

KANSAS
HERPETOLOGICAL
SOCIETY
NEWSLETTER



Number 15

October 1976

THIRD KHS ANNUAL MEETING IN LAWRENCE

The third annual meeting of the Kansas Herpetological Society will be held on Saturday, 13 November 1976, in the Public Education Room (6th floor) of the Museum of Natural History at The University of Kansas, Lawrence. The meeting will start promptly at 1:00PM. The program will be as follows:

- 1:00PM. KHS President Jan Caldwell will call the third annual meeting to order.
- 1:15PM. Guest Speaker: Terry D. Schwaner, University of Kansas, will speak on "The herpetofauna of American Samoa." Color slides.
- 2:00PM. Coffee break and socializing.
- 2:30PM. Guest Speaker: Harvey Lillywhite, University of Kansas, will speak on "The herpetofauna of Australia." Color slides.
- 3:15PM. Coffee break and more socializing.
- 3:45PM. KHS Business meeting and vote on KHS constitutional amendment.
- 4:00PM. Election of KHS officers for 1977.
- 4:30PM. Meeting adjourns.

NOTE: The KHS Executive Council will meet over lunch at noon. Executive council members should assemble in the front entrance foyer of the Museum of Natural History at 11:45AM. Jan Caldwell will lead you to a feeding spot.

Please plan to attend and bring guests. You can pay your 1977 dues at this meeting.

KHS VISITS ELK COUNTY

A fall meeting of the Kansas Herpetological Society was held at the Moline City Lake in Elk County, Kansas on September 24, 25, and 26 of this year. The meeting, which was a combination campout and field trip, was attended by over thirty enthusiastic KHS members and their guests.

The prospects appeared good for a fabulous meeting as the first KHS members arrived Friday afternoon and evening. They quickly went to work setting up tents, cooking supper, and choosing the best in stereo music to be played in a portable tape player that evening. A few members even went on a short collecting trip around the lake. Two leopard frogs were collected by this group. They might have collected more, but they got lost and spent much of their time in search of the lake!

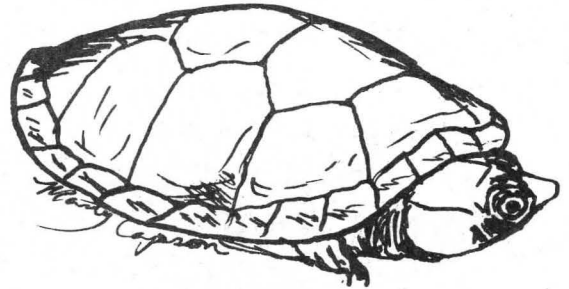
Saturday morning found most members up bright and early and anxious to get into the field. Unfortunately, rain started to fall before any organized collecting trips could get underway. The incessant rains continued all day and most of the night.

The ducks, frogs, toads, fish, and farmers of Elk County were possibly pleased with the rainy weather, but most KHS members were not very impressed. However, the rain did give the group a chance to relax, visit, and get involved in a card game or two. Several trips were also made to nearby Howard, Elk Falls, and Moline for food and sight seeing(?).

Despite the deplorable weather a few dedicated members managed to collect several interesting cold blooded specimens. They include the following records for Elk County: Bufo a. americanus, Bufo w. woodhousei, Chrysemys floridana hoyi, Chrysemys picta belli, Thamnophis p. proximus, Diadophis punctatus arnyi, and Natrix erythrogaster transversa.

Even with the rain, cool temperatures, car problems, and other miscellaneous nuisances that plagued the September 1976 KHS meeting, everyone survived. Most of the participants enjoyed themselves and are eagerly looking forward to future get togethers.

---LARRY MILLER, Caldwell, Kansas



REVISED KHS NOMINATING COMMITTEE REPORT

The KHS nominating committee report which appeared in KHS Newsletter #14 (page 3) is here revised for the following reason: due to other commitments, Delphi Messinger requested that her name be withdrawn as candidate for the office of KHS secretary-treasurer for 1977. The KHS nominating committee, composed of Kelly Irwin, Melissa Burt, J. T. Collins, and George Pisani, wish to announce the nomination of Marjorie Perry, KHS member from Lawrence, for KHS secretary-treasurer for 1977. The election will be held next month at the KHS annual meeting on 13 November.

