

KANSAS
HERPETOLOGICAL
SOCIETY



KHS Newsletter, No. 49

September 1982

NINTH ANNUAL MEETING

Saturday and Sunday

13-14 November 1982

Downs Auditorium

Museum of Natural History, University of Kansas

Lawrence

Program

Saturday, 13 November

NOON - Registration at entrance to Downs Auditorium

1:00 pm- Welcome by KHS President JOHN TOLLEFSON

1:15 pm- JOYCE HARMON, Kansas Fish and Game Commission. "Fish and Game Education Programs."

2:15 pm- KHS General Business Meeting and Election of Officers, KHS President JOHN TOLLEFSON presiding.

2:45 pm- Coffee Break plus Group Photo by LARRY MILLER on Museum front steps.

3:30 pm- JOHN SIMMONS, University of Kansas. "The Andes, The Amazon, and the Disappearing Forest."

4:30 pm- Announcements plus Slide Show (please bring your 10 best slides and tell us all about them).

5:30 pm- Dinner Break

7:30 pm- Beer Social and KHS Auction in Trail Room of the Kansas Union, next door to the Museum.

(continued on next page...)

Program (continued) for Ninth Annual KHS Meeting

Sunday, 14 November

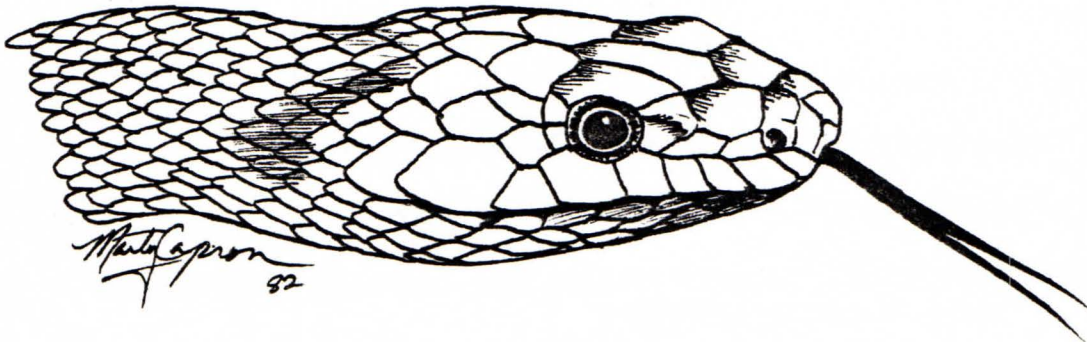
9:30 am- DAVID BARKER, Dallas Zoo. "Rattlesnake round-ups."

10:30 am- Coffee Break

11:00 am- JONATHON CAMPBELL, University of Kansas. "Snakes of the genus Bothrops."

NOON - Adjournment

NOTE NOTE: All KHS members and other interested individuals are invited to attend this meeting. Please bring herp-oriented items to donate to the KHS auction. If you have any questions regarding the meeting, contact Joseph T. Collins at (913) 864-4920, or Rose Etta Kurtz at (913) 864-4540.



SECOND INTERNATIONAL ZOO HORTICULTURE CONFERENCE

For those of you curious to know what holds frogs up, the Sedgwick County Zoo is sponsoring the 2nd International Zoo Horticulture Conference, 18-20 October of 1982. Papers include sessions on Poisonous Plants, Irrigation Systems, Rain Forest Exhibits and several related topics. Further information may be obtained from:

Virginia Wall, Horticulturist
Sedgwick County Zoo
5555 Zoo Blvd.
Wichita, Kansas 67212 (316) 942-2212

REPORT FROM THE FRONT: THE 1982 SSAR/HL MEETINGS

For this the 25th anniversary of the Society for the Study of Amphibians and Reptiles, and the 46th anniversary of the Herpetologists' League, the site chosen was in the graceful state of North Carolina. Our host was the North Carolina State Museum of Natural History in Raleigh. The museum dates back to the time of the Civil War, and has a herpetological collection of some 22,000 specimens, mostly from the Southeastern U.S. The meetings themselves were held at Meredith College in Raleigh, a quiet Baptist women's college which may never be the same again.

As has become the custom, the meetings included presentations of papers, symposia, a herpetological art show, exhibits by commercial publishers, and an exhaustive display of live herps, especially stunning salamanders, from North Carolina. In addition to the large number of scientific papers on a diversity of topics, there were some special paper sessions, including one hosted by the Zoo Liason Committee on Grants in Herpetology, which brought together a number of representatives of funding sources for small research projects. There were also symposia on Laboratory Techniques related to the study of herpetology, Current Controversies in Herpetology, and the Sixth Annual SSAR Regional Herpetological Society Liaison Committee Workshop, this year cosponsored with the North Carolina Herpetological Society. The topic was "Exotic Places, Exotic Herps: Travels Throughout the World". An array of stimulating speakers were introduced by the chairperson of the session, the flamboyant Jan Perry, former editor of the KHS Newsletter. The exotic places included St. Stephens Island (home of the tuatara), the Andes, the Caucasus, and several places in between.

