

EASTERN SEABOARD HERPETOLOGICAL LEAGUE MEETING AT COLUMBIA UNION COLLEGE

VaHS members who started hibernating early missed a great treat! Those who made it to the Columbia Union College's science building, about 100 from the eastern seaboard, saw exhibits and slide talks of excellent quality.

The occasion, October 29, was the first meeting of the Eastern Seaboard Herpetological League. Much was learned from the exposure.

The assemblage was welcomed by Dr. Lester E. Harris, Jr., Chairman of the Biology Department of Columbia Union College.

Professor Harris spoke of some of the research underway over the past few years on campus, and at the college's Biological Station at Head Waters, Va., in HIGHLAND county.

"We have an active program of research going on here at the campus on the venom of the Timber Rattlesnake (Crotalus h. horridus). For this, we have kept 45 specimens in a well-controlled laboratory designed for the comfort of the animals--and the safety of the lab staff. We add a few more specimens from HIGHLAND county each summer."

Opaque coverings on the cages prevent laboratory visitors from disturbing the animals and making them nervous. They are housed one to a cage. Remote handling of food and water jars protects the laboratory staff from the possibility of snakebite.

Current research is on the biochemical make-up of rattlesnake venom and has centered upon the isolation of several components of the venom. Of these, some components have been obtained in too small quantity to permit research results to be obtained. It is hoped, in time, to have these in greater quantity for use. Action of each constituent of the venom can be traced using the carbon-14-tagged amino acid -- leucine.

Other research efforts at the "outdoor laboratory" in HIGHLAND county during the summers have included behavioral research on the local box turtles (Terrapene c. carolina).

Dr. Bruce Bury, Fish and Wildlife Service, Dep't of the Interior, was the keynote speaker. He described the reasons for protecting amphibians and reptiles, reviewed the conservation legislation, and discussed the impact

of recent laws and regulations, emphasizing the role of individual herpetologists and regional societies. He stressed the need for cooperation in line with the ASIH or SSAR resolutions (pp.3-4) and concluded that: "Overall, few species and subspecies of reptiles or amphibians are now really protected from uncontrolled collecting by researchers, fanciers, and the pet trade. The survival of extant herpetiles is our responsibility, individually and collectively. Reasonable demands for pets can continue and studies can be continued unimpaired only if threatened forms are adequately protected by us."

Afternoon's light touch: presentations of the ESHL "coveted" HEDGETOAD AWARD for "outstanding contributions to cooperation among herpetologists and regional societies." The awards were presented to: Franklin J. Tobey, Jr., VaHS; Mr. Itzchak Gilboa, editor of HISS NEWS --- a publication of the Herpetological Information Search Systems; and, in absentia, to Dr. James A. Peters (since deceased).. (see page nine)

ESHL MEETING continued on page two . . . .

The VaHS BULLETIN and PROGRAMS are a non-profit, science-information activity.

VaHS BULLETIN is a newsletter appearing at least six times a year. The pages are open for articles or comment on topics related to Virginian herpetology. The principal activity is the state survey of reptiles and amphibians. (Revised list available soon.)

VaHS BULLETIN is sent, gratis, to Virginia's university and college biology, zoology, and natural science departments.. Science and biology teachers, high school or junior high, may receive the VaHS BULLETIN (with membership) at \$1 a year; request on school letter head preferred.

ESHL MEETING, continued:

Mr. Jaren G. Horsley, Curator of the Reptile Division at the National Zoological Park (NRP) defined a herpetologist as "anyone with sufficient interest in amphibians or reptiles to study them." He said it was the responsibility of amateurs and professional alike to refrain from indiscriminate and non-essential collecting and to take whatever steps may be necessary to preserve the natural gene pools. ...

"Whenever possible, study animals in their environment and return them to their environment because of inadequate population data, we cannot properly assess the effects of our collecting on a particular population."

Dr. W. Leslie Burger, VaHS cofounder and past president (1959-1964) was guest lecturer. He spoke on his proposed reclassification and arrangement of pitviper genera of Eastern Asia and the Western Hemisphere to reflect his theory of the evolution and zoogeography of these groups. We plan to devote future BULLETIN space to a timely message from Leslie Burger on his near-future plans. He is at the U.S. National Museum of Natural History (Smithsonian). We wish he would remain in the area longer than his present plans indicate.

