

THE FORKED TONGUE

THE MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF THE GREATER CINCINNATI HERPETOLOGICAL SOCIETY

The Editor's Den

By Grady Calhoun

The April *Forked Tongue* features highlights from the February meeting and a Roster. The roster lists names, phone numbers and e-mail addresses of current members.

Calendar of Events

- 4/2 Monthly Meeting in room 420 Speaker Al Winstel on Amazon Tree Boas.
5/17 Tentative field trip to central Ohio.

Announcements

Herpetology weekend at Natural Bridge State Park will be held on Easter Weekend this year (4/18, 19 & 20) Everyone that I have known to participate in this event has had a blast.

We have a new website, www.cincyherps.com. Please visit the site and provide any information that may be helpful.

Book Auction

As mentioned last month we will be auctioning off 2 books at the April meeting.

They are:

Venomous Reptiles: Illustrated with Photographs by Shermom and Madge Minton, paperback, 1969 and

Snakes of the World by Raymond Ditmars, hardback 1960

We have received bids of \$15 per book on our website. If you would like to get one of these fine books, come to the meeting and place a bid!

February Highlights

February's meeting featured Dr. Dan Meakin speaking about diseases and ailments in reptiles. Dr. Dan sees many reptiles at his veterinary hospital, All Creatures, in Amelia, Ohio. There are few veterinary practices as interested and qualified to work on reptiles as his. Dan

brings a wealth of medical and husbandry issues to the forefront and illustrates his point with a collection of slides.

The presentation, which covered the diseases and medical issues of reptiles, began with snakes. Dan spends a lot of time looking into the mouths of snakes. The mouth is the window into the snake and where many diseases first present themselves. One of Dan's first slides lists diseases and ailments of snakes into 6 or 7 categories: bacterial, infectious ulcerative stomatitis, pneumonia, septicemia, abscesses, dermatitis-fungal and shedding problems. Dan says that snakes are good at hiding their illnesses. You don't really know they are sick until they are really sick. They heal slowly. Injuries are another set of problems. Common injuries to snakes include trauma, burns, cage injuries, rodents bites, and the complications of egg-bound females. To ward off common parasites, mites and intestinal worms, a fecal check of your animals every six months to a year is recommended. Stress of any kind can lead to failure to eat. A hide box is crucial to reducing or preventing stress for the animal. Less than adequate animal husbandry/cage conditions (i.e. humidity, cleanliness, diet, temperature, appropriate substrate material and animal safety precautions) is almost always responsible for the resulting diseases and ailments that doctors see in snakes and other reptiles.

In his discussion of lizards, again Dan spoke directly to husbandry practices. The best care of an animal includes proper lighting, proper heat and humidity, and a diet that meets vitamin and mineral requirements. Is your animal an omnivore, or strictly herbivorous or carnivorous? How much or how little protein do they need? These are questions that need to be answered fully in order to meet the nutritive needs. For instance, any animal that eats whole prey, does not need as much in the way of lighting spectrum. It gets its calcium from the bones of the mice. For Iguanas, however, 90% of their diet is leafy greens. They do not need that much protein. They do have high requirements of calcium, which they get from the dark

The April Meeting is Wednesday, April 2nd at 7:30 in Room 420 at NKU

green leafy greens. Dan sees a lot of metabolic bone disease; fat and puffy limbs and broken bones in Iguanas and other lizards due to lack of a calcium-rich diet. Full spectrum lighting, which includes UVA and UVB rays, is mandatory for some lizards. Bulbs should be changed about every six months.

Chelonia, comprised of turtles and tortoises, is another order of herps that Dan sees regularly. Calcium and Vitamin A deficiencies are again a major cause of ailment and disease. And again, correct husbandry practices and proactive animal care go a long way towards preventing illnesses. Prolapses and bacterial infections in turtles are often seen by the vet, as are

injuries to the shell. Cars are too often a cause of serious injury and death to turtles (and to many other animals). Box turtles are beautiful creatures to see as they roam freely. Unfortunately, they face a number of human-related dangers, such as busy roadways, lawnmowers and tractors, children and dogs. Rebuilding a turtle's shell is a skill and an art that Dan and other vets struggle to perfect. Many of Dan's friends and assistants at his vet practice are caring for box turtles who need long-term care and observation after being treated for injuries, before being re-released.

Requirements for Submitting Articles to the Forked Tongue

1. Articles can be submitted via 3.5" floppy disk or hard copy to Editor, GCHS 11470 Gatch Hill Road, Aurora, IN 4700.
2. Articles may be e-mailed to Grady Calhoun at gcalhoun@seidata.com.
3. Black and white photographs can be included with articles. Photo submissions should include your name, phone number, and description of photo on the back. Photos can be returned.
4. All time dependent submissions must be in the editors possession no later than the meeting previous to the desired publication date.