The SSAR/HL meetings this year as usual had a little something to offer everyone from the avid amateur to the grim professional. The next SSAR/HL extravaganza will be held in Salt Lake City, Utah, from 7-12 August, 1983.

--Irving Street
Special Correspondent for the
KHS Newsletter

CROCODILIAN IMPORTS INCREASE

In 18 months, US imports of crocodilian skins, leather and manufactured products rose dramatically; 60,000 items in the first three months of 1981 compared with 10,000 in the last three months of 1979. Most trade was in manufactured products from Italy and France. In addition, almost 30,000 live crocodiles for the pet trade were imported in the same period.

--from Oryx 16(4): 308

SEA TURTLE RESCUE FUND

The two-year-old Sea Turtle Rescue Fund (STRF) is offering a variety of interesting educational materials about these majestic reptiles. The information published by them includes a succinct pamphlet entitled Turtle Tracks and Facts, which answers a lot of questions about turtle nesting, migration, hatching, etc., an information sheet entitled Attention Beach Users, alerting vacationers on how to share the beach with turtles without disrupting either party, and a variety of materials from the Center for Environmental Education, dealing with turtles, whales, and such things, including some attractive posters. Further information on the Sea Turtle Rescue Fund and their publications can be obtained by writing to:

Circulation Manager
Sea Turtle Rescue Fund
Center for Environmental Education
624 9th Street, NW
Washington, D.C. 20001

WARNING TO KHS MEMBERS...

Along with the latest issue of Monitor, the publication of the Victorian Herpetological Society of Australia, comes a very sad letter. The saddest part of all is that the letter could someday be sent out by a regional herpetological society such as KHS. It announces that after 22 Newsletters and the three issues of the expanded Monitor over the last five years, publication has ceased, due in part to the "unwilling attitude, by many who were quite capable, to put pen to paper". The VHS will continue to issue Herpetofauna twice a year, but their newsletter will be missed. Don't let this happen to the KHS. Send in your contributions today! Why not write up that last field trip, an interesting bit of behavior you observed in your captive snakes, a helpful hint for photography or cage maintenance? We know you have things to say, since we see all of you talking to each other at KHS meetings and fieldtrips. Remember, the KHS Newsletter depends on you.

ILLEGAL SNAKE-SKIN TRADE

An estimated \$60 million worth of snake-skins are still smuggled out of India every year. At present there are 15 million snake-skins and 200,000 lizard skins in Madras city alone and this is declared stock - undeclared illegal stock in anybody's guess. Smuggling is easy across the 1000-mile border with Nepal which does not prohibit exports. One rodent specialist has suggested that snake-catchers should turn to rats - new techniques for tanning and finishing rat skin make it suitable for shoes and purses. All that remains is for fashion-conscious westerners to make the switch.

--from Oryx 16(4): 304

PREACHER DIES AFTER SNAKE BITES HIM DURING SERVICES

Mullensville, W. Va. - A preacher who handled poisonous snakes in his bare hands to demonstrate his faith was bitten by a rattlesnake and died after refusing medical treatment, authorities said Tuesday.

The Rev. John Lee Holbrook, 38, of Oceana was bitten during Sunday evening services at the Lord Jesus Church in Jesus' Name, according to Wyoming County Coroner Ned C. Rogers, and was pronounced dead at Oceana Medical Center Monday afternoon.

Mr. Holbrook's right arm, from wrist to shoulder, had turned black and there were indications of internal bleeding, the coroner said.

A woman who identified herself as a church member said Mr. Holbrook had routinely handled snakes as a demonstration of faith.

"We do it because the Bible tells us so," said the woman, who asked not to be identified.

She said the basis for serpent handling is found in Mark 16:18, which says:

"They shall take up serpents: and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover."

Mr. Rogers said he was told that Mr. Holbrook had been bitten by snakes before, and that usually such persons develop an immunity to the venom. He said it appeared that Mr. Holbrook suffered an allergic reaction this time that accentuated the effect of the poison.

Snake handling has been a fixture for decades at a few small, rural churches scattered throughout Appalachia. Some states have outlawed the practice.

