

Virginia Herpetological Society

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NEWSLETTER

Catesbeiana Editor

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Newsletter Editor

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Is An Interest In Herpetology Better-Accepted Today, Than In The Past?

*By Frank Tobey, 11175 Edwards Farm Ln., Purcellville,
Va 20132-1909*

When Emmett Reid Dunn (1894-1956), one of the pioneers of Virginia Herpetology, was attending Army Officers' Training School in World War One, of his interest in herpetology surfaced at a decidedly inappropriate time. It won him a transfer to the U.S. Navy where his superior officers felt, he'd have "less opportunity to pursue his hobby." It was not a hobby with Dunn, but a life's calling. He made substantial contributions to the study and inspired many others. One of Dunn's zoology professors at Haverford College was Dr. Henry S. Pratt.

Pratt's "Manual of the Vertebrates" was one of the first zoo texts that I became familiar. It was a preferred reference of my first 'boss' in summer camp (1931-1933). As camp naturalist, he insisted that any animals captured be 'keyed-down' using that imposing volume. Going from museum pest (1931) to assistant naturalist (1933), I earned and my first award in Reptile Study (1932). During the regular school year, my summer avocation was augmented by membership in a museum's junior

science club. I got the basics before I was eligible for high school. (General science was not taught in elementary school in those decades.) Along the way, I was razzed for my off-beat interests.

Raymond Lee Ditmars' "The Reptile Book" was a grade school graduation gift from my parents. But, as a result of cracking that book, instead of my high school Latin and Algebra texts, I bombed both subjects. Redemption came when, in place of Second Year Latin, I took Biology. It was a wise and timely substitution and probably kept me from being one of the earliest "high school drop-outs." Instead, I aced biology and chemistry. All this led to a zoology major in college (1934-1938) where I was in classes with pre-med and pre-dental students.

Summer camp staff jobs shifted from nature study to assistant to the camp doctor (1936-1941). Before going from nature study to assistant in 1942, I had worked with six different physicians. I was sent to the Army's medical department center at Camp Pickett, Blackstone VA., as a medical basic, and then to Carlisle, PA., to the Army Medical Field Service School.

I kept my interest in herpetology to myself, even though I didn't know of Emmett R. Dunn's 1918 experience. I could easily have made the mis-step of my more-illustrious predecessor but for one

key factor - Carlisle, PA. As Dr. George R. Zug of the Smithsonian could tell you, Carlisle is one of the coldest spots in Pennsylvania in winter. (I was there from December 1942 to late February 1943.)

Spring 1943: As the most junior officer in a medical regiment out on Tennessee Manoeuvres it was another thing. Out on reconnaissance, looking for a new place to move our large aid station, I happened to spot a seven-foot Eastern kingsnake (*Lampropeltis getulus getulus*) sunning in front of a handsome barn. Parking my 1/4 ton truck in front of the farmhouse, the jeep was quickly captured by two small boys. They sat in the wide back seat and wouldn't budge. To make polite conversation, I mentioned the big kingsnake I had seen over by the barn. The response, "Oh yeah! Gran'father keeps him 'round to fetch the rats." It was a matter-of-fact statement delivered as though every well-regulated farm had to have a kingsnake for a mouser! [What ever happened to the farm cat?] Resisting the ill-mannered temptation to catch that big snake was an exercise in self-restraint.

Later the same week, two Prairie kingsnakes (*Lampropeltis calligaster calligaster*) crawled into our bivouac area. I caught both but had to wait for a chance to get to Tullahoma to ship them by Railway Express to the junior museum back home. The delay, of course, raised a hue and cry from my tent-mates! Now, I would have thought that two physicians and a dentist could have shown interest. Instead, I was razed. My Company Commander finally said, "Tobey, get rid of those varmits you're harboring!" I had to assume he didn't mean my human tent-mates. (The snakes shipped-out by Railway Express that afternoon.) It was quite a while before the good-natured kidding slacked-off.

With improvements in science-education, today's excellent nature-films, and TV shows like "Wild Kingdom" etc., I hope that many of you have been spared the need to defend your interest in herpetology. As late as 1978, an honored guest at my home in London County took advantage of her position to say, somewhat disdainfully, "How did you ever get interested in THAT?" When I started to reply, she quickly intervened saying, "Oh my gosh, he's going to tell us!"

