on amphibians and reptiles of possible interest to KHS members.

Altig, R. and M. T. Christensen

1976. A bibliography of tadpole biology. *Smithsonian Herpetological Information Service (SHIS)*, 31: 1-33. Available free from: SHIS, Division of Reptiles & Amphibians, National Museum of Natural History, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C. 20560.

Ashton, R. E., Jr.

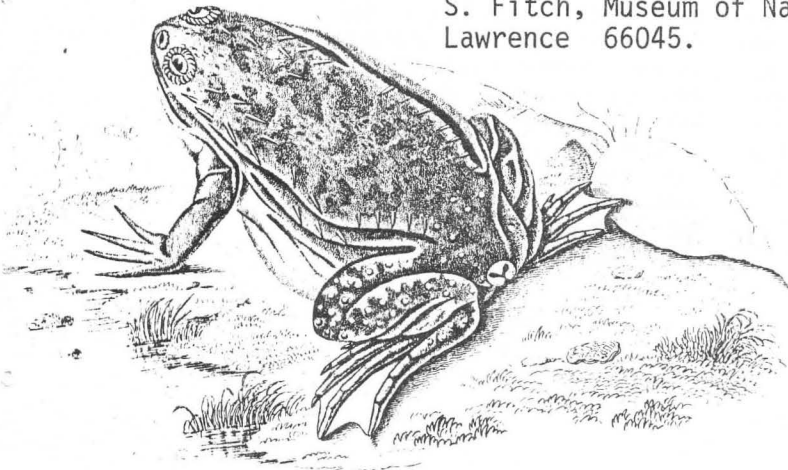
1976. The herpetofauna of Preble County, Ohio. *Ohio Journ. Sci.*, 76(1): 33-38. Available free from KHS member Ashton at Florida State Museum, University of Florida, Gainesville, Florida, 32611.

Bell, T.

1842. The zoology of the voyage of H.M.S. "Beagle". Part V: Reptiles. (Charles Darwin, editor). vi + 51 pp. and 20 plates. Issued as a facsimile reprint in 1975 by the Society for the Study of Amphibians and Reptiles (SSAR). For price, write to: Dr. Henri Seibert, Morton Hall, Ohio University, Athens, Ohio 45701.

Fitch, H. S. and M. V. Plummer

1975. A preliminary ecological study of the soft-shelled turtle *Trionyx muticus* in the Kansas River. *Israel Journ. Zool.*, 24: 28-42. Reprints are available free from: Dr. Henry S. Fitch, Museum of Natural History, University of Kansas, Lawrence 66045.



- Rickart, E. A.  
 1976. A new horned lizard (Phrynosoma adinognathus) from the early Pleistocene of Meade County, Kansas, with comments on the herpetofauna of the Borchers locality. *Herpetologica*, 32(1): 64-67. Reprints are available free from Eric Rickart, Museum of Natural History, University of Kansas, Lawrence 66045.
- Schwaner, T. D. and R. H. Mount  
 1976. Systematic and ecological relationships of the water snakes Natrix sipedon and N. fasciata in Alabama and the Florida panhandle. *Occas. Papers Mus. Nat. Hist. Univ. Kansas*, 45: 1-44. Available (not free) from: Publications Secretary, Museum of Natural History, University of Kansas, Lawrence 66045.
- Smith, A. K.  
 1976. Incidence of tail coiling in a population of ringneck snakes (Diadophis punctatus). *Trans. Kansas Acad. Sci.*, 77(4): 237-238.

### Snake hunt

## You need a license

by MSgt. Richard L. Lardje

There are about 30 snake species that are found in Garfield county. Of these, only three are dangerously venomous: the western massasauga (ground rattlesnake), timber rattlesnake and broad-banded copperhead. The massasauga is the only venomous snake found throughout this county and its distribution is rather spotty. Timber rattlesnakes and copperheads are found in southeastern Garfield County and are generally associated with oak woods and alge sandstone rocks. The nearest official record for the venomous western cottenmouth is nearly 100 miles east of Enid. Western diamondback rattlesnakes occur in the gypsum hills region west of Garfield County and prairie rattlesnakes are found in the short grass county further west.

