

# THE MONITOR



## NEWSLETTER OF THE HOOSIER HERPETOLOGICAL SOCIETY

A non-profit organization dedicated to the education of its membership  
and the conservation of all amphibians and reptiles.

Volume 29 Number 3

March 2018



**H.H.S. Monthly Meeting**  
**March 21st 7:00 p.m.**  
**Holliday Park Nature**  
**Center Auditorium**

**Guest Speaker: Andrew**  
**Ahl, Indianapolis Zoo**

**Topic: "Chelonians: Past,**  
**Present, and Future**



This month's guest speaker is Andrew Ahl from the Indianapolis Zoo. Andrew has been the Deserts Keeper at the Indianapolis Zoo for the past three years. His program, "Chelonians: Past, Present, and Future", will give a background on how turtles came to be, things presently going on with them, and what the future may hold for them. Be sure to make plans to attend this informative presentation!

**AMPHIBIAN OUTING, MARCH 23/24, McCormick's Creek State Park**



## YOUNG HERPETOLOGISTS AWARD!

The Midwest Herpetological Symposium announces a new award for young herpetologists and herpetoculturists.

In each of two age categories (12-14 and 15-17), awards will be given for FREE full registration to the best annual herpetological conference in the Midwest in addition to a cash stipend towards travel expenses.

Don't miss this wonderful opportunity to attend the Midwest Herpetological Symposium (this year in Indianapolis!), learn lots of information, and meet some GREAT herpers!

For more information and complete award rules, please contact [oldherper@tds.net](mailto:oldherper@tds.net) or [president@hoosierherpsoc.org](mailto:president@hoosierherpsoc.org)

## 17th Annual Hoosier Herpout

Saturday, May 12 - 9:00 A.M.

Hardin Ridge Recreation Area (Hoosier National Forest),  
Monroe Reservoir, Bloomington, IN

Hiking, herping, camping, cookout!

Meet at the shelter house #2 near the boat launch ramp parking lot.  
Rain or shine (herping is always good, even in rain)

For more information, call or email Jim Horton (317) 443.4845 email - [president@hoosierherpsoc.org](mailto:president@hoosierherpsoc.org)

## President's message

Jim Horton

Frogs are calling and salamanders have laid eggs! Toads are up next!

If you're an amphibian buff, you might want to check out the **Amphibian Outing at McCormick's Creek State Park**. This event features presentations, a kids triathlon, crafts, and hikes to amphibian habitat.

I have exciting news! We are going to head up a herp survey of Holliday Park. This is the vision I've had for the HHS for some time now. We've yearned to head more in the direction of conservation and this is a prime example of it!

I already have a list of 10 members who want to be a part of this effort. I welcome you to become involved in this ongoing event. Contact me if interested at [president@hoosierherpsoc.org](mailto:president@hoosierherpsoc.org) or 317.443.4845

If you are interested in being featured in the monthly 'HHS Members in the Spotlight', please contact me and I'd be glad to have your herp profile in our newsletter.

Welcome new members and welcome back renewed members! See you at the next meeting!

# Welcome new and returning members!

## NEW MEMBERS

Emily A. Stulik  
T.J. Nichols  
Chris W. Myers  
Cristine M. Klika  
Colin Breining

## RETURNING MEMBERS

Pat Hammond  
Raymond Family

## 2018 Science Olympiad

By Ed Ferrer Photos by Kimberly Scott

Butler University is the site of the 2018 regional Science Olympiad.



Teams of students from middle schools and high schools from Central Indiana compete in 23 various categories of science such as Optics, Crime Busters, Meteorology and Hovercraft to name a few. Dr Philip Villani, the coordinator for the event, asked the Hoosier Herpetological Society to provide the test questions and live animals and other items for the Herpetology section of the

competition.



In most cases we provided live amphibians and reptiles or photos to assist the students in answering the test questions. The students enjoyed this unique chance to see the questions come to life! It was great to see so many students so enthusiastic about science.



This section was so popular that before, after and in breaks between test sessions we had many other students and some adults come in to view the animals and ask questions.



Thanks to H.H.S. members Jim Horton, Roger and Holly Carter, Kimberly Scott, Rex Morell, Abbie Watson, Ed Ferrer and Angela Thomas for their effort in making this section of the Science Olympiad so memorable for so many students.