I suspect prejudice against reptiles is so deep-seated that we may not expect ignorant reactions will disappear soon. All I hope is that you have had an easier time of it than experiences in earlier decades of this supposedly "enlightened" century. Perhaps the 21st century will be an improvement over ours. Good Lord, I hope so!

FORTHCOMING SYMPOSIUM

The George Washington and Jefferson National Forest (now combined administratively) and the VNNH are hosting a one-day symposium on the history, physical environment, and natural history of the Big Levels sinkhole pond area and the Saint Mary's River watershed of Augusta County. These areas are rich in human and natural history and has been the target of numerous biotic and physical environment investigations. The sinkhole ponds are well known for their northern and Coastal Plain ponds as well as disjunct populations and unique species. The St. Mary's River for its effects by acid precipitation and loss of biological diversity. The date is currently planned for Friday, September 25, 1998. The location will be the VA Department of Forestry and VA Division of Mineral Resources building in Charlottesville. Publication of the papers will be presented in special issue of *Banisteria*.

For additional information, contact Joseph C. Mitchell (804-740-7086, jmitchel@richmond.edu), Dr. Dan Downey, Dept of Chemistry, James Madison University, Harrisonburg, VA 22807 (540-568-6635, downeydam@jmu.edu), or Dawn Kirk, George Washington & Jefferson National Forest, Glenwood Ranger District, P.O. Box 10, Natural Bridge, VA 24579-0010 (540-291-2188, Kirk_Dawn/r8_gwjeff_glenwood@fs.fed.us).

Project Bog Turtle Update

by Tom Thorp, NC Herpetological Society President and Three Lakes Nature Center and Aquarium Supervisor.

In keeping with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service contract to determine the southern range of the bog turtle, *Clemmys muhlenbergii*, this year Project Bog Turtle (an initiative of the North Carolina Herpetological Society) focused its survey efforts towards Virginia. The main project goals are to locate suitable habitat, determine the bog turtle's range, and acquire population estimates. The survey started on May 5 and ran through June 29, 1998. In addition to sampling the counties with known bog turtle populations, surrounding counties with potential turtle populations were also surveyed.

Dr. Joe Mitchell (University of Richmond), Tom Davis (National Park Service), Mike Pinder and Shawn Carter (Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries) and myself spent the first 2 days in the field reviewing the Virginia marking system and data collection procedures, which differ from the those of North Carolina. We visited 2 known sites and located 7 turtles, 2 of which were not marked. Inclement weather and a Suburban with a blown transmission conspired to prematurely end the survey week.

Much of the survey over the next 2 weeks was concentrated in previously unknown bog turtle counties sampling with Joe Zawadowski (NCHS). Little good habitat and few potential sites were located. Not unexpected, some owners refused to allow access to potential sites on their property. Tom Davis, his intern, Heather Gotwald, and summer employee, Tess Ann, joined us the following week to check out potential sites on the Parkway. We also stopped at one known site and found 4 recaptures.

Dennis Herman (NC State Museum of Natural Sciences), Bern Tryon (Knoxville Zoo), and Jim Warner (Wildlife Ecologist) joined the survey in the first week of June to check on some old historic sites and to look for new ones. They visited a private landowner who had located 2 bog turtles near his house. On a previous trip, Joe and I spent a day surveying the same property that yielded no results. Dennis' team spent most of the day on the property checking potential sites until they hit the jackpot. On the way out, they located a site that yielded 11 turtles - and all of the females were gravid! At a second potential site, tracks were found but no turtles.

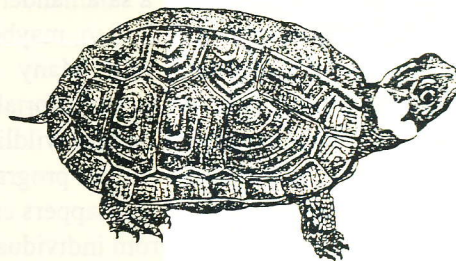
Mike Pinder and Scott Cooney (VDGIF) joined the crew the next day. In one county, they visited an old site where they found 3 new turtles. A new site also yielded 3 turtles. In a different county, one new site

yielded 6 unmarked adults and 6 juveniles.

