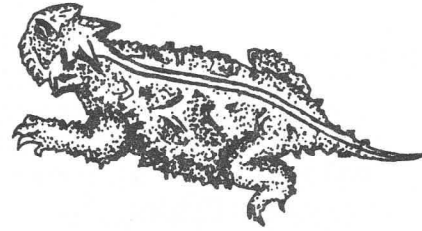


KANSAS  
HERPETOLOGICAL  
SOCIETY



NEWSLETTER

Number 8

August 1975

KHS SEPTEMBER MEETING AT STERLING COLLEGE

The next meeting of the Kansas Herpetological Society will be held on 20 September 1975 (Saturday) at 1:00 pm in Room 103 of Thompson Science Hall at Sterling College, Sterling, Kansas. The meeting will begin promptly and will feature Arnold Froese showing slides and speaking on "HOW SNAPPING TURTLES USE THEIR HABITATS." Following the meeting, KHS members are invited to adjourn to Cheyenne Bottoms (just north of Great Bend) for a combination field trip/campout. This should be a great program -- an excellent talk on Saturday and a field trip on Saturday evening until sometime (?) Sunday. All KHS members are urged to attend and bring friends and prospective members.

BETHEL COLLEGE MEETING ENJOYED BY ALL

Over 25 KHS members attended the July meeting of the society at Bethel College in Newton, Kansas. After a fascinating talk by Dwight Platt on his research with reptiles on the Sand Prairie Natural History Reservation, the attending herpetologists were given an added treat -- Dwight led a tour to the Reservation and discussed his research on the spot. The sand hill plums sure tasted good. The KHS thanks Dwight Platt for an excellent program -- we hope we are invited back to Bethel soon.

A TRIP TO THE MOUNTAINS OF SOUTHEASTERN ARIZONA

Having left Lawrence via TWA at KCI during the afternoon of 14 May, I found myself in Phoenix that same evening. The following afternoon I was piloted to Tucson by the renowned (and unlicensed) John Hayes, third best pilot in the world, in a Cherokee Commander. Upon our arrival at Tucson International, our skilled (and licensed) co-pilot used a novel one-point landing to demonstrate that any landing you can walk away from is a good landing (ground control probably thought otherwise).

The next afternoon John and I hopped into his shiny new (used) Datsun 610 and drove out to a cool pine-and-maple-canopied canyon that will remain unnamed in this article, as will the mountain range in which it is located. Having time for only a quick survey, we spotted a few Yarrow's Spiny Lizards (Sceloporus jarrovi); we then made camp under the fir trees at a higher elevation.



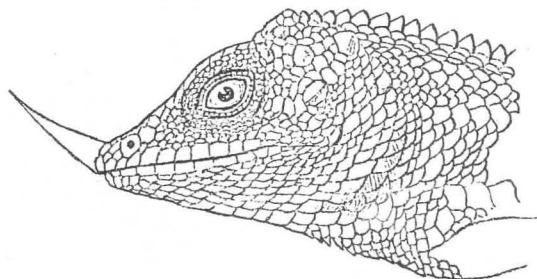
The next morning (17 May) found us re-entering the canyon at 10:00 am. Yarrow's Spiny Lizards, mostly gravid females, were abundant; John also found one lonely male Tree Lizard (Urosaurus ornatus). Aside from the abundant Spiny Lizards, however, the morning's travels yielded little other than pine trees along with unseasonable rain and hail just before noon. Our hasty retreat to the car was followed by a short period of imprisonment therein, made somewhat more pleasant (?) by peanut butter sandwiches and coca cola.

The unseasonably cooler weather (65 degrees F at 5,800 feet) stayed with us for the afternoon (as well as for the remainder of the trip). The sun did return, however, so we elected to complete our unfinished hike up the canyon after the hail melted. In quick succession, John and I each found an Arizona Mountain Kingsnake (Lampropeltis pyromelana). Satisfied with the day's collecting, we returned to camp.