ART WORK NEEDED FOR KHS NEWSLETTER COVER

KHS editor Janice Perry needs black and white line drawings for consideration for placement on the KHS Newsletter cover beginning with the February 1977 issue. All KHS members are urged to submit drawings of any endangered amphibian or reptile found in Kansas. Please send them as soon as possible to: Janice Perry, Museum of Natural History, University of Kansas, Lawrence, Kansas 66045. Appropriate credit will be given.



NEW LIST OF ENDANGERED SPECIES

The U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service has placed 159 animals, including several reptiles and amphibians, on the Endangered Species List. Except under permit, it is now unlawful to import or to export any of these species or even to transport them interstate for commercial activity. The reptiles and amphibians are as follows:

- Chinese alligator (Alligator sinensis)--Lower Yangtze River drainage
of China
- Black caiman (Melanosuchus niger)--Amazon basin
- Apaporis River caiman (Caiman crocodilus apaporiensis)--Apaporis
River of Colombia
- Broad-snouted caiman (Caiman latirostris)--Brazil, Uruguay, Argentina,
Paraguay
- Tomistoma (Tomistoma schlegelii)--Borneo, Sarawak, Sumatra, Southern
Malay Peninsula
- African dwarf crocodile (Osteolaemus tetraspis tetraspis)--West Africa
- Congo dwarf crocodile (Osteolaemus tetraspis osborni)--Congo River
drainage
- African slender-snouted crocodile (Crocodylus cataphractus)--Western and
Central Africa
- Siamese crocodile (Crocodylus siamensis)--Southeast Asia, Malay Peninsula
- Mugger crocodile (Crocodylus palustris palustris)--India, Pakistan,
Bangladesh, Iran
- Ceylon mugger crocodile (Crocodylus palustris kimbula)--Ceylon
- Philippine crocodile (Crocodylus novaguineae mindorensis)--Philippine Islands
- Spotted pond turtle (Geoclemmys hamiltonii)--Northern India, Pakistan
- Three-keeled Asian turtle (Geomyda tricarinata)--Central India to Bangladesh
and Assam
- Indian sawback turtle (Kachuga lectatecta)--Ganges, Brahmanutra, and Indus
drainages of India
- Burmese peacock turtle (Morenia ocellata)--Southern Burma
- Geometric turtle (Geochelone geometrica)--Cape Province, South Africa
- Angulated tortoise (Geochelone yniphora)--Madagascar
- Indian flap-shell tortoise (Lissemys punctata punctata)--Ganges and Indus
drainages of India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh
- Cuatro Cienegas soft-shell turtle (Trionyx ater)--Cuatro Cienegas basin,
Mexico
- Black soft-shell turtle (Trionyx nigricans)--Pond near Chittatong, East
Pakistan
- Indian soft-shell turtle (Trionyx gangeticus)--Pakistan, India, Bangladesh,
and Nepal
- Peacock soft-shell turtle (Trionyx hurum)--Ganges and Brahmaputra drainages
of India and Bangladesh
- Komodo Island monitor (Varanus komodoensis)--Komodo, Rintja, Padar, and
western Flores Islands of Indonesia
- Yellow monitor (Varanus flavescens)--West Pakistan through India to Bangladesh
- Bengal monitor (Varanus bengalensis)--Persia, Afghanistan, India, Ceylon,
Burma, Thailand, South Vietnam, Malay Peninsula, Java

Desert monitor (Varanus griseus)--North Africa to Near-east, Caspian Sea
through U.S.S.R. to West Pakistan, Northwest India
Indian python (Python molurus molurus)--Ceylon and India
Japanese giant salamander (Andrias davidianus japonicus)--Honshu and
Kyushu Islands, Japan
Chinese giant salamander (Andrias davidianus davidianus)--Western China
Cameroon toad (Bufo superciliaris)--Equatorial Africa
Monteverde toad (Bufo periglenus)--Monteverde, Costa Rica
African viviparous toads (Nectophrynoides ssp.)--Tanzania, Guinea, Africa
Panamanian golden frog (Atelopus varius zeteki)--Panama

---Reprinted from: Philadelphia Herpetological Society Newsletter,
No. 13 (issued irregularly), Malvin L. Skaroff and Betsey Clark (Eds.),
Summer, 1976.