Mr. Saul Friess, NYHS, delighted the ESHL meeting with a slide talk on his successful methods of incubating and hatching snake and other reptile eggs, the major problems encountered and how to cope with them. Eggs are removed only from those areas where the environment was being destroyed by bulldozers and similar construction equipment. The hatchlings are later released in proper nearby habitats. A poster he showed bearing one of his photographs of three Pine snakes hatching was entitled "Three Good Eggs." It has been a highly successful educational aid in New Jersey and N.Y. in support of the New York Herpetological Society's conservation program.

Of endangered species, Horsley said: "Wildlife is more important than scientific study. By all means, study a box turtle in the woods, but think twice before taking it home. You don't really know how many there are left."

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See next column:

NEXT ESHL MEETING AT N.Y.

STATEN ISLAND ZOO ON

SATURDAY 3 MARCH 1973

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EASTERN SEABOARD HERPETOLOGICAL LEAGUE MEETS ON STATEN ISLAND, N.Y., 3/3/3

The next meeting of the Eastern Seaboard Herpetological League (ESHL) is at New York's Staten Island Zoo. The date is March 3, 1973 (Saturday). Registration: 12:30 p.m. and first session at 1:30 p.m. with afternoon break and dinner scheduled. It is hoped that a number of VaHS members will be on hand. Hope to see you on Staten Island on 3 March!

Sponsoring the March ESHL meeting are the officers-and-members of New York Herpetological Society (NYHS). VaHS members and friends have been extended a personal invitation by Mr. David Hulmes, President of N.Y.H.S.

The VaHS coordinator for ESHL affairs is:

Mr. Robert D. Jennings
5934 Telegraph Road
Alexandria, VA. 22310

Let Bob Jennings know if you plan to go, whether you will be staying for dinner (6:00 p.m.) nearby restaurant involved) and if you have an item for the program, as soon as you can. Thanks! FJT

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SEE THE PRELIMINARY PROGRAM FOR THE ESHL MARCH 3, 1973 MEETING ON BOTTOM OF P.10. OF THIS VaHS BULLETIN

FAREWELL! GOOD LUCK! TO OUR FRIEND BOB TUCK!

Robert G. Tuck, ESHL coordinator, President of Maryland Herpetological Society (MdHS), and the first (charter) member of the Maryland section of VaHS (1958-1961) is leaving the National Museum for Teheran, Iran, where

he will become the first Curator in Zoology for the Iranian Department of Environmental Conservation and will assist in the development of a new Natural History Museum in the Persian Capital City. Bob has been a good VaHS

friend in the Division of Reptiles and Amphibians and has kept the VaHS BULLETIN posted on new specimens recorded and preserved at USNM that were collected in Va. We will miss Bob and wish him all good luck in Iran.

LETTERS, IDEAS, COMMENTS:

" Received VaHS BULLETIN #66 some time ago and was very interested in the material concerning the Ambystoma salamanders. I have been keeping notes on this group since 1936 and am contributing the following information on the Tennessee animals.

"I have been supplying Ambystoma eggs, mainly A. opacum, maculatum, and t. tigrinum to research laboratories for 30 years. I DO NOT over-harvest them and have ponds that are still producing eggs after twenty or more years.

" The egg-laying periods of A. tigrinum and maculatum are longer in this section than in any other section of the country as far as I can determine. This is no doubt due to weather--very changeable; neither temperature nor rainfall are uniform over a very large area.

A. tigrinum begins laying eggs in one or more ponds on or about Dec. 2d and continues until the last of February in other ponds.

A. maculatum starts laying in the last week of December along the Alabama-Tennessee state line and continues through March in north Tennessee.

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- Ambystoma (the mole salamanders)
- " talpoideum Mole Salamander (western Tennessee)
  - " texanum Small-mouthed Salamander (not in Va.)
  - " opacum Marbled Salamander (Va. statewide)
  - " jeffersonianum Jefferson Salamander (Virginia)
  - " maculatum Spotted Salamander (Va. statewide)
  - "                      Mole Salamander (Va. coastal plain)?

