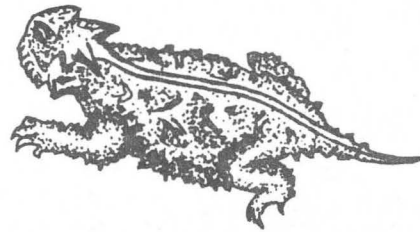


KANSAS
HERPETOLOGICAL
SOCIETY



NEWSLETTER

Number 3

OCTOBER 1974

EMPORIA MEETING ENJOYED BY ALL

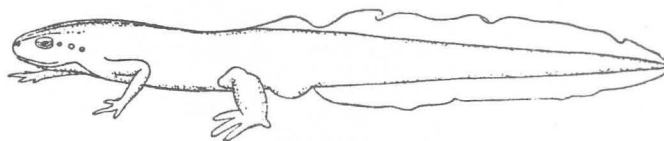
The 28 September KHS meeting at Emporia Kansas State College was attended by 33 persons. Robert F. Clarke, chairman of the EKSC biology department, presented an excellent talk on lizard behavior supplemented by his fine movies on "head-bobbing" in these reptiles. In addition, Dr. Clarke displayed several species of live lizards accompanied by an identification "quiz" which taxed everyone present. The KHS thanks Dr. Clarke for organizing a fine meeting -- also our thanks to Barb Johnson and her friends for making coffee and goodies available at the meeting.

KHS ANNUAL MEETING AND ELECTION IN TOPEKA

The first annual meeting of the KHS will be held on 23 November 1974 in the education room at the Topeka Zoological Park, 635 Gage Boulevard. The meeting agenda is as follows:

- 10:00 am President Rundquist calls the meeting to order and presents society business and resolutions.
- 10:30 am Election of 1975 officers (see attached nominating committee report).
- 11:00 am Coffee break.
- 11:15 am ZOO REPTILE TOUR led by Mary E. Dawson.
- Noon Lunch (local restaurants)
- 1:30 pm PROBLEMS IN KANSAS HERPETOLOGY by Eric M. Rundquist.
- 2:30 pm Coffee break.
- 2:45 pm THREATENED AMPHIBIANS AND REPTILES IN THE U.S. by Ray E. Ashton.
- 4:00 pm Meeting adjourns.

All KHS members are urged to attend this very important meeting. We have a great program. Please bring friends and prospective members. Our KHS Treasurer will be accepting 1975 dues from those wishing to pay at the meeting.



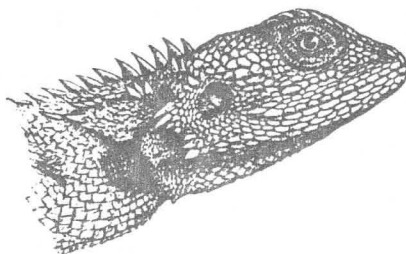
KHS MEMBERS TAKE TRIP TO SOUTHWEST KANSAS

On the weekend of August 30th to September 2nd, Eric Rundquist, Ron Clendenin, and Richard Plumlee took a field trip to southwest Kansas, ostensibly to search for the western diamond-backed rattlesnake (Crotalus atrox) and establish it as part of the state's fauna. Ron and Eric left Lawrence, Kansas, at 7:15 pm on the 30th of August and stopped over in Emporia where they met some friends and stayed for the night. Richard drove straight to southwest Kansas on his motorcycle to join Ron and Eric in Coldwater, Kansas, on August 31.

On 31 August Eric and Ron left Emporia at 11:45 to rendezvous with Dick at Coldwater. After gassing up at Wichita, the pair took the Harper/Attica/Sharon route to Medicine Lodge. Their first find was in Barber County, 2 miles east of Medicine Lodge on US Rt. 160, where they picked up a DOR (dead on road) Plains yellow mud turtle (Kinosternon flavescens). At 3:30 pm the two herp collectors arrived in Medicine Lodge and proceeded down the Aetna road south to stateline road, and then west to Ks. Rt. 1. In Barber County, 5 miles south of Deerhead, an AOR (alive on road) prairie rattlesnake (Crotalus viridis) was found. This animal was photographed with the claim that it was the most impressive rattler ever seen in Kansas.

