



NEWSLETTER

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Fall, 2006



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Spring Field Meet '07

27-29 April or 4-6 May, 2000

The C. E. Miller Ranch

12 mi West of Valentine, Texas

Presidio & Jeff Davis Counties

More info inside.

FALL SYMPOSIUM

**OCTOBER 21, 2006
TEXAS STATE UNIVERSITY
SAN MARCOS**

It's not too late to mark your calendar for the Fall Symposium. The focus of this year's symposium is "Documenting the Change in the Herpetology of Texas." Included in this issue is a call for papers, open to enthusiasts, undergraduate and graduate students, and all members of the THS who have information to share with the society. Deadline for submissions is October 10, 2006. Also included is a mail in registration form which also needs to be postmarked by October 10, 2006.

The Purposes of the Society Shall Be:

To promote the discovery and dissemination of knowledge of amphibians and reptiles;

To encourage specifically the study of amphibians and reptiles in Texas;

To encourage conservation of wildlife in general and of amphibians and reptiles in Texas in particular;

To stimulate fellowship among herpetologists of Texas and the Southwest.

-Article II, THS Constitution

THS Officers 2005-2006

President

Mike Forstner

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Christel Snelson

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Want to join the Texas Herpetological Society?

Membership entitles you to attend the Spring Field Meet and the Fall Symposium, held in different Texas locations annually, as well as bi-annual newsletter publications.

To join, send \$10.00 regular, \$5.00 Student, \$5.00 corresponding, per calendar year, along with your name, address, phone number and e-mail address to:

David Haynes
Secretary/Treasurer THS
1810 W. Mulberry
San Antonio, TX 78201

THS Honorary Life Members, living and deceased, as of October 10, 2003

Richard J. Baldauf	James R. Dixon
L.A.M. Barnette	Alvin G. Flury
W. Frank Blair	John S. Mecham
Bryce C. Brown	Ottys Sanders
Joseph T. Collins	Hobart M. Smith
Roger Conant	John Werler
W.K. Davis	John C. Worrtting
Charles H. Swift	

"If a child is to keep alive his inborn sense of wonder, he needs the companionship of at least one adult who can share it, rediscovering with him the joy, excitement and mystery of the world we live in." -- Rachel Carson

Texas Herpetological Society Fall 2006 Conference

Texas State University 21 October 2006

“Documenting Change in the Herpetology of Texas”

Registration Form

We are looking forward to a wide variety of herpetology-related presentations from enthusiasts, undergraduate students and graduate students from across the state. And we enthusiastically invite you to attend and enjoy the company of fellow herpetologists from all walks of life.

Friday Oct 20

6-7pm

President’s Presentation

**“Current Research and Status of the Houston toad”
Texas State University, Science Building, Room 116**

Saturday, Oct 20-21

8am – 5pm,

Presentations

Texas State University, Science Building, Room 116

6 – 8pm

Reception

Postmark deadline for mail-in registration is: 10 October 2006. Conference registrations will be accepted Saturday 7-8am. If you have questions, please contact Mike Forstner (mf@txstate.edu) or David Haynes (davhaynes@juno.com).

Please mail this form and payment to: David Haynes 1810 W. Mulberry, San Antonio, Texas 78201

Name: _____

Affiliation, if any: _____

Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

*Email: _____

Registration fee waived for new members: Student membership \$5.00, Regular membership \$10.00

Registration Fee: \$5.00 or Membership Fee as applies

Saturday night reception at the Texas Memorial Museum ____ \$10.00 each

Total amount enclosed: \$ _____

(Registration fee includes Saturday morning and afternoon coffee breaks, meeting program and support activities. Spouses and children need not register but each must purchase a Sat. reception ticket.)

Texas Herpetological Society 2006 Fall Symposium

“Documenting Change in the Herpetology of Texas”

Texas State University 20-21 October 2006

Call for Papers - Due 10 October, 2006

The Texas Herpetological Society announces our 2006 Fall Symposium to be held on the campus of Texas State University, 21 October 2006. We encourage enthusiasts, undergraduate students and graduate students to submit abstracts on herpetology-related subjects. Presentations documenting populations, or environmental changes over time in Texas affecting those populations, will be emphasized. Our audience will include members of the herpetological enthusiast community, professionals in wildlife and teaching positions, as well as academics from colleges and universities across the state.

Abstracts will be considered for podium talks and poster sessions. When submitting your abstract, please consider which of these would be the best format for your presentation.

Each podium talk will be 12-minutes long, with 3 minutes for questions. Posters will be presented during the day on Saturday and Saturday night, depending on the number of poster abstracts received.

Deadline for submissions: 10 October 2006.

Please submit abstracts by email in time to arrive no later than 10 October 2006. Authors will be notified by 11 October of the acceptance status of their submission. All presenting authors must also be registered for the symposium by the submission deadline.