IN QUEST OF THE ELUSIVE NATRIX

One day, while wandering around the Herpetology Division at the Museum of Natural History on the Kansas University campus, I was asked if I would like to hunt water snakes. I responded affirmatively to the question, without a thought. The crew would be composed of: Terry Schwaner, Joseph T. Collins, and I, Kelly Irwin. We would venture to the wilds of southern Missouri and northern Arkansas. The purpose of the trip was to collect water snakes of the genus Natrix for Terry's doctoral project.

Leaving the museum on Friday afternoon, September 3, we arrived uneventfully in West Plains, Missouri at midnight. Morning came at 7:00 with the hills covered in a thick blanket of fog. Drinking coffee, at the West Plains Holiday Inn, the fog started to disperse by 8:30. Our first stop was the Eleven Point River on Missouri Route W. The variety of herps observed amazed me: Eumeces fasciatus, Natrix sipedon, Diadophis punctatus, Eumeces sp., Sceloporus undulatus, Eurycea longicauda, Rana catesbeiana, Rana clamitans, Rana palustris, Rana utricularia, and Acris crepitans were all present along the stream. At Riverton, Missouri the Eleven Point River had metamorphosed into a true, cold, rushing, white water river. The water temperature chilled us as the current swept us past most of the snakes we spotted. On this leg of the trip, seven Natrix sipedon were collected, while four were missed.

Moving on, we arrived in Dalton, Arkansas at about 3:30PM the same day. Collecting problems similar to those present at Riverton appeared again, except this time on the Black River. Snake-snatching is difficult when all four of the observed Natrix are seen four or five feet above the roaring river. You must first remain stationary in the gushing current, and then jump up to grab the beasts before they drop into the water. Only two specimens of Natrix sipedon were secured by this method, and one was missed. A lone Hyla versicolor was added to our bags while it was sunning on a branch over the river. Rana catesbeiana was the only other herp seen here. The Black River at Old Davidson State Park is much wider and deeper than the Eleven Point.

It was also muddy where the Eleven Point had been clear and rock bottomed. The night was spent at the Best Western Motel in Walnut Ridge, Arkansas.

Seven and one-half miles east of Walnut Ridge is the Cache River. This small river was inhabited by Natrix fasciata confluens, Natrix rhombifera, Natrix erythrogaster, Rana catesbeiana, Rana utricularia, Bufo americanus, and Chrysemys scripta elegans. Only two Natrix fasciata confluens were seized; but, here is where I found out just how hard Natrix rhombifera could bite!

After the measly two Natrix fasciata confluens collected along the Cache River, we headed south towards Elgin, Arkansas. We stopped at the Black River on Arkansas Rt. 37 where a ferry transported traffic across the river. After walking upstream for a distance of one-half mile, we entered the river. Two snakes of the Natrix sipedon-fasciata complex were seen, but neither one was captured. Bufo americanus and Trionyx sp. were noted along the bank. Terry collected a small Graptemys pseudogeographica while waiting for the ferry to cross the river.

We decided to head back to Lawrence after making a number of stops at the roadside ditches. An Italian Villa Restaurant someplace in northern Arkansas was our fueling stop. Driving the rest of the night, the trio arrived in Lawrence at 10:00AM on Monday, September 5.

---KELLY IRWIN

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.

Adler, K.

1976. Loch Ness monster evidence presented at Cornell University. SSAR Herpetological Review, 7(2):41-46.

Caldwell Elementary School.