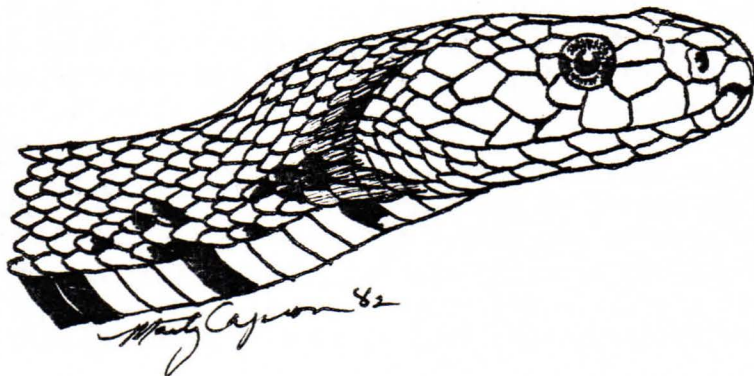
In 1975, the U.S. Supreme Court upheld a Tennessee law prohibiting snake handling. It rejected arguments that the ban violated the constitutional right to freedom of religion.

West Virginia law does not address the issue.

At least six deaths in West Virginia have been attributed to religious snake handling since 1961. Before Mr. Holbrook's death, the most recent had been that of 61-year-old Curtis Mounts of Mingo County, who died in May 1976 after handling a water moccasin and a rattlesnake at a church service in Delbarton.

Officials said Mr. Mounts, who also drank strychnine during the service, refused medical treatment.

- from The Kansas City Times Wednesday, August 25, 1982



THE ROUND ISLAND BOA - PLIGHT OF AN ENDANGERED SPECIES

The home of the Round Island boa (Casarea dussumieri) is a 374-acre island located northeast of Mauritius. Mauritius and several nearby islands, known collectively as the Mascarenes, lie a few hundred miles east of Madagascar. The isolation of these islands from large land masses has enabled the evolution of a truly unique assemblage of endemic plants and animals. Unfortunately, the arrival of the first European in 1507 heralded the annihilation of much of the local fauna. Giant tortoises and flightless birds, including the Dodo, were driven to extinction. Over the years, logging and cultivation has reduced the area on Mauritius containing natural vegetation to five percent.

On Round Island, much of the hardwood forest and endemic palm trees have been destroyed by rabbits and goats introduced during the last century. Without this vegetation much of the soil has been washed into the ocean by the periodic cyclones that ravage the region. These cyclones can also directly damage local bird and reptile populations. One violent cyclone that hit Round Island about eight years ago is estimated to have destroyed half of the Round Island boa population. A recent study estimates the entire population of this boa to contain a maximum of 75 individuals.

Aware of the plight of this species, the Jersey Wildlife Preservation Trust, a non-profit organization dedicated to the preservation of endangered species through captive breeding, obtained 7 wild-caught specimens on loan from the Mauritian government to establish a captive breeding program (Durrell, 1977). Hormonal assays of fecal samples were carried out to determine the sex of the individuals. Subsequently, three pairs have been established. In captivity, initially they would eat only live or dead geckos. After some effort on the part of the staff, the boas eventually accepted baby mice.

Herpetologically, the Round Island boa is very interesting because it is believed to be the sole surviving member of a unique group of primitive snakes (the Bolyeriidae) found only on Round Island. The other member of the family, Bolyeria multicarinata, is believed to be extinct, since several attempts to locate a specimen during the last 15 years have failed.

Aside from several morphological studies which have revealed this species to be somewhat of a phylogenetic enigma (McDowell, 1975), very little is known about the natural history and biology of Casarea dussumieri. Underwood (1967) reports that the most extraordinary morphological feature is the division of the maxilla into separate anterior and posterior bones and presumes some functional significance, but is unable to speculate because of the lack of biological information. He states that a skink was found in the digestive tract of one specimen.

The Round Island boa is on the verge of extinction, and extinction is forever. Heroic efforts are needed to prevent this from happening. One avenue is to establish a viable captive population. Another equally important task is to preserve and improve the habitat of Round Island. The Jersey Wildlife Preservation Trust is working with the Mauritian

government to restore this habitat. First, the rabbits and goats must be eliminated, then, a reforestation program can be implemented. Eventually, some captive born animals could be reintroduced onto Round Island to increase the population size, and hence, improve the genetic stability of the species.

Literature Cited

- Dowling, H.G. and W.E. Duellman. 1978. Systematic Herpetology: a synopsis of families and higher categories. HISS Publications no. 7
- Durrell, G.M. 1977. Golden bats and pink pigeons. Simon and Schuster, New York. 190 pp.
- Durrell, G. and L.M. Durrell. 1980. Breeding Mascarene wildlife in captivity. International Zoo Yearbook 20:2-119.
- McDowell, S.B. 1975. A catalogue of the snakes of New Guinea and the Solomons, with special reference to those in the Bernice P. Bishop Museum. Part II. Anilioidea and Pythoninae. J. Herpetol. 9(1):1-80.
- Underwood, G. 1967. A contribution to the classification of snakes. Staples Printers, Ltd., England. 179 pp.