# HHS/Holliday Park Survey

The HHS has partnered with Holliday Park and will survey the area for amphibians and reptiles. We will need help conducting these surveys. HHS members are encouraged to take part in this field survey. If you are interested in being a part of one or more of these surveys, please contact me at [president@hoosierherpsoc.org](mailto:president@hoosierherpsoc.org)

## HAND HELD HERPS (ARIZONA)

Article and photos by Roger Carter



In July 2017, several of us from the Hoosier Herpetological Society flew to Arizona for some field herping (you need a permit if you are going to handle any of these animals) and to attend the International Herpetological Symposium near Rodeo, New Mexico, just across the border. For the next several issues of the HHS "Monitor" I will cover the small, harmless herps that we were able to catch and photograph.

The Nightsnake, *Hypsiglena torquata*, is a small snake that measures twelve to twenty-six inches long. The background color is gray or tan with dark brown blotches on the body and up to three brown blotches on the neck, a pale underside without markings and vertical pupils. This snake is found in a variety of habitats from the plains to deserts to woodlands to the lower slopes of mountains. The Peterson field guide, "A Field Guide to Western Reptiles and Amphibians", lists several subspecies of the Nightsnake found throughout the southwestern states up to eastern Oregon and a small pocket of southern Washington. The "Amphibians and Reptiles in Arizona" from the Arizona Game and Fish Department shows the Nightsnake found almost everywhere in Arizona. This snake eats other snakes, lizards, frogs and toads. It is venomous but the venom is harmless to people.

For our first night of road cruising, we were about an hour's drive from Phoenix and we split up into two groups to cover the roads. Holly and I were following Dan when, suddenly, he pulled over, got out of his rental car and ran back down the road a short distance. Dan noticed a small snake on the road and, while he wasn't sure what it was at first, he knew it wasn't one of the dangerous venomous snakes from the area, even though we did see a Western Diamond-backed Rattlesnake, *Crotalus atrox*, and a Mojave Rattlesnake, *Crotalus scutulatus*, late in the afternoon. We all had our flashlights on the snake while Dan's girlfriend was flipping through the field guide. The snake was identified as a Nightsnake. While handling the snake it musked a little and defecated a little but never tried to bite. While we were looking at the snake and taking pictures of the snake, a pickup truck pulled in behind us, a guy got out and asked what we had. We told him what it was and showed it to him. We chatted a little bit, told him about us and what we were doing and found out that he was one of the locals from the area just road cruising like we were doing. After moving the snake away from the road for a short distance, we all went on our way. This isn't my first time in Arizona but it is my first time herping in Arizona.



# HHS AT GARFIELD PARK

Jim Horton and Ed Ferrer

Last month, members of the HHS displayed some of their favorite animals at the Garfield Park Conservatory.

This was a large crowd that seemed to keep coming until the doors closed. The park coordinator said that over 400 people attended. It was the busiest we've seen in along time.



Onlookers were delighted to see herps from around the world. Our visitors saw a wide variety of "herps" from amphibians such as salamanders, frogs, and toads. Reptiles included snakes, lizards, turtles, and tortoises.

Jim Horton brought some examples of frogs and

salamanders recently collected so people could see what sort of "herps" were out in our state this early in the year.

Dale brought a crowd favorite, 'Wally' the sulcata tortoise. Wally slowly traversed the brick flooring in search of 'turtle treats'. The treats were apple slices and other fruits that didn't last long.



Roger Carter draped his rainbow boa around the necks of wary visitors – to their delight.

'Squishy' is another favorite among our visitors. He's a black throat monitor who

belongs to Rex Morrel and Abbie Watson. Squishy even has his own Instagram page.



This is a good example of how our society educates the public about these often misunderstood creatures. Thank you to HHS members Roger and Holly Carter, Kimberly and David Scott, Ed Ferrer, Jim Horton, Rex Morell, Abbie Watson, Misty Forsha, Constance and Colin Breining, Dale Schoentrup, and Anastacia Marsh for their contributions that made this event such a success.



**HHS member  
Kimberly Scott**



**Age you found interest in herpetology?** I became interested in herpetology when my mother found a small toad in my backyard. I was about 7 at the time, and instantly I wanted to keep it as a pet. The little toad sparked an interest that would be alive for years to come.

**What got you interested in herpetology?** As a small child, I was only interested in frogs and toads. Because of the toad my mother found, but as I started becoming more educated in biology and ecology my love for all herps developed.