1976. Science Newsletter, 5:1-10. Contains numerous notes and observations on amphibians and reptiles. Limited numbers of copies available free from: Larry Miller, Caldwell Elementary School, Caldwell, Kansas.

Carl, G., Counts, G., Horst, M. and L. Livo.

1976. A guide to the reptiles and amphibians of the Denver area. 20pp. Available from: Colorado Herpetological Society, P.O. Box 15381, Denver, Colorado 80215.

Chizar, D., Scudder, K., Smith, H. M., and C. W. Radcliffe.

1976. Observation of courtship behavior in the western massasauga (Sistrurus catenatus tergeminus). Herpetologica, 32(3): 337-338.

Christiansen, J. L.

1973. The distribution and variation of the western earth snake, Virginia valeriae elegans (Kennicott) in Iowa. Proc. Iowa Acad. Sci., 80: 4pp. Reprint available free from: J. L. Christiansen, Department of Biology, Drake University, Des Moines, Iowa 50311.

Ferguson, G. W.

1976. Color change and reproductive cycling in female collared lizards (Crotaphytus collaris). Copeia, 1976(3):491-494.

Hutchinson, V. H. and L. G. Hill.

1976. Thermal selection in the hellbender, Cryptobranchus alleganiensis, and the mudpuppy, Necturus maculosus. Herpetologica, 32(3):327-331.

Ireland, P. H.

1976. Reproduction and larval development of the gray-bellied salamander Eurycea multiplicata griseogaster. Herpetologica, 32(3):233-238.

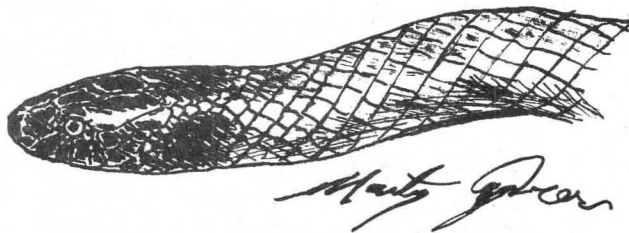
WESTERN PAINTED TURTLES FOUND IN OKLAHOMA

The shell of a Western Painted Turtle (Chrysemys picta belli) was found about 2.5 km south of the Kansas-Oklahoma state line near the town of Braman, Oklahoma. The shell was found the afternoon of August 5, 1976 along the banks of the Chikaskia River by KHS member Jody Trott. The shell measured 147 mm in upper shell length. It is the first western painted turtle ever recorded from the state of Oklahoma.

Several other western painted turtles have since been observed in the same area and as far south as Blackwell, Oklahoma. A live specimen has also been collected since Jody's find on August 5. It was collected, in the same area as the shell was found, by Larry Miller. The live turtle was captured August 6, 1976 and its upper shell length is 150 mm.

Jody Trott joined the KHS in May 1976. He is a seventh grade student in South Haven, Kansas and seems to have quite an interest in Herpetology.

---LARRY MILLER, Caldwell, Kansas



HABITATS ENDANGERED

Bill 9560, concerning wildlife, has been given to Congress with an amendment by Congressman Brea. If passed, the amendment would permit the dredging or filling of water areas such as marshes, swamps, and ponds, for commercial development without the studies of the Fish and Wildlife Department. Naturally it could do away with many good herp areas, such as Okeetee, South Carolina, North Carolina coastal marshes, and numerous Florida, Louisiana, Texas, and California areas. In the San Francisco

area alone, it would do away with 60,000 acres of ponds and marshes.

If you're concerned about this amendment to Bill 9560, write your Congressman at the House Office Building or your Senator at the Senate Office Building, Washington, D.C., and tell them that you do not wish the amendment to Bill 9560 to be passed.

---CHARLES F. STRONG, "Habitats Endangered," Notes from NOAH (The Northern Ohio Association of Herpetologists), Vol. 3, No. 10, July 22, 1976 (Reprinted from).