A. opacum laying season is shorter -- about September 25 through Oct. 15.

"In the mountainous areas and in the northern states the egg-laying season for A. maculatum is short, usually less than 2 weeks.

A. texanum is not common, at least in middle Tenn., but I have several collection records for western Tenn. There is a colony near here in a small rocky stream that goes dry in the summer. Here, I find eggs (fresh) from January to March attached to the underside of flat stones near currents. They must attach their eggs to leaves and twigs, etc., in western Tennessee because there are no stones on the stream or pond bottoms.

A. talpoideum lays eggs mostly in February but, I have found freshly laid eggs in early March. In two ponds known to me, they apparently are neotenic (retain larval physical characteristics into maturity). At least some are. A herpetologist at Austin Peay State University preserved a female (showing the larval form) but containing eggs. I checked a shallow pond last year in June and estimated that it had a

population of 3 to 4,000 larvae 30 to 50 mm in length. I have only two records of A. jeffersonianum, both from western Tennessee. As far as I know, these are the only species of Ambystoma in W. (western) Tennessee."

Sincerely,

(Dr.) Glenn Gentry\*  
2816 Colonial Circle  
Donelson, Tenn. 37214

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\*Dr. Glenn Gentry is a member of VaHS of long-standing and aided it, on several occasions, with encouragement and sound advice.

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Enclosed with the current issue of VaHS BULLETIN is a folder from The University of Kentucky Press advertising availability of "Turtles of the United States" by Dr. Carl H. Ernst of George Mason University (Fairfax, Va.) and Dr. Roger H. Barbour of the University of Kentucky. We are hopeful that this book will have the success it deserves. While the price may be "out-of-reach" for some of the younger members, it is hoped that those who can obtain a copy will do so, or recommend its purchase to your area (or school) librarian.



ARTICLES OF INTEREST ('72)

JOURNAL OF HERPETOLOGY: October 1972 Vol.6 nos.3-4 (Soc. for the Study of Amphibians and Reptiles) pp. 209-215:

Comparative Tolerance to Desiccation in the Salamanders Desmognathus f. fuscus and Desmognathus o. ochrophaeus by M.A.Houck, and E.D. Bellis, Dep't of Biology, Pennsylvania State University, University Park, Pa. 16802

Investigation concerns: the comparative tolerance to water loss of two related species of plethodontid salamanders -- the northern dusky salamander and the Allegheny mountain salamander. The investigations showed that the Allegheny mountain salamander has a measurably greater tolerance to water loss than northern dusksies perhaps playing a role in the movement of the Allegheny mountain salamander away from the stream margins to more terrestrial habitats.

JOURNAL OF HERPETOLOGY: July 1972 Vol.6 No.2, SSAR pp. 111-137:

Systematic Studies of the North American Microhylid Genus Gastrophryne by Craig E. Nelson, Dep't of Zoology, Indiana Univ., Bloomington, Ind. 47401

The affinities of Gastrophryne, based on osteology, adaptations for myrmecophagy (ant eating)

(continued top of column 2)

continued from column one:

secondary sexual characteristics, tadpole form, mating call, and karotype (chromosomal plot), lie with Hypopachus, and not with Microhyla. Consideration is given to the 5 species of the genus.

Since you have shown an interest in the VaHS, we are asking you to participate more actively in the VaHS program in 1973. Provide the editor with news items, bits of data, notes on new publications of direct interest to Va. field herpetologists. Remember your collecting notes on Va. specimens!

For those whose support we still seek (those in arrears, or those who are not yet members) there is a membership renewal or application blank and an envelope enclosed for convenience. HAPPY 1973!

Dr. J. Michael Jones has accepted a position with Emory and Henry College, Emory, Va. 24327. With this issue, we are starting to provide him copies of the VaHS BULLETIN. He has, according to HERPETOLOGICAL REVIEW, recently completed a study of the evolutionary changes in the Bufo woodhousei and Bufo americanus populations near Bloomington, Indiana.