There is always the chance that someone who participated in one

of the annual snake hunts may have gotten tired of the rattler or moccasin he rounded up, releasing it someplace in our county. These hunts are publicity stunts that emphasize exhibitionism. They include hunts into the gypsum hills for both native and pre-released rattlesnakes, exhibits in a carnival atmosphere, a festival with a beauty queen, practical jokes, a liar's contest, snake handling and White Fang Awards, for those careless ones bitten during the hunts. Rattlesnakes are sold alive or butchered and rendered for their parts. There is a growing number of individuals and groups opposed to rattlesnake roundups in their present form, because they are considered unsafe, inhumane, anti-environmental and hypocritical.

This year, Oklahoma requires a hunting license for hunting or killing wildlife and includes non-game species such as rattlesnakes.

## ANOTHER TRIP TO SOUTHEASTERN ARIZONA, PART II

(This is the second part of a two-part article on collecting in southeastern Arizona. Part I appeared in KHS Newsletter #11.)

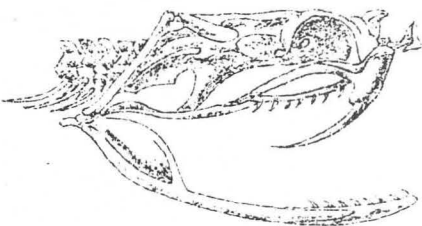
The weather was still unpleasant the next morning, so, pretending that the weather would be different elsewhere, we drove to another mountain range. As we drove onto the desert, we saw a 130 cm Gopher snake bulging from a recent meal, and two Desert Spiny lizards (Sceloporus magister). As we neared our destination (the second place that John and I had visited last May) we spotted a DOR Mountain Patch-nosed snake (Salvadora grahamia) and a DOR Mountain Short-horned Lizard (Phrynosoma douglassi). We pulled into our destination, a large canyon, at 1:00pm and began to hike upstream. Grasses, weeds, and summer annuals had grown in profusion since last May, when the ground had been almost bare. The sky was still overcast, but the air was warmer. We saw only a few juvenile Yarrow's Spiny Lizards and an adult female Striped Plateau Lizard (Sceloporus virgatus) during our afternoon hike.

At sunset we cruised nearby roads to look for herps. Just outside camp we found a fresh DOR Black-tailed Rattlesnake (Crotalus molossus); next we found a DOR Green Rat Snake (Elaphe triaspis). We also saw several javelina on the road. At lower elevations we saw a Mojave Rattlesnake and a DOR Texas Horned Lizard (Phrynosoma cornutum). Disgusted by the "Day of the DOR" we returned to camp just in time for rain and another night inside the Chevrolet. We were serenaded by the high-volume tape system of riotously drunken youths in the neighboring campsite.

Fortified by a breakfast of grapefruit juice and Rich 'n Chips cookies, we headed up a rocky, exposed fork of the canyon the next morning (12 August). Juvenile Yarrow's were "sunning" under a cloudy sky, and a Banded Rock Rattlesnake (Crotalus lepidus) buzzed from a small pile of rocks. An angry agave attacked and severely punctured Jan's arm, back and canteen while we photographed the snake. Farther up the canyon we found pools filled with tadpoles, probably of the Canyon Tree Frog (Hyla arenicolor), and a juvenile Black-necked Garter Snake (Thamnophis cyrtopsis). About noon we met some insect collectors from San Diego State who had just seen an Arizona Mountain Kingsnake (Lampropeltis pyromelana).

The sky cleared in the early afternoon so we drove up to some huge talus slopes at 8400 feet. Of course, by the time we arrived the sky was again overcast and it was cold. Nonetheless, Jan heard a rattlesnake buzz but could not find it in the talus. At sunset we headed back down the mountain, where road-hunting yielded nothing. Rain greeted our return to camp so we spent yet another night enjoying the sleep that only an old sedan can provide.