A TRIP TO THE OZARKS

Saturday morning, May 29, Steve Starlin and myself courageously boarded my supersonic snake-mobile (a '65 Ford Falcon wagon) and set forth for a week of collecting in Missouri. Nearing the Missouri border at Fort Scott we came upon a large eastern yellow-bellied racer crossing the road--naturally, in the other lane, with cars coming from both directions! However, making a "Starsky & Hutch" turn, we sprang into the fray. The snake, a very large one, was a dull blue in color and quite beautiful. Unfortunately, it had other ideas than to exhibit its beauty. In my common fashion for dealing with nasty snakes, I grabbed it by the tail, where upon it promptly seized my leg just above the knee. With its tail at arm's length and its mouth firmly attached to my Wrangler jeans, we began attracting the attention of numerous passersby. It finally released, but quickly regained, an identical hold on my left leg, much to my dismay and the public's entertainment. It was obvious that this snake was far more pugnacious than other racers. We finally managed to stuff it into a sack, but it shot out before the top was closed and seized Steve by the thumb. This explains my reluctance to be "left holding the bag" on collecting trips! After recovering, and reassuring Steve, we continued on. Box turtles, both three-toed and ornate, were all over the roads.

Braving Memorial Day traffic in the name of science, we arrived at my uncle's farm lost on a winding, dusty Ozard road near El Dorado Springs, Missouri without further incident, except for an eastern coachwhip that crossed the road ahead of us. We were happy to find that my uncle had caught a large Speckled kingsnake and a Rough Green snake for us. The day was late and the only items we turned up in a short excursion were two three-toed box turtles and a ring-neck snake. We weren't thrilled by either, so we decided to try our luck fishing instead. That ended up more profitable--Steve caught a 3½ pound channel cat!

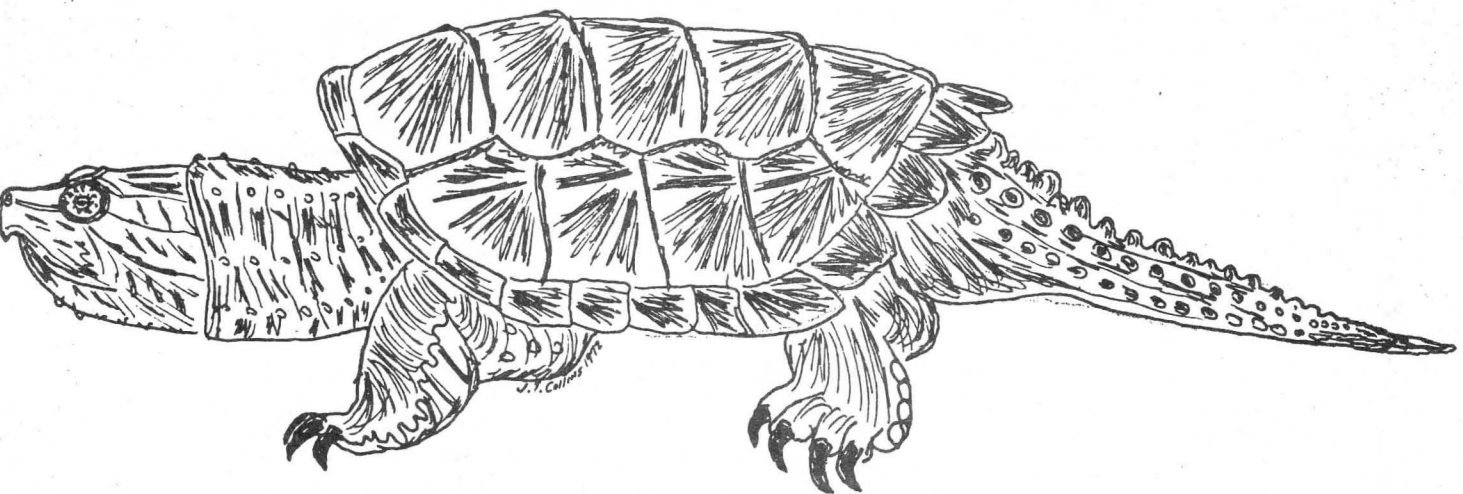
We were up early the next day, May 30, and itching to try our luck for hellbenders in Grade-A habitats, south of US 54, some thirty miles away. Water snakes naturally showed up, but the giant salamanders didn't. Moving to another creek proved no better for hellbenders, but it did turn up a western plains garter snake! We chased a few bullfrogs for exercise but failed to catch any; however, we managed to overtake a Fowler's toad. Five-lined skinks were on every log and we captured one beautiful red-headed male. Turning to fishing again, we caught a baby map turtle of unknown species. We also hooked another channel cat.