YELLOW-BELLIED TURTLE RECORD VIRGINIA BEACH:

On September 18, 1947, a yellow-bellied turtle (Chrysemys s. scripta) nest was uncovered by a plow near Long Island, Back Bay Refuge, Va., in what was formerly Princess Anne county, now VIRGINIA BEACH. A sprout of beardgrass (Andropogon) had grown through the plastron of one developing turtle and emerged through the carapace. Though other external features appeared normal, shields were deformed where the grass had entered ventrally between the left abdominal and femoral scutes and emerged between the junction of the left third vertebral and second and third costals. The nest was disturbed greatly, but apparently the specimen had hatched as there were no adhering egg remains. "To my knowledge this is the first deformity reported due to direct contact of vegetation on a yellow-bellied turtle embryo." The item, carried in HERPETOLOGICAL REVIEW for October 1972, Vol.4, No.5, page 165, was written by Frank J. Turkowski, Dep't of Zoology, Arizona State Univ., Tempe, Arizona 85281

(Editor's note)

Because of the early date (1947), we are recording the specimen, the fourth record of the yellow-bellied turtle in Va. Any added records welcomed.

In recent years the American Society of Ichthyologists and Herpetologists (ASIH), the nation's peak professional society and publishers of COPEIA, has expressed concern about the future of our faunal heritage....It has vigorously supported the Endangered Species Act; pushed for federal legislation to place the gator under interstate commerce protection; recommended guidelines for responsible conduct of research activities, esp. as regards procuring animals for research; and debated ... concerning introductions of exotic species without adequate pre-introduction studies. Yet, we still disregard the danger signals that have been raised. Despite resolutions, flagrant disregard for guidelines is evident.

Aspects of three of the resolutions are food for thought, so please, let the following weigh on your consciences.

(1)

Deliberate Introductions  
Recent new locality records for reptiles in some states are directly traceable to the dubious pleasures of having some intriguing and interesting "exotics" enlivening the local collecting scene. ... Introduction not only may flaw our concepts of natural zoogeographic distributions,

NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTIONS:  
A PLEA FOR CONSERVATION

Dr. Harold A. Dundee  
Department of Biology  
Tulane University  
New Orleans, LA 70118

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Excerpted from October  
1972 Herpetological  
Review (SSAR)  
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but especially they may disrupt normal ecosystems to the extent that the native flora and fauna may be severely damaged.

(2)

Scientific Collecting  
The encouragement of student collecting to augment zoogeographic knowledge of local or state faunas, which has, doubtless, brought to light valuable specimens is fraught with pitfalls for the scholar who uses this data. (Over-collecting) may decimate local faunas and, more importantly, the award of a grade credit for such collecting may result in deliberate falsification of collecting data by grade-conscious students.

(Editor's note: VaHS was once asked to provide a small monetary bounty on new specimens to defray the expenses of a young collector. Fortunately, the VaHS Treasury has not been so fat as to tempt us into such ill-advised efforts. We declined and have had to be content with volunteers!) FJT

(3)

Commercial Exploitation  
We have seen an unprecedented rise in amateur collector enthusiasm and the building of institutional collections, and, concomitantly, a great rise in the number of dealers trafficking in specimens. All too often the dealers, encouraged by the high price that can be commanded for rare species of limited distribution, have made heavy inroads on those animals. Such crass commercialism can lead to rapid demise and extinction of many species long before we are prepared to examine significant aspects of their biologies.

It would be to the best long-range objectives of scientists (and conservationists) if they would boycott such dealers or foster action for suitable local or federal laws to restrict the activity.

I know that many of us, including myself, could find ourselves living in the proverbial glass house. From conversation with other herpetologists I am aware that there may be strenuous objections to 'policing' of our scientific endeavors, but we must face the fact that we can indeed easily be our own worst enemies.

Theme continued on next page.

NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTIONS:

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The Society for Study of Amphibians and Reptiles (SSAR) at its Lake Texoma meeting in August 1972, urged the concerned units of the federal and state governments to develop regulations prohibiting the importation of amphibians and reptiles except for legitimate scientific educational or zoological display or study purposes.

