

Lancaster Herpetological Society

Husbandry, Education, Conservation, Community

The Lancaster Herpetological Society is a small club that meets once a month to discuss herps and herp-related issues. The club meets at the North Museum (www.northmuseum.org, 400 College Ave., Lancaster, PA 17603) on the 3rd Friday of every month. Meetings are open to the public, free of charge, and begin at 7pm. Please feel free to attend by entering through the back door (ring bell if locked). The membership requests that all children under the age of 16 be accompanied by an adult. For more information, contact Chad Arment (lancwildlife@verizon.net). *Hope to see you there!*

Upcoming Meetings

<u>Date</u>	<u>Speaker</u>	<u>Topic</u>	<u>Comments</u>
7/18/2008	Carl Ernst	Snakes	Coauthored numerous books about herps
8/15/2008*	Gregg Feaster	Subocs & Pits	www.greggsrb.com
9/19/2008	Reptile Vet TBA	Herp Healthcare	Tentative, subject to change
10/17/2008	LHS Members	Halloween Program	**At Park City Center in Lancaster, PA

***Meeting for Board Members at 6PM prior to club meeting in August.**

****Please note special meeting place for October Meeting. LHS will meet in the Community Room above the Kohl's entrance next to Arby's.**

Upcoming Havre de Grace Herp Shows: August 9th, October 4th

Upcoming Hamburg Herp Shows: August 2nd, October 18th

Upcoming Timonium (M.A.R.S.) Herp Show: September 13th & 14th

Club Happenings

As always, the last three months have been full of excitement at LHS! In April, Phil Dunning gave a powerpoint presentation on copperhead ecology that is part of his work towards a Master's degree. Phil and LHS were able to exchange with each other many excellent herp sites in Pennsylvania. May brought breeder Demian Lewis informing the club from a hobbyist's perspective on the western hognose. Besides a wonderful powerpoint filled with bits of personal, (and sometimes humorously humbling) biographical information, Demian also brought a representative of each of the species he breeds: a western hognose; a California mountain kingsnake; a green tree python; and a Brazilian rainbow boa. June was the first Members' Night in six months. Some of the herps that members and guests brought in were: a Florida intergrade kingsnake; a large Stuart's milksnake; a rarely seen Indo-Chinese ratsnake; a pair of rescued Mali uromastixs; a juvenile South American sideneck turtle; and a northern pine snake that definitely left a mark at the meeting!

LHS also organized a field trip in May to Clyde Peeling's Reptileland. Though geared towards a general audience, many of us found the assortment of animals at Reptileland interesting. LHS was also granted a special behind-the-scenes tour of Reptileland. Additionally, field herp season is in full swing and numerous semi-planned, impromptu trips have been led by various members of LHS. Though not official LHS field trips, these field herping excursions are enjoyable for all our members, especially when photos are shared through LCHerp@yahoo.com, www.fieldherpforum.com, chain emails, and other internet resources. Keep the pics coming!

Community Outreach

Lancaster Herpetological Society will be participating in Reptile Invasion Day at That Fish Place That Pet Place on August 9th. Forgotten Friends has temporarily donated some of their larger boids and

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colubrids for a picture table sponsored by LHS. For a nominal fee, the general public will be able to get their pictures taken with a snake of their choosing. All proceeds will benefit LHS. The picture table will also provide information about LHS for the general public. We still need more volunteers to help staff the information table. If you are interested in helping with this event, please contact Jesse Rothacker, info@forgottenfriend.org.

As previously mentioned, our October meeting will be specially held at Park City Shopping Center. The details of this community outreach program are still being finalized, but it will undoubtedly revolve around herps and Halloween. Members should plan to bring their own personal herps to this meeting to share with the public.

Slogan Contest

Lancaster Herpetological Society has a slogan! The board combined two separate entries to create a winning slogan: Husbandry, Education, Conservation, Community. Due to substantial understanding and generosity from Coachwhip Publications, both Jesse Rothacker and Roy Mellott each received a free copy of the **Herper's Life List** for their individual contributions and winning ideas that contributed to the final slogan.

In the News

According to the journal Proceedings of the Royal Society B (Biological Sciences), the little known and rather unique tuatara may soon be extinct. Researchers used several computer models that indicated by the year 2085, global warming will raise incubation temperatures so high that only males will be born. Researchers cite that the two remaining species of tuataras are limited to several small islands surrounding New Zealand and will not be able to immigrate to cooler islands due to the presence of invasive creatures, namely rats and cats.