We were plagued by partly cloudy and cool (53 degrees F) weather the next day when we explored a talus slope up around 8500 feet; we saw nary a lizard, much less a snake. Therefore, we decided to return to our favorite canyon of the previous day where I immediately saw a Sonoran Whipsnake (Masticophis bilineatus) and John found another Arizona Mountain Kingsnake. Again, Yarrow's Spiny Lizards were everywhere.

Desiring warmer weather and more diverse scenery, we left at 7:30 am the next morning for another mountain range. We rolled into a large canyon shortly before noon, and set out for a short hike in the early afternoon. Just outside camp we found an Arizona Alligator Lizard (Gerrhonotus kingi), a Striped Plateau Lizard (Sceloporus virgatus), and, of course, more Yarrow's Spiny Lizards. We also saw and photographed an interesting bird, a male Coppery-tailed Trogon. On the way back to camp, John saw and photographed a Black-tailed Rattlesnake (Crotalus molossus) and a Banded Rock Rattlesnake (Crotalus lepidus klauberi). That night a large number of javolina (also known as peccary) shared our campsite with us for several hours.

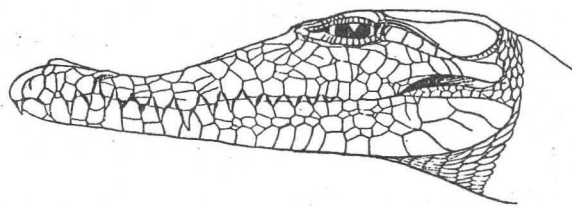
The Coppery-tailed Trogon and its numerous attendant bird-watchers (mostly older women of the tennis shoe persuasion) awoke us early the following morning (20 May). During our hike for that day, we captured but could not precisely identify a whiptail lizard (Cnemidophorus sp.). We also saw another Rock Rattlesnake just to the side of the trail. Later that afternoon we ran into a pair of itinerant snake collectors who had just found a large Arizona Mountain Kingsnake. The sighting of a coatimundi and many mule deer added some mammals to our vacation.



After a late start the next day (the Trogon arrived late on that morning), John and I misread the sign posted by the trail and a projected six-mile hike turned into a marathon ten-miler -- and that got us only halfway to our destination (and back). Disappointed and tired, having found only three Striped Plateau Lizards, we were pleased to see three Rock Rattlesnakes in rapid succession as we neared our campsite.

Replete with herp sightings, good scenery, and photographs, we returned to Tucson the next morning. Shortly thereafter I was back in Lawrence.

-- RANDALL N. JOHNSON, Museum of Natural History, University of Kansas, Lawrence 66045.



#### CURRENT LITERATURE

This current literature section has been compiled by Mary E. Dawson, and contains articles or books of possible interest to KHS members.

Conant, R.

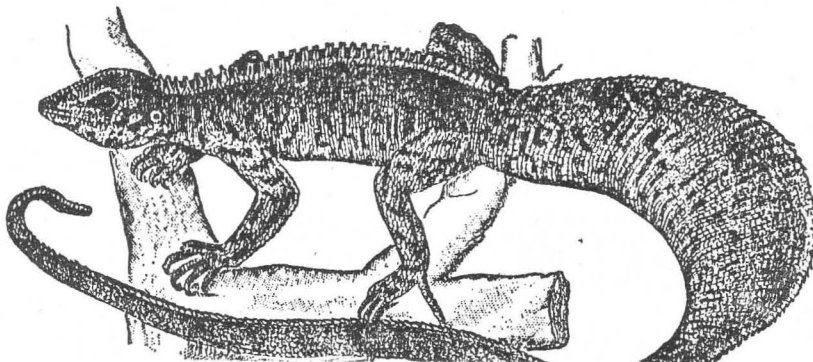
1975. A field guide to reptiles and amphibians of eastern and central North America. SECOND EDITION. 429 pp. Houghton Mifflin Company, Boston. Available for \$6.95 (paperback) from all major bookstores -- a volume of the Peterson Field Guide Series. Highly recommended for all KHS members.