People who think in terms of keeping unusual or "exotic" reptiles or amphibians and largely for display purposes are not true amateur herpetologists. The animal is

just another status symbol. Pet shops, catering to this off-beat symptom of our affluent society, import many thousands of specimens from the semi-tropical and equatorial regions. Many of these people profess to be good conservationists. However, growth of sales of exotic (South and Central American or African) reptiles has the scientists and true conservationists extremely worried.

Whole areas are being depleted of their natural animal populations to satisfy the demand. And, as long as there is a demand there will be an effort made to meet it. It isn't too different in

principle from alligator hides, ostrich feathers or bird of paradise plumes for ladies' accessories.

So far as result goes --- it removes the animals from the "gene pool" just as effectively.

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At the end of his statement, in HERPETOLOGICAL REVIEW for October 1972, Dr. Dundee observed that: "An extinct species is not a renewable resource. Thus, my plea that this is the time for us to expose our consciences to the realities of life and to re-examine our resolve.

(Editor's note: Comments from VaHS readers will be welcomed.)FT

HERPETOLOGICAL INFORMATION SEARCH SYSTEMS (HISS) HAS THREE NEW PUBLICATIONS:  
(Information on amphibians and reptiles and related fields at the prices noted.)

- (1) HISS: NEWS a bimonthly magazine beginning January 1973 (replaces HERPETOLOGICAL REVIEW a publication sponsored until December 1972 by Soc. for Study of Amphibians and Reptiles) will contain news of herpetology and herpetologists -- institutions, societies, meetings, and other activities -- plus observations on anatomy, cytology, ecology, physiology, conservation, and geography.
- (2) HISS: TITLES will appear four or five times a year with lists of "Current herpetological titles" that HISS has prepared since 1968 for Herpetol.Review. About 4,000 current books and papers on all aspects of herpetology: biochemistry, embryology, experimental biology, are listed each year. Expanded coverage is promised including important contents of herpetological journals.
- (3) HERPETOLOGISTS' YEARBOOK -- a compendium of information on current herpetology. Names and addresses of active herpetologists and their institutions, along with much basic data on amphibian and reptilian classification and biology.

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Your subscriptions should be sent in as soon as possible to avoid missing the first issues. Write: Dr. Herndon G. Dowling, Director of HISS, American Museum of Natural History (AMNH) Central Park West at 79th Street New York, New York .. 10024



COLLECTING NOTES: SUSSEX  
AND CAROLINE COUNTIES..

The fifth record for the state of the yellow-bellied turtle (Chrysemys s. scripta) was collected in SUSSEX county near the SOUTHAMPTON county line in the vicinity of Wakefield, Va., on June 10, '72.

The fifth state record was collected on a sunny day in a roadside ditch by David Brittle, student living in Wakefield, Va., and Mrs. Dale Brittle of Bowling Green, Va., long-time VaHS member who has reported regularly on the CAROLINE county reptiles and amphibians.

Other yellow-bellied turtle specimen records are: Two from former Princess Anne county (now Virginia Beach); one from NEW KENT county; (the latter was a record which was supplied by Mr. Neil D. Richmond of Carnegie Museum); and one from Newport News, (found by LTJG Glen Engeling, Va HS-B No. 62).

A common musk turtle (Sternotherus odoratus) was collected 2 miles N. of Dawn, CAROLINE county, Va., near Mill Creek Br. of Reedy Creek on Rt. 301 by Mrs. Dale Brittle on July 7, 1972. A color slide of each of the specimens has been placed in the VaHS 2" X 2" slide collection to back up the released specimens. (More on this program in No.72.)

COLLECTING NOTES: AMELIA  
AND NOTTOWAY COUNTIES, VA.

Here are a few observations on NOTTOWAY and AMELIA counties' herpetofauna. Seventeen specimens have been turned over to Dr. Robert D. Ross at Virginia Tech (VPI & SU) Blacksburg, Va. All of these species were expected to occur in the counties but most had not been backed up with preserved specimens.