Traveling into an adjoining county, one potential site was located and tracks were observed. At a second site, a turtle was seen from the vehicle but escaped before it could be apprehended.

The following week, I returned with Bekky Monroe and revisited the site where Dennis had hit the jackpot. Here, we located 6 new females -- all gravid. At the second site in this county, where tracks had previously been spotted, I located a female turtle. The remainder of the month was spent surveying new counties, locating some potential sites, but no turtles as yet.

The survey so far has yielded 5 new sites, 9 recaptures, and 43 new turtles. Based on my observations at this point, Virginia maybe the best chance for the bog turtle's future in the South.



WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Richard Black

The Biley Family

Albert Bohon Jr.

Scott Cooney

Justin Crawford

Tom Davis and

Kathy Laskowski

David Dawson

Barbara Farron

Martha Fogelin

Catherine Harding

Carol Heiser

Jess Jones

Robert Lapsley

Francis Little

Barbara McCane

Danielle Painter

Steve Perry

Laura Pinder

Gene Sattler

Angela Thorp

WildlifeMapping in Virginia

by Karen Reay, Research Specialist, Senior, Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries, Richmond.

WildlifeMapping is a program that provides the citizens of the Commonwealth an opportunity to collect wildlife-related information that will, in turn, be available to everyone via the Internet. Volunteers are able to contribute wildlife observations to the state's biological database through a hands-on educational program that is available to school children, outdoor enthusiasts, scout troops or anyone with an interest in observing wildlife.

The goals of *WildlifeMapping* are to: provide distribution data on a variety of species, promote public involvement in the management of Virginia's wildlife resources, educate the public about the wildlife resources of the Commonwealth, and complement survey, monitoring and research efforts in the Commonwealth.

Resource Guides - A Helper in the Field

Is it a toad or a frog? Is it a salamander or a lizard? Could you answer these questions? If so, maybe you could be a *WildlifeMapping* Resource Guide! Many *WildlifeMapping* leaders may not feel comfortable with the details associated with identifying certain wildlife in the field. This is where the Resource Guides program comes in to play. This program gives WildlifeMappers an opportunity to receive assistance from individuals with an expertise in identifying wildlife seen in the field or provide tips on improved viewing opportunities.

Individuals chosen for the Resource Guides Program will be selected through an application process, receive training and supplies (including a certificate of completion and t-shirt). They will be featured in a directory that will be used to match Resource Guides to WildlifeMappers. The Resource Guides can share their wisdom and experience by assisting with the use of field guides or other identification methods such as song or calls, confirming sightings, giving presentations on particular species of interest, or assisting with computer applications for *WildlifeMapping* data entry.

Through hands-on discovery and practice in the field with Resource Guides, WildlifeMappers can learn life long skills, gain confidence in species identification, and share with others the joy of observing wildlife and teaching respect for the environment. If interested, please contact Lisa Sausville, *WildlifeMapping* Coordinator, 4010 W. Broad St., Richmond, VA 23230, Phone: (804) 367-8747, email: LSAUSVILLE@DGIF.STATE.VA.US.

1ST ANNUAL VHS PHOTO/ART CONTEST

Announcing the 1st Annual VHS Herp Photo Contest for all VHS members and their families. There will be two contestant categories, Adult and Youth (12 and under). Subjects must be of a reptile or amphibian native to Virginia. Only one entry per individual. Entry to the contest is free.

Adult category: All photos must be 8" x 10" and dry mounted. Information about the photograph should be provided on the back of the photo mount and include: photographer's name, species common and scientific name of subject, date, location. Photographs submitted under the adult category can be color or black and white. They will be judged based on the composition, lighting, focus, exposure, background, and clarity/visibility of species identification characteristics. Prizes will be available for first, second, and third place.

Youth category: Entries in the youth category can be black and white or color photographs, drawings, or paintings. There are no size or mounting restrictions in this category; however, the artist's and subject name must be printed on the back of the entry. The youth category prizes awarded will be for first place, runner up, and participation.