Luck was with us a little more the next day, June 1, as we found a hillside and began turning up scores of slimy salamanders, of which we kept four. We also secured more skinks (five-lined and ground). A number of fence lizards eluded our capture, as did a fair-sized snake of unknown species, which disappeared down a hole. Box turtles were, as usual, anywhere and everywhere we went. After exploring some neat caves, I gracefully stepped upon a smooth earth snake by accident, with fatal results for the unfortunate serpent. Another ringneck and a flat-headed snake were also seen. Western worm snakes became the most abundant reptile on this hill. On the way back we picked up a few fence lizards and, despite shade and dampness, the slimy salamanders all mysteriously had died.

That night we were invited to go to a colleague's research station to observe cottonmouths on a creek that will remain un-named in this article. This was perhaps the most rewarding challenge of the entire trip: getting to work with wild cottonmouths in the water, at night, at close range. Many interesting things could be learned during just a few hours of wading about with head-lamps, taking notes on the aquatic pit vipers. I also happened across a large map turtle that was resting on the bottom. I examined him and went on, thoroughly amazed at the ease with which one could pick up a map turtle, even at night. Wet and cold, but entirely happy with observing the water moccasins, we sloshed from the water around midnight and headed for a bite to eat and drink. Recuperated, we doffed our wet attire for some dry clothes and hit the sack.

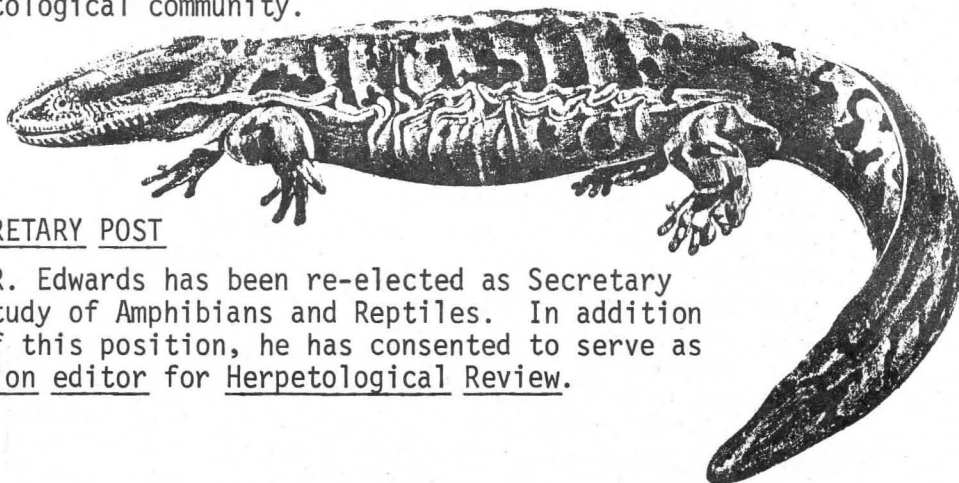
The next day, we directed our search back to Kansas around the infamous Kaw Valley area to hunt for red milk snakes. They managed to avoid us in the next few days of hunting, so we headed back home to Oxford.

---MARTIN B. CAPRON, Box 542, Oxford, Kansas



PISANI, COLLINS TO EDIT SSAR HERPETOLOGICAL REVIEW

KHS members George R. Pisani and Joseph T. Collins have been appointed co-editors of Herpetological Review, an international quarterly published by the Society for the Study of Amphibians and Reptiles. Their appointment, made by the SSAR Board of Directors at the 19th annual meeting in Ohio last August, is effective 1 January 1977. In addition, Pisani will continue his editorship of the SSAR's Herpetological Circular series, an irregular publication dealing with a wide variety of topics of interest to the herpetological community.