Eric and Ron met Dick in Coldwater at 5:45 pm. They all left Coldwater at 7:45 pm and proceeded to road cruise through the southwest part of Comanche County, observing the low, luscious greenery of southwestern Kansas. The wind picked up and the temperature dropped. The collectors found two unusual looking toads (Bufo) in Comanche County, 2 miles south of Protection. They tentatively identified these toads as the species woodhousei, the Rocky Mountain toad, but noted that they were much, much lighter colored than other woodhousei found in that part of Kansas. In the lowlands many Bufo woodhousei were found, and on higher ground some Great Plains toads (Bufo cognatus) were observed. Nine miles south of Protection in Comanche County, the herpetologists picked up a young-of-the-year bullsnake (Pituophis melanoleucus sayi). Three miles east and 1.5 miles south of the bullsnake locale in the same county, the crew found a DOR eastern hognose snake (Heterodon platyrhinos) which had eaten a barred tiger salamander (Ambystoma tigrinum mavortium). In addition, the collectors captured another prairie rattlesnake 5 miles east and 10.75 miles south of Protection. The three men continued road cruising until 11:00 pm and then returned to a roadside park south of Coldwater to spend the night. The weather during the day had been partly cloudy with a high of 87 degrees F., but the collectors spent the night in a north wind and drizzle.

Rising at a leisurely 11:00 am on the 1st of September, they packed their gear and drove into Coldwater for food. Collecting resumed at 12:30 pm when the men decided to collect during daylight the same area covered the night before. They drove to the Cimarron River but found no suitable collecting areas, so they headed east toward Ks. Rt. 1. Along the Oklahoma border the herpetologists discovered an amazing amount of limestone -- a rarity for the area. But best of all, the collectors found



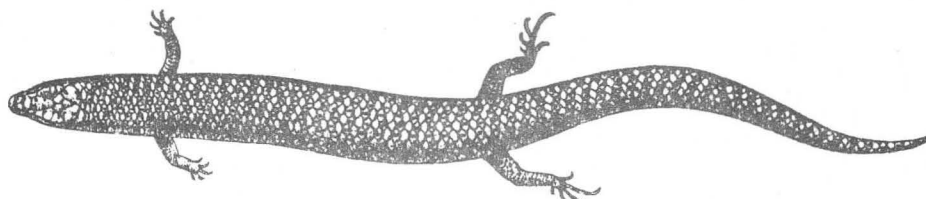
a beautiful western milk snake (Lampropeltis triangulum gentilis) about 30 feet north of the Oklahoma border. This animal was a complete surprise to the crew -- it was one of the last animals they expected to find, although the habitat was favorable. In addition, the three KHS members saw a Great Plains ground snake (Sonora episcopa), two young eastern collared lizards (Crotaphytus c. collaris), and two sub-adult male eastern prairie lizards (Sceloporus undulatus garmani). They also found another prairie rattlesnake in what appeared to be a den area in a ravine. Dick plans to check this out next spring. The entire area appeared to be excellent habitat for the diamond-backed rattlesnake, but none were seen. About 4:00 pm the herpetologists drove toward the Schwartz Canyon area in Comanche County. They collected a prairie ringneck snake (Diadophis punctatus arnyi) and a little-seen red-spotted toad (Bufo punctatus) approximately 12 miles east and 13 miles south of Coldwater.

At 7:45 pm the men headed back to Coldwater and ate dinner. Ron and Eric decided to road-cruise at 9:30 pm, but Dick stayed behind since motorcycles are not the best mode of travel in the downpour that started up. Through lots of wind, rain, and a spectacular electrical storm the two collectors cruised southward. Fourteen miles south of Coldwater on Ks. Rt. 1 they picked a bullfrog (Rana catesbeiana). They saw an occasional Rocky Mountain toad, but nothing resembling the Texas toad (Bufo speciosus), another species not yet known from Kansas. Traveling further, the two herpetologists picked up a Plains spadefoot (Scaphiopus bombifrons). They stopped several times to listen for amphibian calls, but heard nothing -- probably due to the fact that the temperature had dropped below 60 degrees F. Losing faith in the weather, Ron and Eric drove north on Rt. 160/183 toward Protection. There were frogs all over the road, but they could not stop due to heavy traffic and no place to pull over. Ron and Eric hurried all the way to Protection, turned around, and drove back down the highway to the place of plentiful frogs -- no frogs. The disgruntled men returned to the Coldwater roadside park at midnight and hit the sack at 1:00 am with a fierce gale roaring across the prairie. At 3:30 am the fierce gale was joined by a torrential downpour which spurred the entire party into a mad dash for the car where they spent the rest of the night sleeping in unusual positions due to the cramped conditions.