All contest entries must be submitted to Shay Garriock, Secretary/Treasurer, by 12:00 pm at the fall meeting or mail to Shay Garriock, 703 Burruss Dr., Blacksburg, Va 24060. Current VHS officers and professional photographers cannot participate. The VHS reserves the right to cancel the contest if the number of entries is unacceptable. Photo entries cannot be computer enhanced images. Participants do not have to attend fall meeting to win. All entries will be returned to owners. Contest winners will be announced during the evening social after the fall meeting. *Contest judges to be announced at the meeting.*

HERP HAPPENINGS

Spring Meeting - On May 14, 1998, the VHS held its spring business meeting at Northwood High School, Saltville, Va.

The meeting discussed constitutional amendments, t-shirts, mugs, and awards. Information was provided about the snake brochure, fall meeting location, and society budget. As the sole representative of the membership committee, Mary Rybitski presented a poster promoting the society. The poster will be distributed to schools to increase society membership. A slide presentation showing herps of southwest Virginia preceded the meeting. Meeting minutes will be available in the next Catesbeiana.

Spring Survey - The VHS Spring herp survey was conducted at the Clinch Mountain Wildlife Management Area on May 14-17, 1998. The survey was attended by over 30 members that observed herps throughout the management area.

Unlike many of our recent spring surveys, the weather for this one was sunny, warm and dry. Late night forays landed surveying parties such interesting herp species as an eastern hellbender (*Cryptobranchus alleganiensis*) and a green salamander (*Aneides aeneus*). A valiant, yet futile, effort was made to find the legendary North Fork Holston cave. Similarly, members of the elite VHS Alpine Assault Team did their best to conquer Beartown Mountain with little success. Overall, 27 herp species were found during the 3 day survey. The VHS would like to thank Scott Whitcomb, WMA biologist, for assisting in survey organization. A detailed species list will be available in the next Catesbeiana. Additionally, group photographs (5" x 7") are available by sending \$5.00 to the secretary/treasurer.

New Journal Editor - The VHS journal, Catesbeiana, now has a new editor. Dr. Steve Roble, Virginia Natural Heritage Program, will be taking over the duties. Steve's address is Va Department of Conservation and Recreation, Division of Natural Heritage, 217 Governor St., 3rd Floor, Richmond, Va 23219. All new manuscripts and field notes should be sent to this address. The VHS would like to welcome Steve and thank Paul Sattler for all his hard work and dedication in editing the journal for the last 8 years.

Reptile and Amphibian Advisory Committee - The Reptile and Amphibian Advisory Committee met on May 1, 1998 to discuss a variety of issues. Members include Don Schwab (Chair), Drs. Allan and Barbara Savitzky, Dr. Paul Sattler, Dr. Joe Mitchell, Dr. Steve Roble, Dr. Jack Musick and Mike Pinder. Topics included species nomenclature, propagation of native species, and the herp atlas. The use of passive integrated transponder (PIT) tags was presented as a possible way to identify snakes that were born and raised in captivity. The next meeting is planned for sometime in October, 1998.

Herpetoculturist/VDGIF Meeting - The VDGIF staff met with herpetoculturist community members on April 24, 1998.

Proposals included the addition of new native species to those already allowed to be legally sold in Virginia and changes in the length limit of captive-raised snakes. All proposals are being reviewed by Department personnel.

HB38 Passed - The Wildlife Funding Initiative, better know as House Bill 38, passed both houses of the General Assembly uncontested (99-0 House, 38-0 Senate). Governor Gilmore signed the bill into law on March 14, 1998. Starting in the year 2000, the initiative will allow the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries to use half of the sales tax generated on outdoor equipment for capital improvements, law enforcement and wildlife conservation. The passage of this bill would not have been possible without the support of the Department's non-traditional constituents. With this in mind, it is now up to us to keep up the pressure to make sure the new money is appropriated to nongame projects and activities. Contacts need to be made to your Delegates, Department Board members, the Secretary of Natural Resources, and the Governor. We have only 2 years to get our message across. Lets see this all the way through!!!