**What amphibians/reptiles do you keep?** I have a Bearded Dragon, a Crested Gecko, 3 Fire Bellied Toads, a Ball Python, a Fowler's Toad, an American Toad, a Corn Snake, and my newest addition is a Pacman Frog.

**How long have you been a member of the HHS?** I officially joined the HHS in 2016.

**Do you exhibit your animals at HHS shows?** I try to make it to all of the live animal exhibits. You can usually find me with my bearded dragon named Drogon, my Ball Python named Reggie, and my Fowler's Toad named Prince. Sometimes I bring many more!

**What do you like most about the HHS?** In the HHS I'm surrounded by people who share the same passion that I do. I love the opportunity to go out into the field with people who are just as excited as I am. I feel that The HHS is a network of knowledgeable people that I can learn from.

**Do you field herp? If so, where have you been?** I field herp with the group usually, we have gone to McCormick's Creek for the annual amphibian outing, Lake Monroe for the herp out, and Slade Kentucky for herpetology weekend. All of these events were outstanding, and I recommend them to everyone.

**Where do you get your herps?** Most of my herps come from the Midwest reptile show, however, my toad Prince was obtained as a young toadlet, that had just emerged out of the water.

**Have you ever bred any herp species? (if so, what kind?)** No, I haven't dabbled in any breeding projects.

**Other hobbies?** I love arts and crafts, including painting, drawing, sculpting, and paper mache. I play Dungeons and Dragons and Pokemon, and I also partake in birdwatching. I'll try anything once, so I'm often picking up hobbies left and right.

**Anything else you would like to ad?** I have a degree in Biology, and I've always wanted to find a career in wildlife conservation, zoology, or ecology, and one day I hope to pursue it further, but I currently work with adults with disabilities as a Community Support Coordinator. This path is also a calling of mine, because my older sister was born with autism. Reaching out and enriching the lives of those who need me most is deeply rewarding and fulfilling.

## 2017 HERPETOLOGICAL EVENTS

**March 21, 2018** – HHS meeting, 7:00PM Holliday Park Nature Center. Special Guest – Andrew Ahl, Topic – “Chelonians, Past, present, and Future”.

**March 23/24, 2018** – 6<sup>th</sup> annual Amphibian Outing, McCormick’s Creek State Park. Two days dedicated to amphibians! Presentations, games, and hikes to find frogs, salamanders and toads.

**April 8, 2018** - Midwest Reptile Show, 10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. Southwest Pavilion, Indiana State Fairgrounds, Indianapolis. \$5.00 admission, reptiles, amphibians, books, cages, feeder animals, and other supplies. Sell your herps and dry goods free of charge at our H.H.S. information booth (HHS members only)

[www.midwestreptile.com](http://www.midwestreptile.com) Other dates: June 3, August 6, Nov. 4

**April 20/21 – 2018** – Herpetology Weekend Slade, KY Two days of field trips and presentations in the Red River Gorge area of the Daniel Boone National Forest.

**May 12, 2018** – Hoosier Herpout, A day of herping, hiking, photography, cookout, and camping.

**June 20-23, 2018** – 41<sup>st</sup> International Herpetological symposium, Crowne Plaza Brookhollow, Houston Texas. [www.internationalherpetologicalsymposium.com](http://www.internationalherpetologicalsymposium.com)

**September 28-30, 2018** – Midwest Herpetological Symposium, Indianapolis, IN, LaQuinta Inn, 5120 Victory Drive, Indpls, IN

[www.hoosierherpsoc.org](http://www.hoosierherpsoc.org)

### *HHS Board of Directors - 2018*

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The Hoosier Herpetological Society is a non-profit organization dedicated to the education of its membership and the conservation of all reptiles and amphibians. General monthly meetings are held on the third Wednesday of each month at 7:00 p.m. at Holliday Park Nature Center. Membership is open to all interested individuals. **No venomous animals are allowed at the General Meetings.**

**MEMBERSHIP FORM**

\_\_\_\_  **New Member**

\_\_\_\_  **Renewal**

\_\_\_\_ **Name**

\_\_\_\_ **Address**

\_\_\_\_ **City**

\_\_\_\_ **Email Address**

\_\_\_\_  **Individual/Family Membership \$20.00**

\_\_\_\_  **Sustaining Membership \$25.00 or more**

\_\_\_\_ **Herpetological Interest(s)**

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Dated Material Enclosed

Address Correction Requested

\_\_\_\_\_ If this area is checked, it's time to renew your membership!