You can only submit your abstract by email. To accommodate as many speakers as possible, we ask that each presenter make only one submission. If you have special presentation needs (such as sound or video files), please indicate that on the form and plan to be present in the intersession before your presentation is scheduled, in order to test those files.

If you have questions, please contact mf@txstate.edu

Abstract submissions by email: mf@txstate.edu

Texas Herpetological Society 2006 Fall Symposium

Author Submission form

Please email the following information to mf@txstate.edu.

All submissions must be received no later than 10 October 2006.

Name: _____

Affiliation, if any: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Country: _____ Zip/Postal Code: _____

Email: _____

Telephone: _____

Are you interesting in presenting:

TALK ONLY POSTER ONLY EITHER

Do you have special presentation needs, such as audio or video?

YES I Need _____

NO

Title: (30 words or less)

Author(s) (please indicate presenting author with an asterisk * following the name)

IMPORTANT! Include an abstract (up to 250 words) that summarizes the content of your talk and/or poster highlighting results and their context to your conclusions. A Microsoft Word format document is required.

Make sure your submission form is complete and includes your contact email and telephone number.

Texas Herpetological Society

2006 Spring Field Meeting-Griffith League Ranch, Bastrop County, 24-26 March

THS Spring field meet: Environmental Challenge series continues

Well, to remark on how herps and temps are related, would be to have been out with us this past March. Temps on arrival were not too bad (for sleeping in a mummy bag) being 55 F, but the cold came quickly, dropping to 32F that night. The next day was predictably cool with temps finally reaching 66F by the middle of the afternoon. That night was pretty chilly with a hard freeze, reaching 26F. It was good coffee on Sunday morning.

All in all, it speaks to the skills of our membership when you review the list of specimens collected against that environmental challenge. Two areas were searched on Saturday, with amphibians surveys conducted on Friday night (but the temps dropped too quickly on us to do much good). We were able to work the Griffith League Ranch, in Bastrop County and another property in Lee County. The Capitol Area Council- Boy Scouts of America hosted us on the GLR and Pines and Prairies Land Trust hosted us on their Knobbs Preserve up on the Lee County line.

In Bastrop County we heard only *Rana sphenacephala*, but we did see *Acris (crepitans?)* or in the latest taxonomic swipe just *gryllus?* Dixon says *A. crepitans* and we bet he is right. Then we were able to collect:

Eastern hognose *Heterodon platyrhinos*
Texas rat snake *Elaphe obsoleta*
Copperhead *Agkistrodon contortrix*
Sceloporus olivaceous
Scincella lateralis
Cnemidophorus sexlineatus (seen, but still fast at 65F)
Chelydra serpentine
Trachemys scripta elegans

Meanwhile in Lee County, Dixon took a crew up and worked the northern site. Expectedly, Doc managed to get a few things up there too.

In Attendance:

Cheyney, Trent	Martin, Jim
Dixon, Jim	Montgomery, Bill
Forstner, Mike	Peri, Vito
Haynes, David	Roelke, Corey
Hibbitts, Diana	Sanderson, Roger
Hibbitts, Terry	Stevens, Ann
Jones, Melissa	Stevens, Ed
King, Clint	Treadaway-Martin, Linda
McCracken, Shawn	Watson, Matt

Texas Herpetological Society
 Treasurer's Report
 31 December 2005

Balance: 31 December 2003

General Fund:		Research Fund:	
Cash	4875.53	Cash	(594.54)
Total			\$4280.99

Receipts:

General Fund:		Research Fund:	
Dues	1290.00	Interest	44.96
Spring Meeting	352.00	Donations	<u>5.00</u>
Fall Meeting	<u>45.00</u>		49.96
	1687.00		
Total			\$1736.96

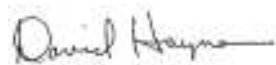
Expenses:

General Fund:		Research Fund:	
Spring Newsletter	114.70	Awards	<u>500.00</u>
Spring Meeting	371.17		500.00
Fall Meeting	312.02		
Dues Envelopes	47.68		
Office Postage	<u>5.85</u>		
	851.42		
Total			\$1351.42

Increase (decrease) for the year	385.54
Balance forward	<u>4280.99</u>

Balance as of 31 December 2005 \$4666.53

Respectfully submitted,



David Haynes
 Secretary/Treasurer

Texas Herpetological Society

Minutes of the General Business Meeting held in conjunction with the Fall Symposium at the University of Texas at Austin, 19 November 2005

The business meeting was called to order at 1625 by President Christel Snelson. She then asked for any old business and, there being none, asked for any new business.