Snake Brochure - The snake brochure is one more step to reality. Dr. Joe Mitchell will soon be contracted to develop the brochure describing the 30 snake species in Virginia. For its completion, we are looking for photographs of each snake species to accompany the written descriptions. If you have a good quality snake color photograph (in slide form) and would like to see it published, please send it to Mike Pinder, 2206 South Main St., Suite C, Blacksburg, Va 24060. All slides, either used or not, will be returned to their owner. Although there is no monetary reward for getting you photograph selected, you will be acknowledged and your contribution will allow us to publish additional brochures. These brochures will be provided free to anyone who requests them.



YOU ARE CORDIALLY INVITED TO THE VHS 40TH ANNIVERSARY

The VHS will be celebrating its 40th year on October 31, 1998, at Maymont Park, Richmond. In honor of this event, there will be a symposium entitled, "Reptile and Amphibian Conservation: Past, Present, and Future." The list of invited speakers include Frank Tobey (VHS Founding Father), Dr. Ron Heyer (Smithsonian Institution Curator of Amphibians), Dr. Joe Mitchell (Author, Reptiles of Virginia) and others. A luncheon, raffle, photo contest, and evening social will part of the day's festivities. A fee for everyone over 14 years old will be used to cover lunch, evening social, and facility charges. Individuals 14 years and under are free. Preregistration is \$3.50 members and \$5.00 nonmembers. A registration fee at the door will be \$5.00 members and \$7.00 nonmembers. More information will be provided in the next Catesbeiana.

Where: Maymont Park, Richmond

When: 12:00 noon - 7:00 p.m.; October 31, 1998

Maymont Park is a beautiful historic park situated on the James River in the heart of Richmond. The park offers a nature center, museums, an arboretum, aviary, and stunning gardens. Lunch will begin at noon til 1:00 pm. We recommend that you come early to walk the grounds and see the sights. Admission to Maymont is free.

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Registration Form (Registration Deadline is October 9, 1998)

Registration fee includes lunch and evening social.

Name: _____ Address: _____
 City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____
 E-mail: _____ Phone: _____

Membership status: Member Nonmember **Payment Method:** Check Money order

Mail registration form and payment to Shay Garriock, Secretary/Treasurer, 703 Burruss Dr., Blackburg, Va 24060. A confirmation letter will be sent to registrants by October 16th and will include information on hotels, directions, etc.

VIRGINIA NATIVE

Barking Treefrog

Hyla gratiosa

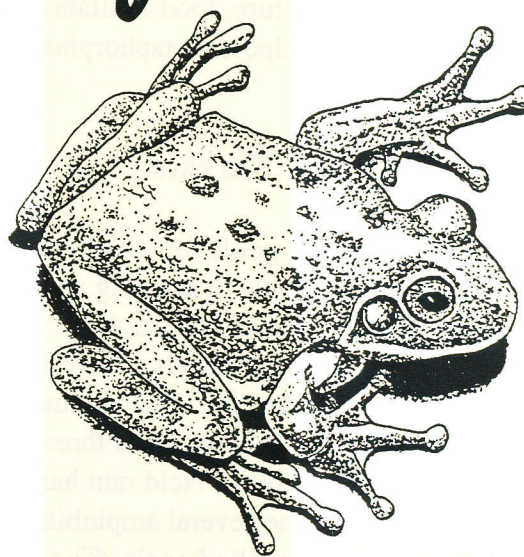
**Status in Virginia:
Threatened**

Description

Have you ever heard barking from the top of a tree? Don't worry, it wasn't some new species of arboreal canine. Rather, what you are probably hearing was the barking treefrog. At a distance, these frogs have a call that sounds similar to the barking or baying of a dog. Barking treefrogs are one of the largest treefrogs in North America reaching lengths of 3 inches (snout to vent). The tadpoles reach lengths of 1-2 inches and are considered the largest of all hylids in North America. Like other members of the Family Hylidae, they have adhesive discs on toes that allows them to climb trees and buildings. These animals are the chameleons of the frog world. They have the ability to change color from bright green and spotless to deep green with many dark, rounded spots. The upper lip is bordered in white and a yellow to white stripe extends from their upper jaw to the side of the body. Males have a green to yellow throat.