--Hank Guarisco
Museum of Natural History
University of Kansas
Lawrence, Kansas 66045

NOTE: Former KHS Newsletter Editor Hank Guarisco will soon depart for the Isle of Jersey to spend the fall of this year at the Jersey Wildlife Preservation Trust in the Channel Islands near England in Europe. Hank has promised to send the KHS Newsletter a report on the aspects of Jersey Wildlife Preservation Trust of interest to us.

RECENT LITERATURE OF INTEREST TO KHS MEMBERS

- Cannatella, David C. 1982. Leaf-frogs of the Phyllomedusa perinesos group (Anura: Hylidae). Copeia 1982(3):501-513.
- Houseal, T.W., J.W. Bickham, and Marlin D. Springer. 1982. Geographic variation in the yellow mud turtle, Kinosternon flavescens. Copeia 1982(3):567-580.
- Reinert, H.K. and W.R. Kodrich. 1982. Movements and habitat utilization by the massasauga, Sistrurus catenatus catenatus. Jour. Herpetol. 16(2):162-171.
- Rudloe, Jack. 1982. Master of my lake. Audubon 84(4):5-9 (July issue).
- Tennant, Alan. 1982. Herpin'. Audubon 84(4):22-25 (July issue).

HERPER HELPERS

Note: This column is a new addition to the KHS Newsletter, and will appear from time to time as contributions are made by you, the members. It is designed to help all of us share our special knowledge and skills useful in locating, studying, and maintaining reptiles and amphibians.

Photographing Reptiles and Amphibians, Part One: Equipment

So, you want to take those stunning color photographs of small milk snakes and leopard frogs that everyone else seems to have at the annual KHS meeting yourself, but you are afraid it is an expensive and difficult hobby to take up? Wonder no more. Herp photography may be easier than you think.

There was a time when the photography of small subjects required expensive lenses and cameras, hours spent in calculations of exposure times, and the patience of Job. The advances made in lens technology, new film, and lightweight, inexpensive (relatively speaking) automatic cameras have changed all that. You now need little more to learn how to photograph herps other than to learn how to read, and the patience of Job.

A. Camera

Cameras come in all sizes for a variety of different types of film, but by far the most common and certainly the cheapest to get with the idea of adding equipment and lenses as you go is the 35mm format, the most popular size of camera around today. When you go to look at 35mm cameras, you will find you can divide them immediately into two classes, through-the-lens viewing (SLR, for single lens reflex) and those that aren't. The difference is that with an SLR, what you see is what you get. In the viewfinder, you are looking at the image which is being projected onto the film by the lens. With other cameras, one lens projects the image on the film, the other shows you a close approximation of what the film sees. Obviously, since you will want to buy special lenses as your skills improve, the SLR system is better. Within this class of cameras, there is an incredible variety to choose from. Decide what you can afford to spend on the basic camera body, then go look at them in the camera store. Different people like different cameras: the focusing can be split-image or spot focus, the camera may be easier to use left-handed than right-handed, one metering system will probably be easier for you to use than another. Once you think you know what you want, check to see what lenses are available for it, and try to find someone who has one to see how they like it. But remember, a camera is a very personal thing, like the type of automobile you drive. What may be perfect for you might not do at all for someone else. You will want to make sure your camera does have the following features:

1. A way to override the automatic exposure system for special circumstances you might encounter later on.
2. A good variety of lenses available. Better yet is the ability to take lenses made by a variety of manufacturers, which

allows you to do some real bargain shopping for equipment.

3. Hot-shoe attachment for electronic flash, so that you have less cords to deal with.

B. Lenses

When you buy your camera, you should buy it with the "standard" 50 or 55 mm lens, as you will certainly want to use it to photograph other things than reptiles, such as habitat, your friends and lovers, or your friends and lovers in the herp habitat. You will also want a lens to get close to those cute little froggies, and there are three basic ways to do this:

1. A macro lens, very popular, designed to do close up work. How close it will go varies quite a bit from lens to lens, but most are fine for specimen photography.
2. A short telephoto lens of, say, 100 mm or so. With this you can still fill the frame with the beasts, but you will have to stand back a bit to do it. Sometimes, this too is advantageous. The advantage over a macro is that you can't use the macro as a telephoto, but the macro lens will give you better close-up resolution, since that is what it is designed for.
3. A teleconverter. If you are cheap like me and don't want to lay out the bucks for either of the above fancy lenses, buy a 2X or 3X teleconverter to fit between your 50 or 55 mm lens and camera body. What this does is double or triple the focal length of the lens, giving you the equivalent of a 100 mm or 150 mm telephoto which can, of course, be used for close-ups. However, as with most good bargains, there is a catch to this one as well, and that is that you sacrifice a lot, such as ease of use, depth of field, and most of all, teleconverters gobble up light. A 2X teleconverter will mean that you will have to add another 2 or 3 f-stops to your exposure (don't panic now, how to use all this gear will be covered in the next appearance of this column).