Froom, B.

1972. The snakes of Canada. 128 pp. Available from McClelland and Stewart, Ltd, Toronto/Montreal.

Henderson, R. W. and L. G. Hoervers.

1975. A checklist and key to the amphibians and reptiles of Belize, Central America. Milwaukee Public Mus. Contrib. Biol. Geol., 5: 1-63. Available from: Publications Secretary, Milwaukee Public Museum, Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53233. Price not known.



CURRENT LITERATURE (CONTINUED)

Jacobs, G.

1975. Keys to the herpetofauna of the eastern hemisphere. Part II. Africa. Publ. Smithsonian Herp. Information Serv., 30: 1-13. Available free from: SHIS, Division of Reptiles & Amphibians, National Museum of Natural History, Washington, D. C. 20560.

Terra Special Issue #2 - Frogs and Toads.

1975. Available for \$2.00 from: Natural History Museum, 900 Exposition Blvd, Los Angeles, California 90007.

SPECIAL OFFER: A new book entitled "Edward H. Taylor: Recollections of a herpetologist," will be issued this fall. The book may be ordered at the special prepublication price until 1 October 1975 of \$5.00 (including postage and handling) from: Publications Secretary, Museum of Natural History, University of Kansas, Lawrence 66045. After 1 October 1975 the price will increase to \$6.00. (Editor's note: Dr. Edward H. Taylor is probably the world's most famous living herpetologist -- he is the only honorary life member of the Kansas Herpetological Society).



A TRIP THROUGH THE KANSAS FLINT HILLS

On a sunny 16 May, Steve Starlin and I set out for an area five miles southeast of Winfield, Kansas, hoping for successful herpetological collecting. A large common snapping turtle in a small, spring-fed pool was our first find of the day. It evaded my attempts to capture it by vanishing beneath thick foxtail moss. While searching unsuccessfully for the turtle, I found a leech establishing a new home on my foot. After removing this beast, we continued our hunt up a canyon. Several hundred yards into the canyon and above the spring, Steve spotted a Texas Horned Lizard out sun-basking. Along the rim-rocks we noticed several Collared Lizards that skillfully avoided our clumsy attempts to catch them.

About thirty minutes later my color-blind friend Steve noticed a "green" snake at the base of a yucca plant. It was in fact a fair-sized example of a tan and black striped Western Slender Glass Lizard. This legless creature made a swift exit down a mole tunnel, much to my dismay. The temperature nearing 85 degrees F, I kidded Steve about a "cooked herp" under a piece of tin we spied lying on the ground. Much to our surprise the tin hid a quite warm Collared Lizard that skittered quickly into a junk pile. After several minutes of vigorous pursuit from one end of the junkpile to the other, I finally





succeeded in capturing my first reptile of the trip. A few minutes later I heard a faint scratching in the junk pile and soon discovered another Collared Lizard floating in a fifty-five gallon drum of rain water. Unfortunately, a second specimen in the drum of water had succumbed and left the smell of death behind. We figured the critturs had been sunning themselves on a nearby over-hanging board when something scared them. They probably leaped off the board and ended up in a trap. We eliminated the watery death trap and started back toward our car.

Hiking back to the car by way of a paved road, we observed several Mississippi Map Turtles and a Northern Water Snake as we crossed over a bridge on Walnut Creek. Searching along the roadcut yielded two more Collared Lizards. We saw an Eastern Yellow-bellied Racer that quickly disappeared into the undergrowth along the road. Two weeks earlier we caught two six foot Eastern Coachwhips along this roadcut, but none were seen this time out.

We packed up and left our collecting site around 6:00 pm, Steve trying to dodge Collared Lizards out on the highway. After a cold drink at a drive-in in Winfield, we returned home, satisfied by our success in observing the comparatively rare Western Slender Glass Lizard and the Texas Horned Lizard.