Habitat

Barking treefrogs have the ability to both climb and burrow. Warmer months are spent in trees while they find shelter among tree roots,



vegetation, and leaf litter of the forest floor during winter and dry periods.

Distribution

Barking treefrogs occur mainly along the Coastal Plain from southeast Virginia to Florida and Louisiana. Other smaller populations occur in Tennessee and Kentucky. Virginia's populations occur in Mathews County and southward.

Food

Barking treefrogs feed mainly at night on arboreal insects like beetles, caterpillars, leaf hoppers, and ants. Tadpoles eat algae and microorganisms.

Breeding Biology

Breeding occurs in late spring to early summer in temporary pools under open areas of the forest canopy. Frogs will move to the pools

after a heavy rain. A single breeding pool numbers no more than 25 males. The call of the male is a single explosive *doonk* or *toonk* which is repeated at intervals of one to two seconds. Calls are given while floating in water. Clutch size is estimated between 1800 and 1900 eggs. The larvae period is from 40 to 70 days and is dependent upon temperature, food availability, and tadpole density. Tadpole metamorphose from July to September.

Current Status and Threats

The temporary breeding pools for which the frogs depend are vulnerable to draining and filling during logging and construction activities. The loss of large stands of forests is the major threat to this species. The addition of fish into these naturally fishless pools threaten tadpoles and breeding adults. Acid rain has been linked to the decline several amphibian species that breed in rain filled pools. The spraying of herbicides, pesticides, and fertilizers in these pools can be detrimental. In recent years, these frogs have gained popularity in the pet trade. Because of the small number of breeding individuals at a single pool, overcollection can be particularly devastating.

The barking treefrog received threatened status under Virginia's Endangered Species law in 1992. It is illegal for anyone to possess, harm, or sell barking treefrogs or destroy their habitat. Because of the protected status, any in the wild should be left undisturbed and any found being sold should be reported to VDGIF law enforcement.

To learn more about barking treefrogs and other Virginia amphibians, we suggest the following material:

Conant, R. and J.T. Collins. 1991. The Peterson Field Guide Series - A Field Guide to Reptiles and Amphibians of Eastern and Central North America.

3rd edition. Houghton Mifflin Company, Boston. 450 pp.

Martof, B.S., W.M. Palmer, J.R. Bailey, and J.R. Harrison III. 1980. Amphibians and Reptiles of the Carolinas and Virginia. The University of North Carolina Press, Chapel Hill. 264 pp.

Terwilliger, K. and J. Tate. 1994. A Guide to Endangered and Threatened Species in Virginia. The McDonalds & Woodward Company, Blacksburg. 229 pp.

Editor's Note:

This is a draft copy of what will eventually be a fact sheet for the barking treefrog. Fact sheet was modified from the barking treefrog description by Chris Pague and David Young in Terwilliger and Tate (1994). Art work contribution was by Mike Pinder. Any suggestions or corrections should be sent to the editor.



Virginia Herpetological Society on the World Wide Web

<http://www.public.usit.net/cgarrioc/>

Comments, suggestions, submissions
welcome at:

cgarrioc@usit.net

Literature Review

The purpose of this column is to inform members of recent herpetological research pertinent to Virginia or of special interest to the Society's membership. Papers or notes from professional journals, new books, "gray literature" reports, and popular magazine articles are acceptable for inclusion. Members are encouraged to send recently published items of interest to the editor. Submissions will be accepted subject to the approval of the editor.