C. Film

You have your camera now and a bag of expensive lenses, what kind of film do you want? There are two basic choices right away:

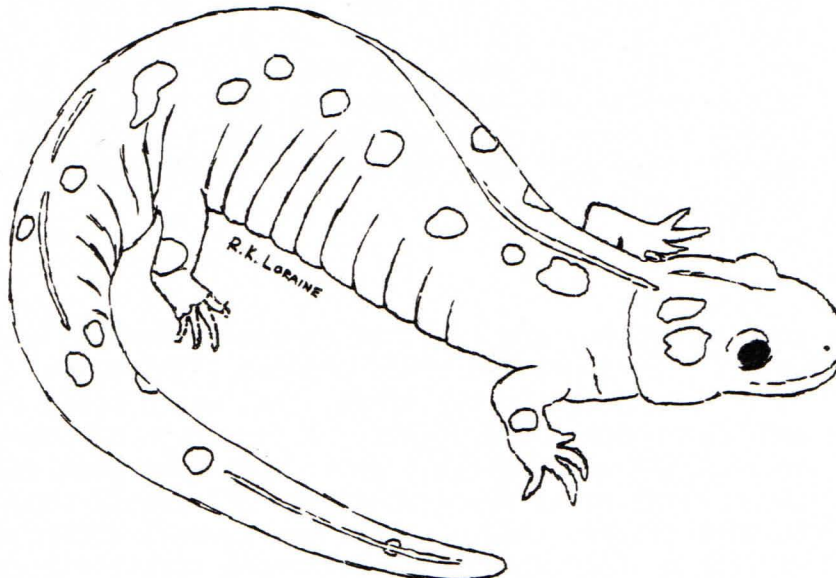
1. Color film comes in two kinds, that which makes slides and that which makes prints. A good rule of thumb is, you can get an acceptable print made from your color slide, but not the other way around, so most people shoot film to make slides. Again, there are several different brands of film on the market with different sensitivities to color, etc. You must determine which you want from experience. However, for most purposes photographing herps, you will want to get film with a speed (or ASA rating) of around 50-100. Slower films present all kinds of problems with sufficient light, and faster films tend to get a bit grainy.

2. Black-and-white film means you will be making prints most likely, so your chief concern will probably be to minimize the grain of the film so you can make bigger, sharper prints. With this in mind, select a film with an ASA of the neighborhood of 125, or even slower.

D. Electronic Flash

This is another of those items that has come a long way since it was first introduced. You can spend very little and get a small, compact unit that will produce a reliable flash of light, or spend a lot and get one that will regulate the amount of light it produces automatically and all sorts of other stuff. Most people associate flash photography with darkness, but you will find that using the flash even outdoors in sunlight for fill-in will do wonders for your photographs, really highlighting the animals you want to capture. The best advice is start with an inexpensive, simple electronic flash unit that couples with the hot-shoe attachment on your camera.

COMING NEXT: Part Two: Shooting for Keeps, how to put all this investment to work for you.



AN INCIDENCE OF ALBINISM IN THE EASTERN YELLOWBELLY RACER (COLUBER
CONSTRUCTOR FLAVIVENTRIS)

On 3 September 1982, Joseph T. Collins received a call from Rich Nolf of the St. Joseph Museum in Missouri concerning a litter of 10 eastern yellowbelly racers he had received the previous day. One of the hatchlings appeared to be an albino. The litter was discovered in the town of White Cloud (Doniphan County, Kansas) by a plumber who was in the process of installing a new water line.

Following the classification of Dyrkacz (1981), the hatchling racer can be classified as a partial albino with erythrophores, since all integumentary pigment is lacking except for red pigment. The eyes are also red. Comparing the weight of the albino (3.7 gm) to the average weight of the nine normal littermates (3.66 gm), we find no significant difference. The size of the albino is normal.

Two recent reviews that document cases of albinism in North American amphibians and reptiles (Dyrkacz, 1981; Hensley, 1959) indicate that a total of seven albino racers have been discovered. One was found by KHS member, Marty Capron, in Oxford, Kansas. Therefore, the present observation represents the second reported case of albinism in this species in Kansas.

The weights for the nine normal littermates are: (in gm) ¹

3.3	3.7
3.4	3.8
3.5	3.8
3.7	4.0
3.7	

Literature Cited

Dyrkacz, S. 1981. Recent Instances of Albinism in North American Amphibians and Reptiles. SSAR Herp. Circular, 11: 1-31.

Hensley, M. 1959. Albinism in North American Amphibians and Reptiles. Pubs. Mus. Michigan State Univ., Biol. Ser., 1(4):133-159.