-- MARTIN CAPRON, P. O. Box 542, Oxford, Kansas 67119.

#### KHS NOMINATING COMMITTEE FORMED

KHS President George Pisani has announced the Society's Nominating Committee to select candidates for 1976 offices. David Grow (Sedgwick County Zoo), Janice Perry (KHS Editor), and Joseph T. Collins (Committee Chairperson) will choose a slate of candidates for 1976. The slate will be published in the October KHS Newsletter and the assembled KHS membership will vote their preferences at the November KHS Annual Meeting in Topeka. Results of the votes will be published in the December KHS Newsletter.

#### AAZK CONFERENCE HELD AT SEDGWICK COUNTY ZOO

The American Association of Zoo Keepers held its annual Midwestern Regional Conference on 8-10 June at the Sedgwick County Zoo.

The conference was attended and enjoyed by approximately 70 people who came from as far away as Los Angeles, Milwaukee and Washington, D.C. Conference registration and a detailed tour of the zoo made up most of the first-day activities. That evening the guests were treated to an outdoor open-pit barbeque. The 9th of June was reserved for papers, slide presentations, and reports on various aspects of zoo activity or animals in general. Some of the interesting topics were: captive breeding of the red-tailed hawk, mother rearing of

captive born gorillas, and a very good slide presentation and lecture about the giant pandas at the National Zoo. Another outstanding slide presentation and lecture entitled "Endangered and threatened species of amphibians and reptiles in the United States" was given by our good friend, Joseph T. Collins, of the Museum of Natural History at the University of Kansas in Lawrence. The evenings festivities included a banquet and party complete with bluegrass band. Good times were had by all. Tuesday, for the most part, was spent discussing AAZK business and trying to remember the previous evening. The conference was adjourned at approximately 2:30 pm Tuesday afternoon, and participants headed home. Many expressed an interest in holding the AAZK National Conference at the Sedgwick County Zoo in 1977. We are looking forward to it.

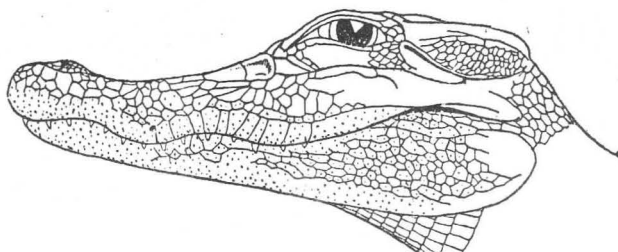
-- DAVID GROW, Sedgwick County Zoo, 5555 Zoo Boulevard,  
Wichita, Kansas 67212.

#### OUR 100TH KHS MEMBER

KHS Treasurer Mary E. Dawson is pleased to announce that Arnold Froese became our 100th member upon payment of his dues at last months KHS meeting in Newton. Arnold received his doctoral degree from the University of Tennessee at Knoxville, and accepted a position in the department of psychology at Sterling College, Kansas, in September 1974. He is interested in turtle behavior, and is currently engaged in research on snapping turtles.

#### COLLINS TO CHAIR ENDANGERED SPECIES COMMITTEE

The Kansas Forestry, Fish and Game Commission has established an Endangered Species Steering Committee to develop official lists of endangered or threatened plants and animals in the state. Five animal work groups (four for vertebrates and one for invertebrates) have been organized. The Reptile and Amphibian Work Group will be chaired by Joseph T. Collins, former KHS Newsletter editor and vertebrate zoologist in the Museum of Natural History at the University of Kansas, Lawrence. Joining Collins on the work group are Robert F. Clarke (Emporia Kansas State College), Stan Roth (Lawrence High School), and Johnny Ray (Fish and Game Commission). The work group members earnestly encourage suggestions, comments, and ideas from all KHS members. An initial meeting of work group chairmen and steering committee members will take place on 26 August in Great Bend.