The next morning (September 2nd) the three herpetologists got up, packed their gear and left Comanche County at noon. They released a prairie rattlesnake near Sun City. Ron and Eric drove straight to Lawrence (as did Dick except for a duly awarded speeding ticket from the Kingman County sheriff), arriving there at 5:00 pm.

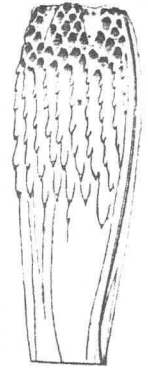
No Crotalus atrox, but an enjoyable and rewarding trip for all.

-- JAN PERRY, University of Kansas



CURRENT LITERATURE

- Arnold, Robert E.
1973. What to do about bites and stings of venomous animals. 122 pp. MacMillan Company, New York. \$1.95
- Burton, Maurice
1973. The world of reptiles & amphibians. 128 pp. Crown Publishers, New York. \$5.00
- Frye, Frederic L.
1973. Husbandry, medicine & surgery in captive reptiles. 140 pp. VM Publishing, Inc., Bonner Springs, Kansas. \$18.00
- Lanworn, R. A.
1972. The book of reptiles. 127 pp. Hamlyn Publishing Group, Ltd., New York. price not known
- USDI
1974. United States list of endangered fauna. 22 pp. Issued by the Fish & Wildlife Service, U. S. Department of the Interior, Washington, D. C. 20240. Available free.



LATTIS TO NEW YORK

Richard Lattis, our first KHS secretary and a doctoral candidate in herpetology at the University of Kansas, has accepted the position of Assistant Curator of Education at the Bronx Zoo. Dick will join Jim Waddick, the Bronx Zoo's Curator of Education and himself a former graduate in herpetology at KU. Dick Lattis has done a superb job as KHS secretary -- his enthusiasm and ever-present sense of humor will be sorely missed. Congratulations to Dick on his new job.

NEW TURTLE EXHIBIT AT THE TOPEKA ZOO

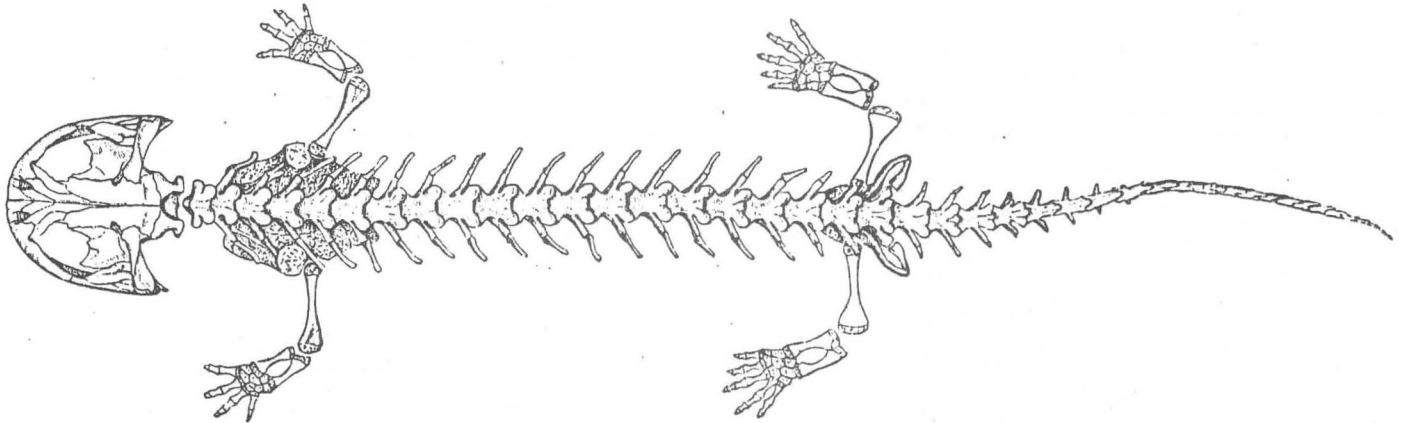
The most recent addition to the Topeka Zoo's reptile collection is a pair of midland smooth softshell turtles (*Trionyx m. muticus*) These animals were collected from the Kansas River in Douglas County and donated to the zoo by Michael Plummer, a KU herpetology graduate student and KHS member.