--- Hank Guarisco
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DENIZENS OF THE WATERY REALM

Picture if you will for a moment, that you have changed. Instead of being five or six feet tall and living in a nice, warm house, you are only eight inches tall and live in the marshy shallows of a stream - a stream that empties into a seemingly endless expanse of water, a local pond. You manage to keep your skin, which is cold and clammy, wet through the heat of the day, and take your place along the shore at night always on the look out for a tempting morsel to pass your way. There are many others in this wet, noisy arena, where one false step may lead you into the darkness of an empty stomach. Three of your kind are along the shore, very near. In turn each booms into the night, "jug-o'-rum," "jug-o'-rum."

Birds also make their home here, especially those black birds with the red patches on their shoulders. One flew very low, near where you were sitting. You launched your oval hulk through the air, with your green missile mouth agape. A flurry of feathers and a squawk. It took nearly an hour to finish your meal.

What have you become? Some monster from deep space who came to earth to colonize this sphere? No. You are a bullfrog. Rana catesbeiana is the name people give you. One person investigating the feeding habits of your relatives remarked, "The voracity of the bullfrog is unbelievable. It has a tremendous mouth, large tongue, and muscles capable of seizing and retaining animals of considerable size." The "animals of considerable size" include ducklings, voles, bats, water snakes (which usually eat bullfrogs), and, oh yes, other frogs. Even a baby alligator has been found inside the stomach of a bullfrog!

Don't feel so bad. You may not be planning to reclaim that girlish figure with your catholic food habits, but you are smart - much smarter than people think. Oh, but what do "people" know anyway! You have learned that tadpoles can make a tasty snack. Also, that distress calls of immature frogs of your species and those of a frog, Rana blairi, attract larger bullfrogs. When tape recordings of these calls were played at a pond, larger individuals congregated to the spot and snapped at anything that moved!

Literature Cited

Frost, S. W. 1935. The food of Rana catesbeiana Shaw. Copeia 1935(1): 15-18.

Smith, A. K. 1977. Attraction of bullfrogs (Amphibia, Anura, Ranidae) to Distress calls of immature frogs. J. Herpetol. 11(2): 232-234.

---Crystal Evans, Cold, Clammy Reporter from the Watery Realm.

(A REVIEW OF) A REVIEW OF THE DISEASES AND TREATMENTS OF CAPTIVE TURTLES

by James B. Murphy and Joseph T. Collins. AMS Publications

There is a vast amount of information in the literature on the diseases of captive turtles and their treatment, but searching out the information you need is a long and difficult task. Murphy and Collins have now made that task much easier with this publication, including over 600 text citations and a supplemental bibliography of over 300 titles, covering environmental factors, bacterial, viral, mycotic and algal infections, protozoan and helminth infections and arthropod infestations, dietary problems, non-infectious diseases and injuries, and procedures for surgery, necropsy, and specimen collection with captive turtles. The text is indexed for scientific names, and is available for \$16 (plus 3.5% sales tax for Kansas residents) from the publisher at RR2 Box 1, Lawrence, Kansas 66044.

THE 1982 INVENTORY OF LIVE REPTILES AND AMPHIBIANS IN CAPTIVITY

Frank L. Slavens has expanded his compilation of the inventory of captive herps to include 382 genera and 952 species located in 176 collections, both public and private, in the United States, Canada, and Mexico. Happily, the reproduction section now numbers 314 species bred during 1981. The current edition of this useful publication is current as of 1 January, 1982. Copies may be obtained directly for the publisher for \$20 (\$25 for hardbound): Frank L. Slavens, P. O. Box 30744, Seattle, Washington, 98103. 212 pages.

AMPHIBIANS AND REPTILES IN PENNSYLVANIA

From the Carnegie Museum of Natural History comes special publication number six, a 91 page work entitled Amphibians and Reptiles in Pennsylvania. It includes a check list, bibliography, and atlas of distribution. It is available from the Publications Secretary, Carnegie Museum of Natural History, 4400 Forbes Avenue, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania 15213 for a total of \$5.00 including postage and handling. The text is written by the infamous C.J. McCoy, who once described a systematic collection of reptiles and amphibians as "a three-way hybrid between a pickle warehouse, a reference library, and a mail-order establishment."

BOOK REVIEW

Race With Extinction

The Herpetological Field Notes of J.R. Slevin's Journey to the Galapagos, 1905-1906

Edited by Thomas H. Fritts and Patricia R. Fritts

Herpetological Monograph No. 1

Herpetologists' League, 1982, vii + 98 pages, 9 figures, map on cover. Softbound.