EDWARDS RETAINS SSAR SECRETARY POST

KHS member Stephen R. Edwards has been re-elected as Secretary of the Society for the Study of Amphibians and Reptiles. In addition to the numerous duties of this position, he has consented to serve as SSAR Annual Meeting section editor for Herpetological Review.

BLACK RAT SNAKES NEEDED

Harvey Lillywhite, professor of physiology and cell biology at The University of Kansas, urgently needs live specimens of the black rat snake (Elaphe obsoleta) for experimentation. The snakes should be three feet or longer, and will not be harmed. Anyone wishing to assist Harvey in these experiments by supplying snakes should contact him at room 523 in Haworth Hall, University of Kansas, or call him at 913-864-3207.

KHS MEMBERS FROM KANSAS ATTEND SSAR MEETING IN OHIO

Numerous KHS members from Kansas attended the 19th annual meeting of the Society for the Study of Amphibians and Reptiles held jointly with the Herpetologist's League at Miami (Ohio) University in Oxford, Ohio, last August. KHS members attending the excellent meeting were: Thomas Berger, David Cannatella, Joseph T. Collins, William E. Duellman, Stephen R. Edwards, Luis Malaret, George R. Pisani, Gregory Pregill and Linda Trueb.

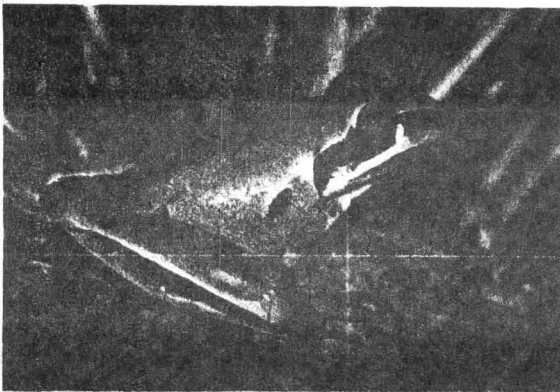
WAU ECOLOGY INSTITUTE
HANDBOOK No. 1



COMMON NEW GUINEA FROGS

By J.I. Menzies

This is a semi-popular introduction to the frogs of the island of New Guinea. Over 50 species are discussed in some detail and illustrated in colour. The species treated are selected on the basis of being widespread or representing a particular group of related species. Under each species there is a discussion of body structure, colour, habitat, call, eggs, life-cycle, distribution and abundance, with any other special points of interest. In addition to this main treatment, there is a general discussion of frog biology, special notes on the colours and their characteristics, a treatment of the fauna as to its composition and origin, a list of references, a guide to the identification of species, notes on preserving frogs, a glossary and a list of frogs recorded from New Guinea. The book is indexed and there is a map plus some diagrams to assist in identification, besides 12 colour plates with up to five or six species per plate.



Foreword by Sir Maori Kiki
Publication in late 1975
Approximately 75 pages of text
plus 12 colour plates

Price: [REDACTED];

[REDACTED]