The mole snake (Lampropeltis c. rhombomaculata) appears to be the most common of the king snakes in both AMELIA and NOTTOWAY counties from reports and specimens brought to my office and from my own observations. The eastern kingsnake (Lampropeltis g. getulus) is by no means rare but doesn't seem to be as widespread or as numerous as the mole snake. Recently, I was given a live 8" specimen of our rarest kingsnake, the Coastal Plain-Milk Snake (Lampropeltis triangulum temporalis).

Although AMELIA county is almost in the center of this subspecies' range, according to Dr. Conant's Field Guide, this specimen's pattern matches that of the scarlet kingsnake. The red, black, and white bands completely circle the snake along the whole length of the body. Also, there are only 19 scale rows at mid body. I hope to get more

specimens to see if this pattern is typical in the AMELIA area. Then perhaps we'll know whether this is an aberrant specimen, in a population of Coastal Plain Milk Snakes, or a member of an intergrade population, or even possibly one of a population of typical scarlet kingsnakes. I also wonder if this snake's ventral pattern might have changed as it got older so that bands would no longer encircle the body. Unfortunately, the snake died 2 days after swallowing a newborn gartersnake (T. s. sirtalis). It has been preserved and will be deposited at VPI&SU with the other AMELIA county material.

The spotted salamanders (Ambystoma maculatum) from AMELIA and NOTTOWAY were interesting finds considering that CHESTERFIELD was the only other county south of the James River for which there was a good record, according to the article on "Spring Research Project" (VaHS-B No. 66). The AMELIA specimen was found under a log in an oak forest in which we also found the marbled salamander (A. opacum), dozens of slimy salamanders (Plethodon g. glutinosus) and a red-spotted newt (Notophthalmus v. viridescens) and, in a stream that runs through the forest, several dusky salamanders (Desmognathus f. fuscus). All were found within a few hundred yards.

AMELIA and NOTTOWAY cont'd:

Because of the nature of my job (County Extension Agent working with 4-H'ers and other youth) I have contact with a great many people, who will capture reptiles and amphibians for me. Well over 100 snakes were brought to me for identification, or confirmation of identification, during 1972. Judging from these specimens, the black rat snake appears to be the most abundant snake in AMELIA county. They have ranged in length from over a foot to over six feet and were caught in barns, basement, birdhouses, outhouses, trees, stumps, swamps, and an amazing variety of other places. Farmers in the county generally protect black rat snakes and will even release them in barns to control rodents. Next in order of abundance, according to my records, are the hog-nosed snake, eastern garter, and northern water snakes.

Occasionally, a rare species is brought in. One of the first snakes I saw from AMELIA was a scarlet snake (Cemophora coccinea) which had been found under a flower pot next to a gas station! The rare Lampropeltis mentioned previously was given to me by a 4-H'er who had caught it on his farm. Only four species listed as recorded or expected from AMELIA county, according to VaHS B. #38 have not shown up yet:

the ribbon snake, mud snake, the rough earth snake and northern ring-necked snake. Also, there have been several reports of snakes fitting the description of the corn snake (E. guttata) Since AMELIA is near that species' range, I would also place it on the list of "expecteds".

(Mr.) Michael Clifford  
County Extension Agent  
Amelia Court House, Va.

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HENRICO COUNTY RECORD

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Eastern Painted Turtle (Chrysemys p. picta) was recently recorded on VaHS distribution maps. The shell (carapace and most of the plastron) found at Laurel Lake near Glen Allen, Va., was probably cleaned out by small mammals. A portion of the plastron was chewed away. The shell was collected earlier in 1972 by Mr. Bill Hadley who is back in the area from military service and on the paramedical staff of one of the Richmond hospitals.

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COLLECTING NOTES: AMHERST AND AUGUSTA COUNTIES, VA.

Specimens from the Va. counties indicated were deposited in the U.S.-National Museum collection (Smithsonian Institution) as follows:

Six red-spotted newts (Notophthalmus v. viridescens) collected by Dr. Ronald H. Pine on 31 May 1969 in AUGUSTA county in small pond in the George Washington National Forest, near Deerfield, Va. USNM #194,751 to 194,756. Also, a northern water snake (Natrix s. sipedon) found under rock in nearby stream; USNM #194,757.