Classified Advertizing Policy

GCHS Members may run a free classified ad of 7 lines or less at no charge for an unlimited time; however, the ad will be canceled after one month unless the editor is informed to continue it. Please include scientific names for the animals with your ad as well as your phone number and area code. Ads of up to 7 lines for non-member are \$2 per issue; ad charges for items more than 7 lines long are as follows:

| | |
|--------------------|----------------|
| Business card size | \$3 per issue |
| 1/4 page | \$6 per issue |
| 1/2 page | \$10 per issue |
| Full page | \$20 per issue |

The GCHS is not liable for the quality of the merchandise advertized. The Society also reserves the right to refuse any ad considered inappropriate.

Classifieds

For Sale: Herp books, 2 by Bartlett & Bartlett: Monitors, Tegus, and Related Lizards; Geckos. Both are Barron's soft cover @\$3.00 ea. plus postage if mailed. One by Sprackland: Savannah & Grassland Monitors, AVS soft cover @\$4.00 plus postage if mailed. All in almost new shape (I bought two copies at different times, pretty smart, huh?) Located in N. Hamilton County. Al Winstel 513-729-2563

For Sale: Amazon tree boas (*Corallus hortulanus*) born 10/13. Various garden phases from gray to tan with light to moderate pattern. \$40.00 ea. Will probably have some eating by mid November. Al Winstel 513-563-4513. Local sales or could bring to GCHS mtg.

For Sale: Feeder rabbits and rats. Call Rod Surber at (812) 637-0305 or e-mail me at Indianarockshop@aol.com.

For Sale: Aquariums-all shapes and sizes (5-90 gallons). Boa Constrictor(s) may be available, prices negotiable. Call Chris at (513) 451-1203.

Discount: A 10% discount is offered to all card-carrying members of the GCHS at All Creatures Animal Hospital where I examine and treat many different reptiles.

Dr. Dan Meakin, All Creatures Animal Hospital, 1894 Ohio Pike, Amelia, OH 45102 513-797-7387

Discount: A 10% discount is offered to all card carrying members of the GCHS at Dr. Dahlhausen's Veterinary Clinic, 5989 Meijer Dr., Suite 2, Milford, Ohio 513-576-0131

(Number to left of decimal indicates males; number to right of decimal indicates females; number to right of second decimal indicates number of unknown sex. For example, 3.2.1=3 males, 2 females, and 1 unsexed specimen)

Currently Held Positions

| | | | |
|-----------------|--|--|---|
| President | Grady Calhoun (812) 926-1206 (513) 564-6041 | Vice President | Dean Alessandrini (513) 347-0099 |
| Treasurer | Peggy Fille (513) 528-4452 | Editor | Grady Calhoun (812) 926-1206 (513) 564-6041 |
| Sargent-at-Arms | Bruce Fille (513) 528-4452 | Education Conservation Committee Co-Chairman | |
| Advisor | Ray Whitson (859) 342-8842 | | Matt Fille (513) 528-4452 Chris Bauer (513) 451-1203 |
| Secretary | Polly Whittaker (513) 321-1884 | | |

About the GCHS

The Greater Cincinnati Herpetological Society holds monthly meetings which typically consist of a short business section, a refreshment intermission, and a program related to herpetology. Both members and nonmembers are invited to attend. Membership is open to anyone with an interest in reptiles and amphibians. New members may sign up by mail or at the monthly meetings. Members receive monthly issues of *The Forked Tongue* and free classified advertising. Annual dues should be directed to the secretary at the society's mailing address, according to the rates below:

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|------------|---------|---------------|---------|
| Student | \$10.00 | Corresponding | \$10.00 |
| Individual | \$12.00 | Sustaining | \$25.00 |
| Family | \$18.00 | Institutional | \$30.00 |
| | | Contributing | \$50.00 |

Why Be a Member?

- Receive monthly issues of *The Forked Tongue*
- Meet individuals knowledgeable about herpetoculture
- Have access to captive-bred herps and feeder animals
- Participate in society-sponsored field trips, and outings.
- Receive a 10 percent discount on herp-related items and services when you show a valid membership card at the following establishments:

| | |
|------------------------------------|----------------|
| Delhi Pet Center | (513) 451-4015 |
| Kentucky Reptile Zoo | (606) 663-9160 |
| Harrison Pet Center | (513) 367-1115 |
| All Creatures Animal Hospital | (513) 797-7387 |
| Dr. Dahlhausen's Veterinary Clinic | (513) 576-0131 |

**P.O. Box 14783
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