Amazingly enough, the next day (13 August) dawned bright and clear. We went back into the canyon at 8:00am; at 9:00am a thundershower

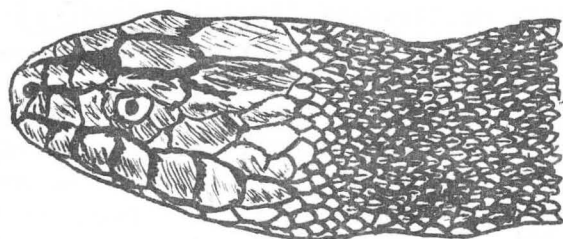


hit us. During our retreat to the car we saw a group of coatimundi foraging in the leaf litter. We then drove about to see if any herps were on the roads in the morning; we found a fresh DOR Western Hognose Snake (Heterodon nasicus). After a quick lunch (ice cream sandwiches) we headed for the talus slopes at 8400 feet. Again, it had cleared up around noon, again it was cloudy and cold by the time we reached the slopes. Determined to see some Twin-spotted Rattlesnakes (Crotalus pricei), we camped up there overnight, hoping it would clear up by morning. The lack of rain that night made our sleep on the pine needles cool and pleasant.

August 14th dawned cool and sunny. Adequately prepared by a breakfast of hot coca (read the label: milk provides substantial nutrition) Jan and I headed up the talus slopes at 8:20am. At 8:30am Jan found a Twin-spotted Rattlesnake in the talus, and while I was examining it at the site of capture, another one warned of its presence from under the rocks--just inches away from the first. At 9:15 a buzz alerted me to a gravid female Twin-spotted Rattlesnake as it was retreating into the rocks. (I collected it; on 26 August it bore two young, of which one was alive and healthy, 26 September it deposited an unfertilized yolk). Yarrow's Spiny Lizards were abundant on the talus, mostly adults. The few young ones had been recently born at this high elevation and were quite small compared to their counterparts at lower elevations.

At 11:30am we headed back to Tucson. Along the way we found a Desert Patch-nosed Snake (Salvadora hexalepis). After visiting the Arizona-Sonora Desert Museum in Tucson and sight-seeing in Scottsdale, Jan returned to Lawrence via Continental Trailways.

--RANDALL N. JOHNSON, 8342 E. Keim Dr., Scottsdale, Arizona

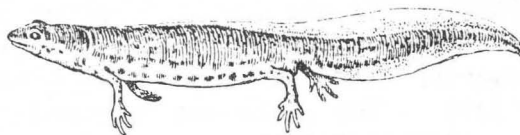


*Marty Capron*

#### RUNDQUIST APPOINTED NEW KHS SECRETARY

Eric M. Rundquist has been appointed as acting Secretary for the Kansas Herpetological Society, replacing Terry D. Schwaner. Terry recently accepted a temporary position as an Environmental Consultant in American Samoa. Keeping up his herpetological interest, Terry plans to do some frog chasing and snake catching and of course, general identifying and observing of all the animals found in the area. For those interested in corresponding with Terry can write

him at: Environment Consultants, Inc., c/o Office of Marine Resources,  
Government of American Samoa, Pago Pago, American Samoa 96799  
Let's congratulate both Eric and Terry in their new positions.



#### SECOND PRINTING FOR COLLINS' BOOK

"Amphibians and reptiles in Kansas" by Joseph T. Collins was first published and released in August 1974. Less than 50 copies of this first printing remain in stock. The Museum of Natural History at the University of Kansas has announced that a second printing of this definitive work on Kansas herpetofauna will be printed this summer. The second printing will in no way differ from the first, but will ensure that additional stocks of the book will be available to all interested persons and institutions. The price will remain at \$5.00 postpaid.

#### INTRODUCTORY HERPETOLOGY COURSE AT SCZ

A short introductory course on herpetology will be taught June 7 through June 23 from 2:00pm to 4:00pm, Monday and Wednesday. The course will be aimed at Junior High to High school ages; however, all interested persons are welcome. Using the facilities of the zoo, the student will learn about all aspects of herpetology. The care of reptiles and amphibians in captivity and reptiles and amphibians in Kansas will be emphasized. Interested persons should contact: Barbara Burgan, Curator of Education, Sedgwick County Zoo, 5555 Zoo Boulevard, Wichita, Kansas 67212. Phone: 316/942-2212.