- Benz, G.W., and D.E. Collins (editors). 1997. Aquatic fauna in peril: The southeastern perspective. Special Publication 1, Southeast Aquatic Research Institute, Lenz Design & Communications, Decatur, Georgia.
- Bjorndal, K.A., Bolten, A.B.; Bennett, R.A., Jacobson, E.R., Wronski, T.J., Valeski, J.J. and Eliazar, P.J. Age and Growth in Sea Turtles: Limitation of skeletochronology for demographic Studies. *Copeia*, 1998(1): 23-30.
- Briston, C.A. Predatory responses of largemouth bass (*Micropterus salmoides*) to conspicuous and cryptic hatching turtles: A comparative experiment. *Copeia*, 1998(2): 383-390.
- Bushar, L.M.; Reinert, H.K. and L. Gelbert. 1998. Genetic variation and gene flow within and between local populations of the timber rattlesnake, *Crotalus horridus*. *Copeia* 1998 (2): 411-422.
- Carreno, C.A. and R.N. Harris. 1998 Lack of nest defense behavior and attendance patterns in a joint nesting salamander, *Hemidactylium scutatum* (Caudata: Plethodontidae). *Copeia*, 1998(1): 183-189.
- Guffey, C., MaKinster, J.G., and R.G. Jaeger. 1998. Familiarity affects interactions between potentially courting territorial salamanders. *Copeia*, 1998(1): 205-208.
- Heppell, S.S. 1998. Application of life-history theory and population model analysis to turtle conservation. *Copeia* 1998(2):367-375.
- Highton, R. 1998. Frequency of hybrids between introduced and native populations of the salamander *Plethodon jordani* in their first generation of sympatry. *Herpetologica* 54(2):143-153.
- Lovich, J.E., Ernst, C.H., Zappalorti, R.T., and D.H. Herman. 1998. Geographic variation in growth and sexual size dimorphism of bog turtles (*Clemmys muhlenbergii*). *American Midland Naturalist* 139:69-78.
- McLeod, R.F. and J.E. Gates. 1998. Response of herpetofaunal communities to forest cutting and burning at Chesapeake Farms, Maryland. *American Midland Naturalist* 139:164-177.
- Mitchell, J.C. and Steven M. Roble. 1998. Annotated checklist of the amphibians and reptiles of Fort A.P. Hill, Virginia, and Vicinity. *Banisteria* 11:19-32.
- Mitchell, J.C., Erdle, S.Y., and J.F. Pagels. 1998. Notes on the distribution and ecology of some amphibians and reptiles in southeastern Virginia. *Banisteria* 11:41-46.
- Petranka, J.W., Rushlow, A.W., and M.E. Hopey. 1998. Predation by tadpoles of *Rana sylvatica* on embryos of *Ambystoma macculatum*: Implication of ecological role reversals by *Rana* (predator) and *Ambystoma* (prey). *Herpetologica* 54(1):1-13.
- Raimondo, S.M., Rowe, C.L., and J.D. Congdon. 1998. Exposure to coal ash impacts swimming performance and predator avoidance in larval bullfrogs (*Rana catesbeiana*). *Journal of Herpetology* 32(2):289-292.
- Schwartzkopf, L. 1998. Evidence of geographic variation in lethal temperature but not activity temperature of a lizard. *Journal of Herpetology* 32(1):102-106.
- Townsend, J.R., V.R. Felgenhauer, B.E. and M.K. Moore. 1998. Quantitative study of the red-backed Salamander, *Plethodon cinereus*. *Copeia*, 1998(2), pp 472-476.

PROPOSED VHS CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS

Presidents Note: During the spring meeting several amendments to the VHS constitution were brought to the floor. In order to vote on these amendments, they must be presented to the membership before the next meeting. Please review the changes and make your opinion known at the fall business meeting. All additions are underlined and removals are stricken.

I. The first amendment to be petitioned is an addition to Article VI of the "BY- LAWS" concerning membership dues.

Section 1. The Executive Council shall be authorized to establish such dues as are compatible with the financial status of the Society

Section 2. A member in arrears for payment of dues for a period of 6 months after conclusion of the current membership year shall be dropped from role after due notice from the Secretary

Section 3. Membership dues reminder notices will be sent to membership at the beginning of each calendar year to members who have not paid dues for that calendar year.

Section 4. Membership dues paid after September 1 of any given year will apply to membership for the following calendar year.

II. The second proposed amendment is to Article IX of the BY-LAWS concerning the VHS Seal, so that the black rat snake and spotted salamander can be increased in relative size.