Postage extra.
A\$ 3-40 surface mail
A\$ 7-10 air mail

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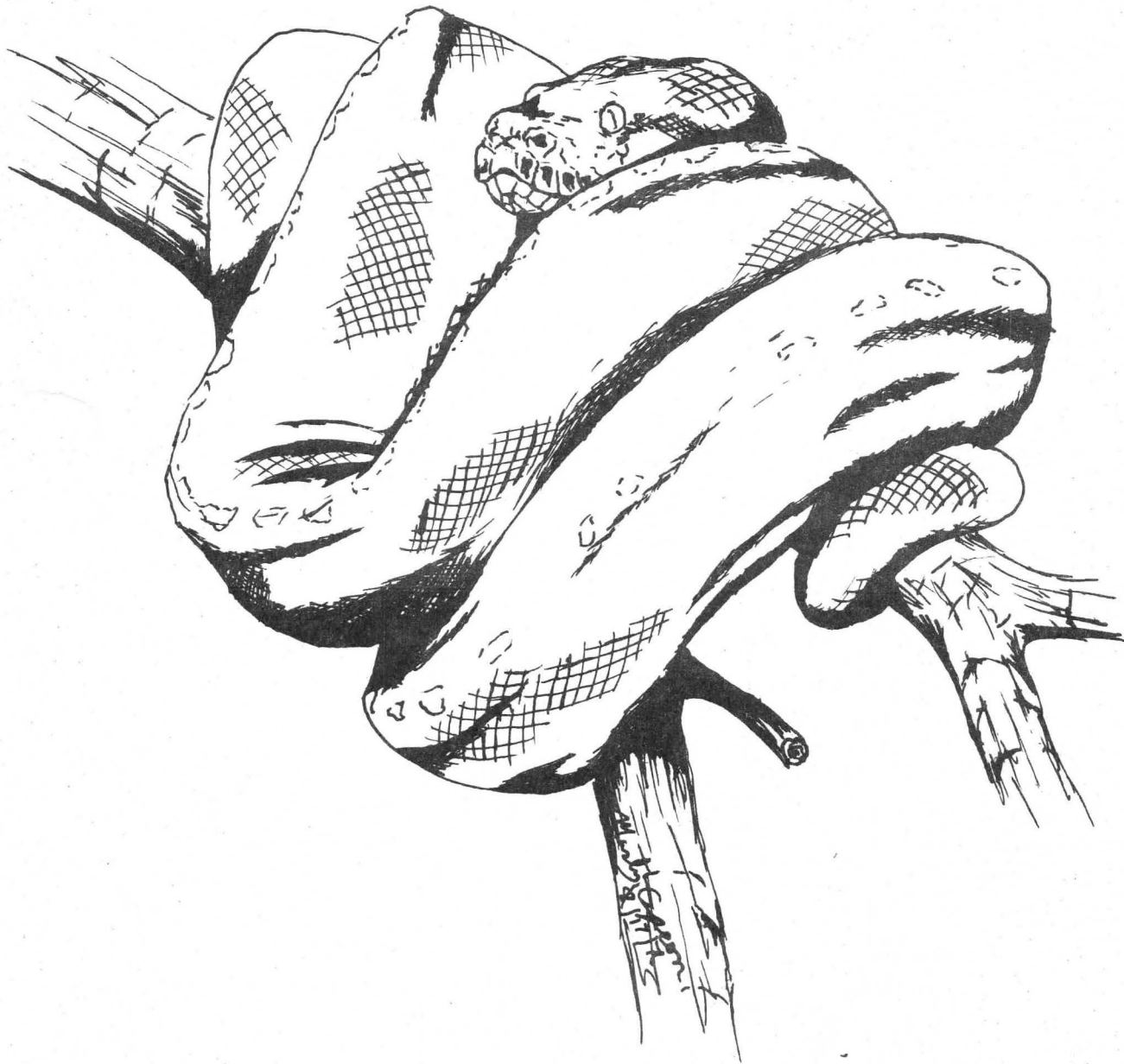
Other publications of WAU ECOLOGY INSTITUTE

First Biennial Report. 1974. 14 p. Prices: PNG K0.50; Au\$0.55; US\$0.75.

Leaflet No. 1. Yumi olgeta laikim diwai (We all need trees). 1975. 8 p.
Prices: PNG K0.10; Au\$0.15; US\$0.20. Postage extra.

Brochure (available in English and Japanese): Free.

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Australia.



---The KHS Newsletter is issued every other month by the Kansas Herpetological Society. All interested individuals are invited to become members. Membership dues per calendar year are \$3.00 payable to: Delfi Messinger, KHS Treasurer, Sedgwick County Zoo, 5555 Zoo Boulevard, Wichita, Kansas 67212. All manuscripts and notes should be sent to the Editor. 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.