The midland smooth softshell turtle is found throughout all but the northwest corner of Kansas. In the wild, it lives in moderate to fast-flowing streams and rivers, and eats a varied diet of fish, amphibians and invertebrates. The Topeka Zoo's pair of these creatures is on display in the Animal Kingdom Building. The turtles are exhibited in a thirty gallon tank with a thick layer of sand in the bottom and filtered water in constant circulation. The simple blue background doesn't distract or camouflage the softshell turtles which are usually partially buried in the sandy bottom with head and long neck stretched upward. To prevent fouling of the exhibit water, the pair of turtles

is fed in a separate tank where they eat a prepared meat diet three times a week.

The midland smooth softshell turtles are a very popular exhibit at the Topeka Zoo. Visitors are delighted by their flexible, leathery shells and are amazed to learn that such fascinating reptiles are common in Kansas.

-- MARY E. DAWSON, Reptile Keeper, Topeka Zoological Park.



KHS EXECUTIVE COUNCIL BUSINESS -- KHS LETTERHEAD

The KHS executive council met on 26 August and urged President Rundquist and Secretary Lattis to design and have printed an official KHS letterhead for use by society officers. The letterhead was printed in early October and is now being used by all KHS officers. The letterhead was designed by Eric Rundquist and the line drawings of the salamander and lizard which accompany our official title are from the pen of Richard Lattis. (The official letterhead is now being used as the title page of the KHS Newsletter -- ED.)

PERRY JOINS KHS NEWSLETTER STAFF

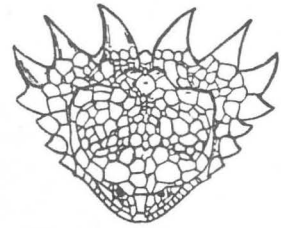
Jan Perry, student at the University of Kansas and part-time employee in the Museum of Natural History's herpetology division, has been appointed associate editor of the KHS Newsletter effective with this issue. Ms. Perry will concentrate on feature articles and news notes, and will assume some of the editor's responsibilities.

ASHTON, COLLINS GIVE 4-H PROGRAMS

KHS members Ray E. Ashton and Joseph T. Collins gave programs on amphibians and reptiles to 4-H districts throughout Kansas during early October. The programs, given in Garden City, Chanute, Colby, Hutchinson and Manhattan, were in cooperation with the Kansas State University Extension Service. In addition, Ashton and Collins have completed a 4-H booklet on amphibians and reptiles which will be distributed statewide.

REPORT OF THE KHS NOMINATING COMMITTEE

8 October 1974



To: All KHS members

In accordance with Article IV, sections 1-4, of the Kansas Herpetological Society Bylaws, the following members have been nominated to run for office on the 1975 ballot:

For PRESIDENT-ELECT

Jan Caldwell (State Biological Survey, Lawrence)
John Wortman (Topeka Zoological Park, Topeka)

For SECRETARY

Vic Eichler (Wichita State University, Wichita)
Terry Schwaner (University of Kansas, Lawrence)