It is ironic that the largest of the Chelonia, the sea turtles and giant land tortoises, are the least well known. When you consider that these monster turtles have been exploited by man through the ages as food sources, for oil, tortoise shell, and other products, it is even more ironic that we know so little about them. Sea turtle nesting behavior is fairly well known, but what the turtles do the rest of their lives is a mystery. That the giant land tortoises of the Galapagos once occurred in great numbers is well known, but what size the populations once attained is only a guess. With this in mind, the little-known field notes from one of the most famous of the Galapagos expeditions have been published, bringing into print for the first time a wealth of observations by Joseph R. Slevin on turtle behavior, sizes, temperatures, feeding habits, etc. The notes were made by Slevin during the famous voyage of the schooner Academy from the California Academy of Sciences in San Francisco to the Galapagos Islands during 1904-1905. While the ship load of scientists were on the trip, the 1905 San Francisco earthquake and fire destroyed the museum and all the collections. The material brought back from this expedition became the core collections of the Academy of today.

During the 17 month-long trip, the young Slevin was able to collect the "most versatile" and best documented collection of green turtles that has been assembled. He also obtained the best documented and most complete collection of the Galapagos tortoises, getting what at that time were thought to be 14 of the 15 races of the turtle. One of the main purposes behind the expedition was to obtain a collection of these tortoises, then thought soon to become extinct like their counterparts, the Mascarene tortoises, of which only the Aldabra tortoise has survived. There is little question that in terms of the ethics of scientific collecting of the day the trip was justified. A study of ships logs from 1831-1868 showed that American whalers alone removed over 13,000 turtles, each ship taking on 200 to 600 to use as food. As recently as 1902, a ship arrived in San Francisco with 37 Galapagos turtles on board to be sold for their meat. The observations of the plight of the turtles on the islands, and the publication of the resulting scientific papers on the Galapagos tortoises helped to draw world-wide attention to the islands, ultimately resulting in their establishment as a National Park by Ecuador, and their preservation today.

Slevin's observations on sea turtles were never published, although much of the information he collected on the land tortoises was. The text, expertly edited by Thomas Fritts and Patricia Fritts (who know

the Galapagos well) does not duplicate the previously published Log of the Schooner Academy (1931) which Slevin authored about the trip. Instead, the Fritts have concentrated on Slevin's observations on the details of habits and habitats, capture of reptiles on the islands, and curious personal observations which give a better idea of what life must have been like on the 89-foot boat for the 11 expedition members. The text is arranged in the order the notes were made in, and includes Slevin's field measurements of the tortoises, turtles, and lizards that he collected. Slevin's descriptions of the impact man had made on various of the islands at that time are very interesting to compare with the present status of the islands as a National Park of Ecuador.

The book is well designed, contains an index to the various wildlife mentioned in the text, and the nine figures selected give a good feeling for the expedition members and the conditions they were working under.

The book is available from Dr. W. Ronald Heyer, Publications Secretary, Herpetologists' League, Smithsonian Institution, Natural History Building, Washington, D.C. 20560.

--John E. Simmons
Museum of Natural History
University of Kansas
Lawrence, Kansas 66045

STANDARD COMMON AND CURRENT SCIENTIFIC NAMES FOR NORTH AMERICAN AMPHIBIANS AND REPTILES (2nd Edition)

by Joseph T. Collins, Roger Conant, James E. Huheey, James L. Knight, Eric M. Runquist, and Hobart M. Smith

The second edition of the Standard Common and Current Scientific Names for North American Amphibians and Reptiles is now available from the SSAR. The first edition of this reference, issued in 1978, quickly became a standard reference for herpetologists, biologists, zoos, museums, conservation organizations, wildlife societies, book publishers, and Federal and State wildlife agencies. This second, revised edition is an updated listing of over 1300 common and scientific names for species and subspecies of North American (north of Mexico) salamanders, frogs and toads, crocodylians, turtles, lizards, and snakes. New features in this edition (not in the 1978 version) are an appendix of Hawaiian amphibians and reptiles, the inclusion of the names of describers for all genera, species, and subspecies, and the addition of a table comparing the number of currently recognized subspecies with those listed in earlier publications. The SSAR Committee on Common and Scientific Names considered over 50 proposed changes for this edition, the majority of which were adopted. This important publication is available for \$3.00 from: Dr. Douglas H. Taylor, Publications Secretary SSAR, Department of Zoology, Miami University, Oxford, Ohio 45056.

BOOK REVIEW

Reptiles of North America
A Guide to Field Identification

by Hobart M. Smith and Edmund D. Brodie

Western Publishing Company, 240 pages, \$6.95. Softbound.

This new Golden Field Guide contains many features that make it a welcomed addition to the naturalist's library. The decision to enlist the artistic talents of David Dennis is reflected in the high quality of the color plates. The format of this field guide is ideal. It is very convenient to find the range map, species description, and color plate for each animal on one, open page. This makes it unnecessary to flip to different sections of the book for this information. The keys and accompanying sketches enable the reader to rapidly identify a specimen. In addition to species native to North America, this field guide also depicts introduced species that occur locally. For example, the authors note that a breeding population of the European lizard, Lacerta viridis, has been found in Topeka, Kansas. A complete description and color plate enable the reader to identify alien species as well as native ones. Any recent taxonomic changes are indicated by including the former designation and stating what revision has taken place. For example, the ground snake, Sonora episcopa, has been synonymized with the western ground snake, Sonora semiannulata. In this way, the reader who may be familiar with the older system of classification is not left guessing about what changes have been made.