Four specimens of the Appalachian Seal Salamander (Desmognathus m. monticola) collected by Dr. Pine (USNM #194,759-194,762)--from the waters of a cascade near Love, Va., in the Geo.Wash.Natl Forest, AMHERST county. Also found at this site was a northern spring salamander (Gyrinophilus p. porphyriticus). USNM#194,763.

Four specimens of the Appalachian seal salamander (D. m. monticola) from a small stream near the Riffles Overlook, Blue Ridge Parkway, GWNF, in AMHERST county, Va. (USNM # 194,764 to 194,767.)



IN MEMORY OF . . .

JAMES ARTHUR PETERS  
(1922 - 1972)

The holiday season was saddened for all interested in herpetology by the death of VaHS member Dr. James Arthur Peters, Curator-in-charge of the U.S. National Museum's Division of Reptiles and Amphibians (Smithsonian Institution) Washington, D.C.

Dr. Peters was one of the top men in his field. His interests were in the fields of zoogeography of reptiles and amphibians, and systematic zoology.

Dr. Peters pioneered in the application of computer technology to systematic zoology and museum curatorial operations. He was the author of more than 100 scientific papers, among them, a classic on genetics (1959) which is used in college courses. His published works include "A Dictionary of Herpetology" (1964) and "Catalogue of the Neotropical Squamata" ('70) published by the Smithsonian Institution. His interest dated from high

school years. At age 17, he attended a meeting of the American Society of Ichthyologists and Herpetologists (ASIH), and was active in that group over the years, later becoming its Secretary and its President.

He attended meetings of the VaHS held at Camp Monocan, near Nellysford, Va., and joint meetings of VaHS and MHS at the National Zoological Park, Washington, D.C. He, like his predecessor, the late Doris M. Cochran, was a good friend of VaHS. Dr. Peters was an acknowledged expert on the reptiles and amphibians of Ecuador where he served as a Fulbright Professor at the Central University in Quito in 1958-1959. Dr. Peters came to the Smithsonian in February 1964, taking a position which led to the curatorship.

He was Secretary of the Society for Systematic Zoology at the time of his death, and a member of many other scientific societies.

The death of Dr. James A. Peters, curator-in-charge of the Division of Reptiles and Amphibians, U.S. National Museum of Natural History (Smithsonian Institution) ended at age 50 a splendid career as one of the outstanding herpetologists of our time and plunges us all into deepest sorrow.

Dr. Peters published over 100 scientific papers, including his doctoral thesis (University of Michigan, 1952) on the taxonomy and systematics of snakes of sub-family Dipsadinae; Also, he completed work on Ecuadorian frogs of the genus Atelopus shortly before his final illness.

Dr. Peters' constant and continued interest in regional societies was manifested in his holding two "open houses" at the Smithsonian Institution in 1965 and 1966, and his setting up an exchange with various groups for their bulletins and newsletters, thus giving the National Museum fairly complete sets of state society material.

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DIRECTIONS TO THE STATEN ISLAND (N.Y.) ZOO

New Jersey Turnpike is reached from I-95 and the Delaware Memorial Bridge. Take N.J. TPK to EXIT 13, STATEN ISLAND EXPRESSWAY (I-278). East on #278 about 4 to 5 miles from Goethals Bridge toll plaza to Hylan Blvd.-Richmond Rd., exit. Exit to traffic light and then turn left into Clove Rd. Proceed North on Clove Road to Broadway (1.5 miles) B'way is a right-hand fork. Zoo is on left side in second block on B'way. Park on the street wherever possible. If you miss B'way fork, take Glenwood Place (one-way) to right until left turn onto Broadway one block from the main entrance of the Zoo.

ITEMS OF INTEREST

THE APPALACHIAN TRAIL  
Ronald M. Fisher \$4.25  
(National Geographic Soc)  
Washington, D.C. 20036

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Full-time and part-time naturalists, hikers, geologists and historians will enjoy this new volume in the GEOGRAPHIC'S special publications series. Experiences on the trail from Georgia to Maine (a long section of it lies in Virginia) with photographs by the author.