New Business

Troy Hibbitts made a short report on the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department Wildlife Diversity Committee, on which he serves as the THS representative. Hibbitts said that this year he did not receive meeting notices, probably because he had changed his e-mail address. In any event the committee is apparently being reorganized to include fewer members, and it looks like THS may end up with a representative only on a rotating basis. Hibbitts also announced that some officials in TPWD have decided that road collecting is legal if the collector pulls completely off the road and walks back for the specimen. As always, actual enforcement decisions will be made by the game warden on the spot, but Hibbitts does have some e-mails from TPWD bosses suggesting a more liberal interpretation.

President Snelson then reported that the nomination committee, under the chairmanship of Past President Terri Cox (who could not attend the meeting), recommended that the following members be elected to the respective offices: Gad Perry, Vice President; Dominic Lannutti, Board Member; and Vernon Dye, Newsletter Editor. As there were no nominations from the floor, nominations were closed; and the election of the suggested slate was moved, seconded, and affirmed unanimously by the members present.

President Snelson then turned the meeting over to incoming President Mike Forstner, who announced that the spring meeting would be on several properties in Bastrop and Lee counties over the 24-26 March weekend. The fall symposium will be held at Texas State University, San Marcos, 20-22 October, and papers will address the topic "Changes in Texas Herpetology, 1939 to the Present."

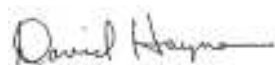
President Forstner announced that he wants to see the THS Web site substantially upgraded. He hopes it can include Newsletters and field trip species lists for as far back as we can go. Jaime Snelson said that he hopes to find a new host for the Web site and will try to get it set in motion as soon as possible. Various methods for accomplishing this were discussed. There was a short discussion about the timing of the Newsletter, and several members mentioned that having information on the Web as soon as it became available would be much more useful than waiting until everything was in place before issuing the Newsletter. Several members pointed out that having a comprehensive Web site might encourage young people to join the Society.

President Forstner wants to make Jim Dixon's bibliography of Texas herpetology available on CD or DVD as a benefit for new THS members and at a nominal fee for current members. Charles Swift suggested that we also make T-shirts available again and volunteered to investigate the possibility of setting up the same sort of deal that we had a few years ago that involved no front money from the Society. President Forstner reminded members that Tom Vermersch is putting together a history of the THS and that he is collecting photos from previous Society functions. Members who have pictures, particularly older ones, are asked to contact Vermersch.

Members were also encouraged to send their e-mail addresses to Secretary/Treasurer David Haynes, so announcements could be more rapidly and economically decimated. Finally, President Forstner announced that he wanted to update our grant program and that he would work with the Executive Committee to produce new guidelines to present to the membership.

There being no further business, President Forstner adjourned the meeting at 1637.

Respectively submitted,



David Haynes
Secretary/Treasurer

From President-elect Travis LaDuc:

The Spring 2007 THS Field Meet will be in Presidio/Jeff Davis Counties at the CE Miller Ranch, roughly 12 miles W of Valentine. This 33,000 acre ranch was the site of a 37 day, large-scale vertebrate survey and collection by Dr. Frank Blair and 22 Univ. Texas students in 1948. These 1948 collections represent a unique slice in time and are an accurate representation of species diversity and community membership in west Texas 50 years ago. Fifty-one reptile and amphibian species were found during that trip including, at the time, the third known specimen of *Trimorphodon vilkinsonii* and the second US locality for *Bogertophis subocularis*. Focusing on the herpetofauna, I have returned to the Miller Ranch for 7-10 days each of the past three years, initiating a new long-term survey at this site. Along with many helpful field collaborators, we have found 41 species over the past three years. In the past, our trips have coincided with the time frame of the 1948 trip (entire month of June). The two tentative dates for the THS Spring 2007 field meet will give us a chance to visit the site roughly 1 month "ahead" of schedule: 27-29 April or 4-6 May. As an FYI, the ranch is accessed via a dirt road off of US Hwy 90, just north of Valentine. The dirt road to the ranch house is accessible by two-wheel drive vehicles with clearance (though some have been brave/foolhardy enough to drive two-wheel drive vehicles with almost no clearance). The rest of the ranch, including the camp site, is generally only accessible with four-wheel drive vehicles.

THIS GRANT AWARD 2006

And the Winners Are:

Luther W. Hamby and Randy Cordero

Research Objectives:

- a. Population density counts including GPS locations of sightings and, where possible, photographic documentation to accompany. Digital pictures will document terrain including flora and rock formations, and patterns of body coloration for each individual captured and released in a field environment. Also, storage of such pictures on a CD with natural history for historical reference also is clearly an acceptable, but detailed, way to catalogue and identify various populations.
- b. Possible intergradations with other collard species in area where research is conducted. Such intergradations would be documented by the above stated process. (No collection of intergrade animals)
- c. To pinpoint the eastern most range through southwest Texas, specifically areas around Uvalde and Hondo, Texas, including north and south of Highway 90 and beyond.
- d. Study *Crotaphytus reticulatus* natural history in a captive environment utilizing current mercury vapor lighting and up to date husbandry techniques and compare to outside caging and the dynamics of the two environments. And their captive responses and natural history. Study to include offspring growth rates, food requirements, including any possible vegetarian tendencies, water requirements, substrate preferences, caging size, optimum basking temperatures, weight loss during winter brumination, breeding process, egg laying, including duration of gravidity in the female and overall hatch rates of eggs in days, and all other requirements that surround husbandry techniques and observations over several years.
- e. Publish articles in various magazines and periodicals with respect to *Crotaphytus reticulatus* observations and development of new information with respect to this species.