PLATT AND KAS CONSERVATION COMMITTEE CONGRATULATED

KHS President George Pisani has announced that the KHS Executive Council has approved the following resolution:

WHEREAS, the Conservation Committee of the Kansas Academy of Science has diligently and accurately prepared a list of the 25 endangered species of amphibians and reptiles in Kansas, and ....

WHEREAS, this official KAS list has been made public record and been published in volume 76 part 3 of the Transactions of the Kansas Academy of Science, and ....

WHEREAS, the assembling and publishing of this list has provided a most important service to all the people of Kansas, and provided much needed information about the status of the natural environment of the state, be it therefore ....

RESOLVED, that the Kansas Herpetological Society congratulates the Conservation Committee of the Kansas Academy of Science and its chairman, DWIGHT R. PLATT, for their efforts on behalf of the herpetofauna of Kansas.

CURRENT KHS OFFICERS AND THEIR ADDRESSES

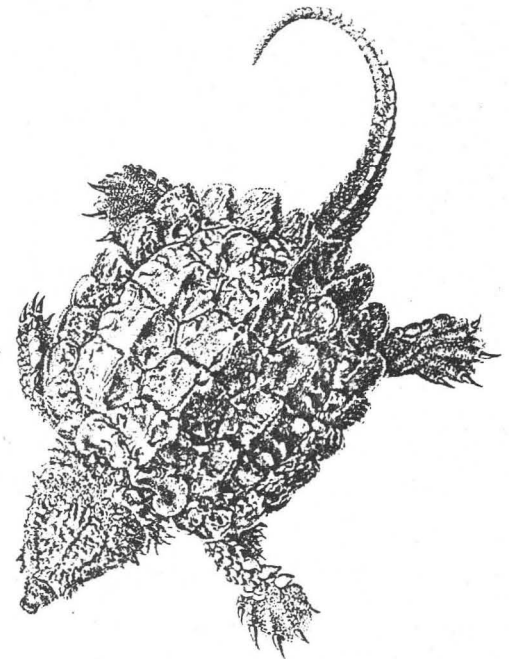
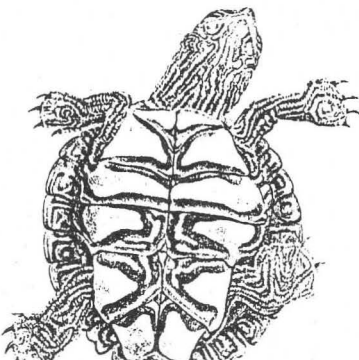
President - George R. Pisani  
Department of Biological Sciences  
University of Kansas  
Lawrence 66045

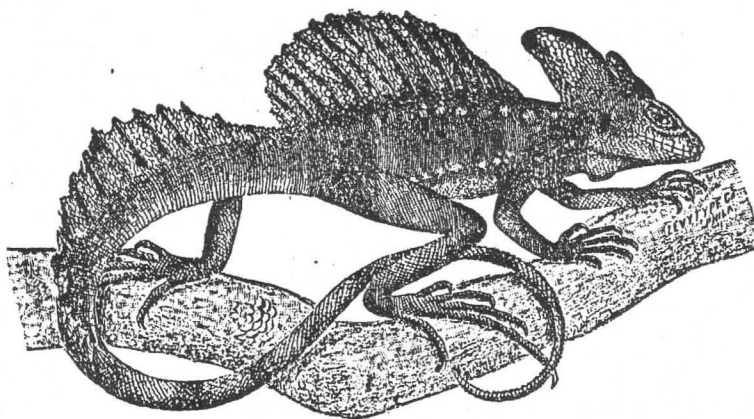
President-elect - Jan Caldwell  
State Biological Survey  
2045 Avenue -A- Campus West  
Lawrence 66045

Past President - Eric M. Rundquist  
1708 Louisiana Street  
Lawrence 66044

Secretary - Terry D. Schwaner  
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Lawrence 66044

Treasurer - Mary E. Dawson  
Topeka Zoological Park  
635 Gage Boulevard  
Topeka 66606





-- 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.