The majestic views, flora and fauna, geology, and more recent history, plus, make this a "must" for anyone interested in the out-of-doors.

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THE FENCE LIZARD: A CYCLE of SEASONS Lucille Trost \$4.25 Addison-Wesley Publishing Co., Inc., Reading, Massachusetts 01867

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A season-by-season account of fence lizard or "swift" activities. A female fence lizard's existence from birth to egg-laying. The struggle for survival against the natural environment: temperature, moisture, predators. It could lead to greater interest in studying the life habits of other less well-known reptiles or amphibians close at hand.

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SEND IN ITEMS-OF-INTEREST

SUNDAY STAR (WASH., D.C.):  
26 November 1972 An article by staff writer John Fialka stated in part:

"In the Back Bay National Wildlife Refuge, located below Virginia Beach (the area was formerly part of PRINCESS ANNE county) the sand has become compacted from the almost constant traffic of dune buggies and four wheel drive vehicles. The impact of the vehicles, reportedly, has caused disappearance of the loggerhead turtles that once laid their eggs along the beach. Some of the Interior Department officials believe the sand has become too compact for the turtles to dig. Others think it's just the traffic. 'That turtle just gets ready to lay an egg when she sees another vehicle coming,' commented one official."

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VIRGINIA WILDLIFE magazine April 1972 noted that the refuge manager at Back Bay National Wildlife Refuge is Mr. Dennis F. Holland. He serves as manager for three areas: Back Bay NWR: 8,523 acres located near Princess Anne; Fishermans Island NWR: 1,000 acres at the N end of the Chesapeake Bay Bridge-Tunnel (NORTH-AMPTON county, Va.); and MacKay Island: 6,824 acres near Knotts Island in N.C.

NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC:  
November 1972 (Vol. 142, No.5) pp. 633-650  
Goliaths of the Galapagos by Craig MacFarland. . . Ecuador's Galapagos Islands lie 600 miles W. of South America. Ancestors of the archipelago's tortoises may have drifted there on clumps of vegetation disgorged from rivers of the continent. Eleven of 14 subspecies survive. A map shows extinct groups and endangered groups and the homes of less-threatened groups. Contains much on the life style and ecology of the Galapagos Tortoises. Even though this is stretching the editorial limits (only Va. material) more than ever, this article has much to recommend it to Virginian readers of VaHS BULLETIN.

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REPTILE SCIENCE ASSEMBLY KIT (RENEWAL models)

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Assembly kit contains:

Alligator, Box Turtle, Chuckwalla, Leopard Frog, Rattlesnake, and Red Eft. All are cast from live specimens supplied by the American Museum of Natural History and the N.Y. Zoological Society (Bronx Zoo). Plastic models are for assembly and study. Kit includes an authoritative handbook illustrated in color and written in popular style. (\$5.95)

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SATURDAY, MARCH 3, 1973, EASTERN SEABOARD HERPETOLOGICAL LEAGUE MEETING PROGRAM:

12:30 REGISTRATION  
1:30 Introduction: Carl Kauffeld, Director and Curator of Reptiles, The Staten Island (N.Y.) Zoo.  
1:30-4:14 following:  
Dr. Herndon G. Dowling & Mr. Itzchak Gilboa -- "The New Look at HISS (AMNH)."  
  
Dr. James D. Anderson, Professor of Zoology, (N.J.) Rutgers University, "An Outline for Studies of the Bog Turtle."

Dr. Lester E. Harris, Jr. VaHS, Head Biology Dep't, Columbia Union College, on "The Galapagos After Darwin" (see top right col.)  
  
4:15 Break for viewing the reptile collection. Followed by dinner at a local restaurant.  
6:30 p.m. Tuck on ESHL. Robert L. Brandner, NYZS, NYHS, "Conservation Practices in the Jersey Pine Barrens."

William & Donna Marvel, Md HS, "Western Terrestrial and Aquatic Garter Snakes"  
  
Michel Klemens, CtHS, "Tortoises of the World." NYHS will supply a Kodak Carousel projector if you wish to present a slide talk and prepare your tray ahead of time.  
  
Don't Forget: 3 March '73 See You at the Staten Island Zoo! .....