TEXAS HERPETOLOGICAL SOCIETY

Grants-in-Herpetology

Amount: Requests should not exceed \$500.

Who May Apply: Priority one: Non-professional herpetologists including non-students, amateurs, public school undergraduates, and college undergraduates. Priority two: Professionals, graduate students, and wildlife biologists.

Proposal Format:

1. Typed, double-spaced, on one side of bond paper
2. Cover page: Should include a) title, b) amount requested, c) project term; d) name and address of principal investigator(s); and e) occupation.
3. Body: a) Clearly state the objectives; b) justify based on previous research or a lack thereof; c) define the relationship between the disposition of funds and the expected results; d) define the qualifications of all investigators in the project; and e) include a letter of agreement from each consultant. The body should not exceed 2500 words.
4. Budget: Budget items should be listed and justified. Funds requested can not be used for salaries.
5. Literature Citations: Literature citations in the body should be referenced

Report: In the event an award is made, a report as to the results and disposition of funds must be submitted to the Secretary/Treasurer within six months of completion date stated in the proposal. A final report is required following the completion of the project.

Entry: An original and four copies of the proposal should be submitted to the Secretary/Treasurer prior to January 1st. The number of awards made will depend on the number of requests and the amounts requested. The awards will be announced on March 15th.

Send proposals to:

David Haynes
Secretary-Treasurer
Texas Herpetological Society
1810 W. Mulberry
San Antonio, TX 78729

Three new books were received for review by Mike Forstner.

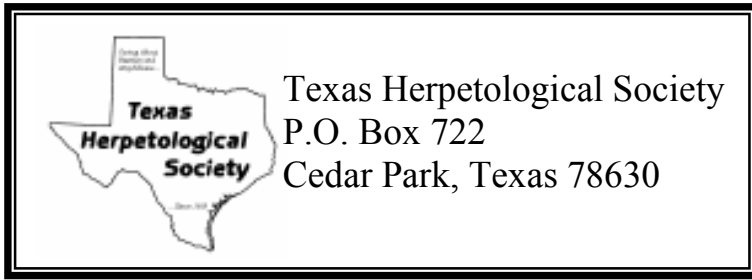
The first two are published by LM digital (www.lm-digital.com) and represent extraordinary photographic compilations of *Grey-banded Kingsnakes* (sorted by locality) and *California Mountain Kingsnakes* (again by locality). Both are medium format coffee table style softcover book.

"*Alterna: the Gray-banded Kingsnake*" (80pgs) is by Gerold and Walter Merker and provides overview of the ecological association, geographic distribution, and context of "alterna culture". A visually dramatic introduction to this exceptionally variable snake and just the remedy for those sad eyed souls in your acquaintance when winter has come or the moon is full. Twelve familiar haunts are provided and photos of some of the best representative phenotypes from each locality are provided.

"*Zonata: the California Mountain Kingsnake*" (64pgs) is the west coast's answer to equal billing for the most vivid snake in the west. Here Mitchell Mulks and Gerold Merker have teamed up to provide both text and the remarkable photographs for this snake. Each of the major ranges is covered and the photographs are high quality in every case.

Both books provide background, ecology, and context to enhance the quality of the volumes, but it is the photographs that are the real draw in both cases. It is even possible that having the two books could be the means to finally convince the uninitiated into the reason the fever hits as late spring finally comes around. The descriptive context of the localities in the alterna text is more precise than in the mountain king text, sure to inspire the newest generation to the quest.

The last book is more technical but as valuable in its content as the first two are for eye candy. "*Incubation of Reptile eggs: Basics, Guidelines, and Experiences*" by Gunther Kohler (updated and translated by Valerie Haecky) was published in 2005 by Kreiger (Malabar, FL). It is an amazing compilation of data, tips, tools, and approaches in the captive incubation of reptile eggs. Numerous specific taxa have their own guidelines and tips to successful hatching after the initial success of eggs has been had. The book is directly valuable to captive reproduction efforts and earned a ready place on the shelf as the most up to date reference available.



Texas
Herpetological
Society

NEWSLETTER

OPEN IMMEDIATELY!

Fall Symposium
Texas State University
October 20, 2006
More Info Inside