"The official seal of the VHS shall be a perfect circle representing the total membership and it shall enclose the outline or silhouette of the Commonwealth of Virginia; the circle shall touch upon the eastern shore, Great Dismal Swamp, and the extreme southwestern tip of the state in the vicinity of Cumberland Gap National Historic Park; ~~above the state outline in the space made by the greater arc, is a~~ A silhouette of a black rat snake (*Elaphe o. obsoleta*) will be in a semi-coiled position with the tail overlying the state outline along the course of the New River to represent the reptilians reptiles native to Virginia; in the lower arc beneath the state outline is a likeness of the spotted salamander (*Ambystoma maculatum*) to represent all indigenous amphibians. The salamander tail will loop around to its midsection and overly the state outline in the vicinity of Lunenburg, Brunswick, Sussex, and Southampton Counties."

III. The third proposed amendment is creation of Article X, Section 1 of the BY LAWS concerning the establishment of a student lodging fund.

Section 1. The monies derived from the VHS raffle, auction, and sale of T-shirts and bumper stickers will be dedicated to a fund for student lodging at the spring meeting and field trip. Herein the fund will be known as the Student Lodging Fund (SLF). Contingent upon monies available in the SLF, the VHS treasurer or designee will pay up to 50% for lodging. Funds will be separated proportionally to the number of students paying for lodging. A student is defined as an individual enrolled or attending fulltime in a public or private high, undergraduate, and graduate school, and those individuals that are home schooled at an equivalent educational level. Lodging will be the motel, hotel, camp, or facility that the VHS has reserved for its members for the spring meeting and field trip. Students must be members of the Virginia Herpetological Society. Lodging duration will include no more than two nights. Students must submit an original, itemized bill to the VHS treasurer or designee within 30 days to receive reimbursement from the SLF.

BOOKS

Reptiles of Virginia By Joseph C. Mitchell

Beginning with Captain John Smith's observations of the region's reptilian fauna, this book offers the first complete catalog of the reptiles of Virginia, from the sea turtles of the Atlantic Coast to the snakes, turtles, and lizards of the Piedmont and Blue Ridge Mountains.

Including full-color illustrations of numerous habitats and thirty-two of the species, distribution maps for each species, and easy-to-use keys for quick identification (with a separate key for young snakes), *The Reptiles of Virginia* is a practical resource and an essential overview of this faunal group and its habitats.

The book is based on data derived from examination of some 10,000 Virginia specimens, yielding a wealth of new information on the ecology, life histories, and biogeography of reptiles in the state. Each of the 62 individual species accounts provides local common names, the historical context for scientific names, present habitat affinities, and information about geographic variation in color, pattern, and morphology, as well as reproduction, predators, and prey. The book also explores the human impact on Virginia's natural habitats and species' distribution patterns, presenting a historical perspective on the conservation of these animals.

About the Authors

Joseph C. Mitchell is an adjunct professor of environmental and conservation biology at the University of Richmond and is a research associate of the Virginia Museum of Natural History. John M. Anderson, a curatorial assistant at the Virginia Museum of Natural History, participated in a herpetological survey of Assateague Island funded by the National Park Service.

Amphibians and Reptiles of Assateague and Chincoteague Islands

By Joseph C. Mitchell and John M. Anderson

Assateague and Chincoteague islands are among the best-known barrier islands off the Atlantic coast of North America. Millions of people visit them every year for recreation. Most visitors are well acquainted with the famous Assateague ponies, but few know that these islands are home to unique assemblages of plants and animals.

This book provides information on some of the islands most secretive inhabitants, the amphibians and reptiles. Most of the frogs, salamanders, turtles, lizards, and snakes have occupied these islands since they were formed thousands of years ago. The reptiles and amphibians have learned to live in a harsh environment characterized by hot and dry sand, scarcity of freshwater, and periodic overwash by saltwater. Each of the seven species of amphibians and eighteen species of reptiles can be readily identified using the keys, color photographs, and descriptions in this book. Many interesting aspects of their biology are summarized in highly readable form.

Within these pages we discover why the islands are inhabited by far fewer species than are known to occupy the Delmarva mainland. We also learn about measures proposed to insure their longterm conservation, and how to observe these animals in their natural habitats. This book is the only source available that provides a window into the biology and ecology of two fascinating groups of animals on these barrier islands.

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