#### SUPPORT THE KANSAS ACADEMY OF SCIENCE

All KHS members with a serious interest in biological science are strongly urged to join and support the Kansas Academy of Science. The KAS was founded in 1868, and publishes four issues of the KAS Transactions each year. Many important and interesting papers on amphibians and reptiles are published each year in the Transactions. In addition, the KAS holds an annual meeting in Kansas where some herpetological papers are presented. KHS members interested in joining the KAS should send \$8.00 (\$5.00 for High School and College students) to: Dr. B. L. Owen, KAS Secretary, Kansas Wesleyan, Salina, Kansas 67401. JOIN NOW--support your state Academy of Science.



### LARGE GARTER SNAKE CAUGHT AT ZOO

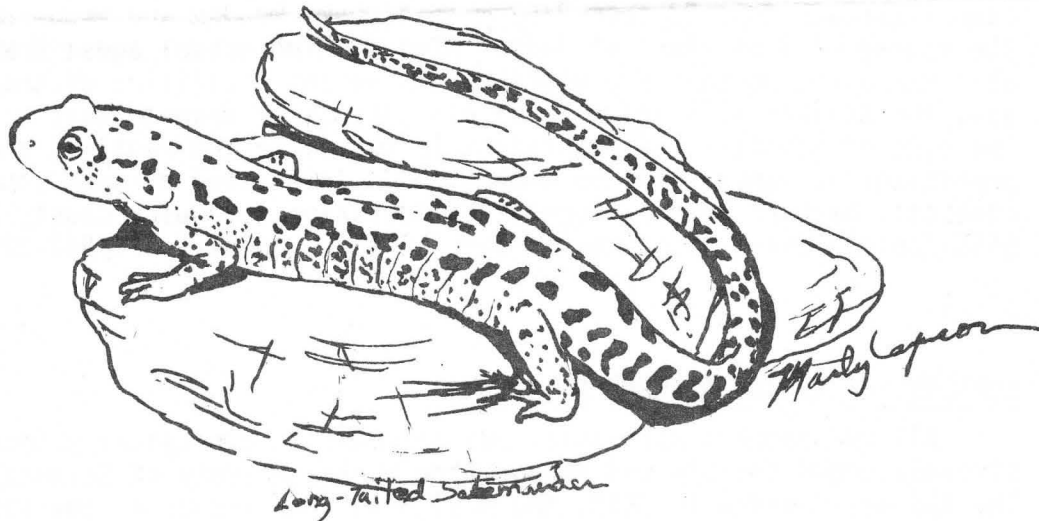
On December 2, 1975, a 45½ inch female red-sided garter snake was captured at the Sedgwick County Zoo by zoo personnel. This is two and one-half inches larger than the largest specimen listed from Kansas by Collins (1974) and only one-half inch shorter than the record size given for this subspecies by Conant (1975). The snake was measured alive and could possibly have been stretched another one-half inch or so if we had really worked at it. It is now in the herpetarium and taking mice readily after they are first rubbed on fish.

On December 10, 1975, another red-sided garter snake was captured at the zoo; this one nearer to the normal size. Both garter snakes were captured on warm days (around 60° F). Preceding the capture of the first snake, we had had record low temperatures, so there's no doubt the snakes had been in hibernation and then came out during the nice weather.

Another example of this behavior was the finding of a large blotched water snake in mid-January at Harvey County Park about twenty miles west of Newton, Kansas.

Some amphibians seen out and about during warm spells last winter were: bullfrogs, leopard frogs, and somewhat more unusual, cricket frogs and Bufo's.

--DAVID GROW, Sedgwick County Zoo, 5555 Zoo Boulevard, Wichita, Kansas



--The KHS Newsletter is issued every other month by the Kansas Herpetological Society. EDITOR: Janice Perry, Museum of Natural History, University of Kansas, Lawrence 66045, and ASSOCIATE EDITOR: David Grow, Sedgwick County Zoo, 5555 Zoo Boulevard, Wichita 67212.