In addition to being a useful field guide, this book summarizes a lot of diverse biological information on reptiles. The sections on life history and first aid for the treatment of snake bites are especially noteworthy. The adverse effects of man upon reptile populations through habitat destruction and commercial hunting is mentioned.

On the negative side, I wish that a color plate of each of the currently recognized subspecies of reptiles of North America would have been included in the field guide. However, this probably would have increased the production costs considerably, without adding a great deal of information. Where there are many subspecies, each is described and a few representative races are pictured. This is adequate for proper identification. A negative comment of minor importance involves the slightly inaccurate range map of the California legless lizard (Anniella p. pulchra). This animal is shown as occurring across the Baja peninsula to the Gulf of California, although there is little evidence to confirm its presence there (pers. comm., L.E. Hunt).

In conclusion, I feel that this latest field guide will have a great appeal to both amateur naturalists and professionals alike.

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THE KANSAS STATE FAIR, 1982, ANOTHER SNAKE STORY...

On September 11th and 12th of this year, KHS member Rose Etta Kurtz and I had the opportunity to participate in the University of Kansas exhibition at the Kansas State Fair in Hutchinson. We were there for two days to answer questions and talk about the Museum of Natural History, its education programs, exhibits, and research departments. To attract attention, as in past years we took down with us some live herps: a red milk snake (Lampropeltis triangulum), a checkered garter snake (Thamnophis marcianus), two ornate box turtles (Terrapene ornata), a western hognose snake (Heterodon nasicus), and a six and one-half foot long bullsnake (Pituophis melanoleucus).

The hognose snake and the bullsnake were alternated as "touch and feel" animals, the other herps exhibited in cages. As might be expected, the live snakes attracted quite a crowd. Rose Etta and I have drawn up the following list of observations about the people we met at the fair, and their reactions to the herps. We thought it might be of interest to the KHS membership to see this unscientific poll.

1. Most people did recognize the bullsnake and know that it was a beneficial creature to have on their property. Some even told us stories of catching the snakes in their fields and bringing them up to their barns and buildings for rodent control.
2. Those who didn't identify the bullsnake correctly usually thought that it was poisonous. We found it curious that such a large number of people thought we would have a poisonous snake out for people to touch. Perhaps they have watched too many episodes of Real People...
3. Countless people told us the story of finding the bullsnake in the hen house full of chicken eggs. A few even went on to add that the snakes would curl around a post to break the eggs after it had swallowed them.
4. Far fewer people recognized the hognose snake, but when told what it was, many people seemed familiar with it, especially under the name "spreadin' adder". Of those who correctly identified it, few had even witnessed its display in full from bluff to death feign.
5. The vast majority of the people passing in front of our booth were grossly overweight and should be dieting instead of eating corn dogs and cotton candy.
6. Women and small children were far more willing to first admit their fear of snakes, and then to go ahead and touch them. Men, especially the truly "macho" sort, were very reluctant to touch the snakes at all.
7. A surprising number of farmers told me that they never killed snakes because they were aware of their value for rodent control. The other extreme were the far fewer number of people who proudly told us of massacring every serpent they saw no matter what it was. It is apparently a more courageous act to dispatch a snake with a shotgun than by any other means, as this was the preferred method among the men.
8. Very few people recognized the checkered garter snake as a garter snake at all.
9. Most people thought garter snakes were "gardner" snakes.

10. Most people thought the red milk snake was a coral snake. A few could not be convinced otherwise. Hardly anyone had seen a red milk snake before, and no one seemed familiar with the myth of their sucking milk from cows.

11. Everyone had good words for the box turtle, even those who reported that they ate their tomatoes off the vine. Many, many people had a box turtle that habitually frequented their yard, some had even marked individuals to see how often they came back (one every year for four years, one every year for seven years).

12. Almost all of those who had never touched a snake before but were able to summon the strength of character to do so were surprised to find that the snake was not slimy, sticky, cold, or clammy. The snakes were reported to feel like leather, corn-on-the-cob cold (one assumes without butter), a basketball, and my favorite, one kid who said it felt just like skin.

All in all, the weekend was quite revealing concerning the attitudes of many Kansans toward snakes. Whether they love them or fear them, are fascinated or repulsed by them, everyone reacts strongly to snakes. Even a negative reaction could usually be turned into an opportunity to educate the public a little about the role snakes play in the ecology of our state.

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