Though extinction is far from certain at this point, the loss of tuataras would be tragic to the herp community. Superficially similar to lizards, tuataras are the only living representatives of the family Sphenodontian which has been on earth for over 200 million years. Whereas male lizards typically have two reproduction organs (hemipenes), male tuataras have none. If the researchers' models are correct, an all male population of tuataras could persist until 2185 since they are exceptionally long lived.

Recent articles about a variety of scientific topics, herps or otherwise, can be found at Science News, <http://www.sciencenews.org/>. A better source for exclusively herp news can be found at HerpDigest, <http://www.herpdigest.org/>. HerpDigest will email you directly an electronic newsletter twice a week. Both services are free, though you must subscribe to Science News to read archived articles.

Lots of Calls for Snake Removal by Jesse Rothacker

It was a typical morning for me at the reptile rescue. I was editing a youtube video of one of Africa's biggest lizards trying to crack open a tennis ball, because he thought it was an egg. That's when the phone rang and I got a call from a very distraught woman in Manor Township. She had been seeing snakes around her house and had no less than two that were hanging out around her clothes dryer. She was terrified out of her whits and was on the phone begging anyone she could find to come help her. From the description on the phone it sounded like she had either garter snakes or black rat snakes, so I assured her they were harmless and we'd try to help remove them for her.

Because I lived about 30 minutes away from her, I decided to enlist some help from other club members. I knew Matt Dearolf lived much closer to Manor Township than I did, and I also knew he works second shift. I checked my watch, and it was only 10:30 AM. I figured Matt was probably in his boxers in

Lancaster Herpetological Society

Husbandry, Education, Conservation, Community

his basement, ordering snakes on kingsnake.com and just waiting for an exciting phone call to interrupt him before work. So I gave him a call and he was able to help her out.

That same month, both of my next-door-neighbors had eastern garter snakes in their gardens and they came to my front door anxiously asking for my help to remove them. In both cases a thunderstorm had preceded the snakes showing up in gardens, and my guess is that they were moved out of their normal home range by the rain.

Later that month, I got another call about black rat snakes that had entered a business. This time the call was for Roy Mellott's neck of the woods, so I gave him a call and put him to work!

*Roy added the following: 'Jesse Rothacker of Forgotten Friends Reptile Rescue gives me a call and says that there's a business in Mountville (where I live) that has a black ratsnake that they caught and need to have relocated, since it was freaking out the employees. Since it's right down the road, I go to pick it up. After calling the guy at the business though, I find out it's **snakes**....one's still on the loose somewhere. I get there and they've got one in a box and they take me out back to the back door. There's a concrete landing with metal steps leading to it. All kinds of leaves and garbage and such have collected under it and they say the other snake is in there somewhere. They think it's just a little one. So I go digging and after pulling everything out, I crawl under the steps and find the "little" snake coiled up at the concrete footer for the steps. I pull it out and it's about 5ft. (for once someone under exaggerated!) Well after a good nip on the hand, I get her and the other one in a bag and take them to a nearby wildlife area to release them.'*

Forgotten Friend Reptile Rescue Update by Jesse Rothacker

The summer is the rescue's busiest time for educational outreach, and this summer is no exception. We are visiting dozens of libraries as part of the summer reading program, as well as many vacation bible schools, the Creation Festival, and many other events with our educational reptile shows. Samuel Bearinger and Mark Layton were able to help cover a reptile show for me earlier this month while I was away, and it went really well. It is nice to know we are reaching thousands of people with our reptile messages, and having plenty of fun along the way.

Currently at the rescue we have a few reptiles for adoption.

Red Tail Boa

Young Nile Monitor

And we have calls for more stuff to come in soon. If you are interested in adopting, please contact Jesse at info@forgottenfriend.org or simply visit www.forgottenfriend.org. Thanks!

Forgotten Friend is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit rescue and education organization.

Requests

LHS exists solely as a volunteer organization. The club would not survive without the constant and continual input of its members. Arranging speakers, organizing field trips, and producing the newsletter take volunteered time. If you have ideas for and are willing to take the lead in arranging speakers or field trips, please contact Chad Arment (lancwildlife@verizon.net).

If you wish to contribute to the newsletter, please contact Zach Barton (zbarton@ycstech.org). Possible original contributions include: book reviews; species care sheets; notes from a field herping trip; herp news summaries; and opinionated essays. The deadline for the Fall 2008 Newsletter is approaching fast!

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Husbandry, Education, Conservation, Community

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