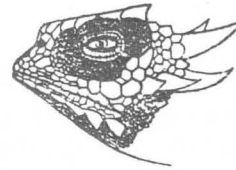
For TREASURER

Mary E. Dawson (Topeka Zoological Park) - unopposed

Respectfully submitted,

KHS Nominating Committee

Marc Thiry
Jan Perry
Richard Lattis, chairperson

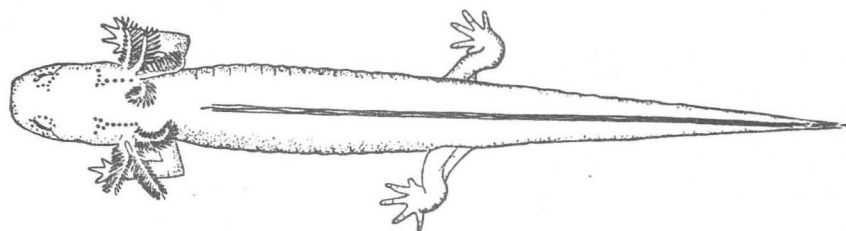


KHS MEMBERSHIP LIST

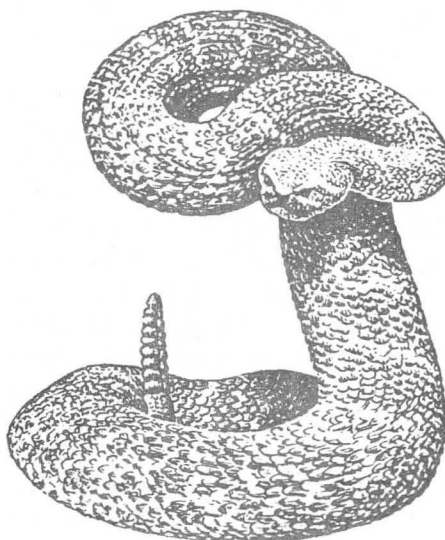
The list below is complete as of 15 October 1974. The KHS is printing this list to encourage communication among persons interested in amphibians and reptiles. Any errors or omissions should be brought to the attention of the editor immediately.

Ashton, Ray E. Museum of Natural History, KU, Lawrence 66045
Beuchot, Ron. R. R. #1, Silver Lake, Kansas 66539
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Bryant, David 312 Gemini, Silver Lake, Kansas 66539
Caldwell, Jan 2045 Avenue -A-, Campus West, KU, Lawrence 66045
Chirila, Cornell 5523 West 92nd Place, Overland Park, Kansas
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Clarke, Gary K. Topeka Zoo, 635 Gage Boulevard, Topeka, Kansas 66606
Clarke, Robert F. Dept. of Biology, Emporia Ks St. College, Emporia
Coker, Mike 2730 James, Topeka, Kansas 66614
Collins, Joseph T. Route 1, Box 150, Lawrence, Kansas 66044
Dawson, Bruce R. R. #1, Hutchinson, Kansas 67501
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 Eaton, Theodore H. Museum of Natural History, KU, Lawrence 66045
 Eichler, Victor B. 2354 North Yale, Wichita, Kansas 67220
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 Fitch, Virginia R. Route 3, Box 142, Lawrence, Kansas 66044
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 Grow, David 3801 West 13th Street, Wichita, Kansas
 Hedquist, Chris 3205 West 33rd Court, Topeka, Kansas 66614
 Hickok, Tim 9932 Ensley Lane, Leawood, Kansas 66206
 Hoffman, Stephen 922 Hemlock Street, Junction City, Kansas 66441
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 Irwin, James 2218 West 2nd Street, Topeka, Kansas
 Irwin, Kelly 2218 West 2nd Street, Topeka, Kansas
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 Mullen, William K. 635 N. Sheridan, Wichita, Kansas
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 Perry, Marjorie 812 Murrow Court, Lawrence, Kansas 66044
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 Roth, Stanley 532 Oklahoma Street, Lawrence, Kansas 66044
 Rowell, Gareth 450 Nebraska Street, Lawrence, Kansas 66044
 Rundquist, Eric M. 913 Indiana Street, Lawrence, Kansas 66044
 Savitzky, Alan H. Museum of Natural History, KU, Lawrence 66045
 Schwaner, Terry D. 1103 Randall Road, Lawrence, Kansas 66044
 Shields, James M. Box 14, Reading, Kansas 66868
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 Sprackland, Robert 1632 Engel, Hashinger Hall, Rm 435, Lawrence 66045
 Sperry, Kris 1515 Pinewood, Lawrence, Kansas 66044
 Starr, Christopher Dept. of Entomology, KU, Lawrence 66045
 Stegall, Eddie 1632 North Waco, Wichita, Kansas 67203
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von Achen, Pennie R. R. #2, Eudora, Kansas 66025
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Wilson, Dennis W. Bonner Springs High School, Bonner Springs, 66104
Wortman, John Topeka Zoo, 635 Gage Boulevard, Topeka, Kansas 66606



-- JOSEPH T. COLLINS, Editor, Museum of Natural History, University of Kansas, Lawrence, Kansas 66045 and JAN PERRY, Associate Editor, Museum of Natural History, University of Kansas, Lawrence, Kansas 66045. The KHS Newsletter is issued every other month by the Kansas Herpetological Society.