

THE FORKED TONGUE

THE MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF THE GREATER CINCINNATI HERPETOLOGICAL SOCIETY

The Editor's Den

By Grady Calhoun

The August Forked Tongue features an article by Al Winstel on corn snake breeding. Please note that the August meeting time has been changed. Although we don't like to do this we have the opportunity again to have a great program and we don't want to miss it.

The August Meeting Time and Place has been changed!!!

Calendar of Events

- 8/14 Monthly Meeting in room 521 of the Old Science Building at NKU featuring Pam Lyons of the Newport Aquarium. She will speaking on satellite tracking of loggerhead turtles.
- 9/3 Monthly Meeting at NKU Tentative program - Herp Hibernation
- 9/13 Picnic at the Calhoun House

July Highlights

The July featured Will Bird of the Louisville Zoo speaking on Herps of Kentucky. He has spent a great deal of time in the field searching for herps. He has been quite successful as was evident from his presentation. He shared a huge collection of photos that he had personally taken. All but 2 of the photos he showed were his own. This was a power point presentation which tends to result in a more flexible and professional appearance. Some of the highlights of his presentation included some very unusual morphs of black rat snakes that were observed in the wild. He also shared some tips for successful herping on other people's property. One instance that was related was to learn the local terms used for specific animals. He mentioned that he had asked a property

owner if he had seen any corn snakes. The man said that he had not. He later asked someone else and added a description. The woman reported that she thought he was referring to a red chicken snake. He later asked the same guy if he had seen red chicken snakes and he said sure and pointed him to the spot where one was immediately found. This was a great presentation and we really appreciate Will traveling from Louisville to speak with us. We are also working on possibly having joint field trips with the Kentuckiana society. Visit their website link on our site!

AUGUST MEETING CHANGES

The August meeting will be held on **Thursday** August 14th in room 521 of The Old Sciences Building. This is the same building we have been meeting in for years but the room has changed. We have made this change to accommodate our speaker. The program is on satellite tracking of loggerhead sea turtles. It includes a Powerpoint presentation and video.

Rescued Animals need Homes

We desperately need volunteers to adopt animals that are given to the society. If you are willing to provide a good home for iguanas, large boas or pythons, tortoises or crocodilians please contact Chris Bauer at (513) 451-1203 or Matt Fille at (513) 528-4452.

Corns at Last

By Al Winstel

About 30 years ago I acquired my first corn snakes. I had 3 animals, one a brightly colored Okeetee morph, one the red on gray phase known as a Miami corn, and the third a dull orange with reddish blotches. This was a real varied colony at the time. I kept them in a 29 gallon glass tank with a dry pine needle substrate. I corresponded about the proper way to breed the corns

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with a zoo reptile keeper who assured me they were easy to breed (boy, was that prophetic). The tank was in an upstairs bedroom where the winters were cool and the summers hot. After a year or two with no observed breeding, I sold or traded the trio. Since then I've raised one creamsicle type albino corn, but up until 3 or 4 years ago, I'd had little contact with corn snakes. I still haven't reached my goal of catching a corn snake in the wild, despite some quickie road hunting in Florida and a couple trips to South Carolina, one to the Okeetee region. Guess that pretty much makes me the last herper in the eastern U.S. to be able to say this.

At any rate, a few years ago I finally found space in my collection for a few corn snakes. I was able to assemble a reverse Okeetee pair, a ghost corn female (hypomelanistic and anerythristic, sort of a muted black albino) and a very red (hypererythristic?) male. I also recently acquired a hurricane type motley animal as a hatchling. After 2 or 3 years of raising the reverse Okeetees and the ghost and the addition of the adult hypererythristic, this year I was hoping for eggs.

Both adult females appeared swollen with eggs this spring. Unfortunately I misjudged the laying date and my first clue that it was time was the discovery of 14 eggs in the reverse Okeetee's water bowl. Two were laid outside the bowl, and three were retained by the female. Eventually the retained eggs were expelled with some help from me (I may take up massage as a career now), but unfortunately only 2 of the eggs (probably the ones laid outside the dish) hatched. Both young were gorgeous, white with very red saddles. This clue led me to place a sphagnum filled laying container in the ghost's cage. I was later rewarded with a clutch of 19 eggs. As expected, all young look like wild type corns, only perhaps redder at this stage in their lives. I have checked the online corn snake progeny predictor and looked up my old genetics notes and it appears that the offspring of these baby snakes could include at least 4 separate morphs: very red "normal" pattern, black albinos, normal animals with a shortage of black (hypos) and hopefully extra red, and ghost. I'm not 100% certain of these possibilities since I don't know how the hypererythristic factor will act. It looks like the blood characteristic, with a few differences, such as black blotches on the belly. Also I don't completely know what the genetic backgrounds

of all the parents are. A few of the young have broken saddles on their backs, but whether this is an "Aztec" type factor or just normal variation, I don't know.

Oh yeah, both females also decided to double clutch just about the time the first clutches hatched. Once again, a surprise and the eggs started to shrivel before I found them. One laid 9 and the other 13, although several were infertile slugs.

This whole event has me wondering how I managed not to breed those corns 30 years ago. I ascribe it to the fact that they were wild caught and not yet acclimated to captivity, that I probably shorted them on food (mice were expensive then), and that the captive bred animals I am working with now have been bred for generations in captivity. It's really neat that after all these years an animal as common as the corn snake (at least one breeder produces thousands each year) can be so exciting to breed, with potential surprises whenever the eggs hatch. Over the years I have bred Amazon tree boas, ball pythons, flying geckos, day geckos, Pueblan milks, eastern milks, and veiled chameleons, but the corn snakes have been as exciting as any.

Fund Raiser for Video Projector

It's a sign of the times. More frequently we are running into presenters that can only provide presentations with video projectors. This is because their images have been taken with digital cameras. We would like to purchase one of these projectors. The problem is that they are quite expensive, somewhere in the \$3000 plus range. They are more than \$200 per day to rent. We would like to get some input from members on how we could raise the funds for such a purchase. If you have any ideas please forward them to Grady Calhoun at gcalhoun@seidata.com or call at (513)564-6041. Possibilities include corporate donation or sponsorship, identification of a discounted projector, and of course asking members for donations to go toward this. If anyone would like to head up a fundraiser we would be glad to hear from you.

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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.

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.

Classifieds

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.

For Sale: I will have baby corn snakes available in July, a few albino Okeetee corns and the offspring of a ghost X hypererythristic(red) cross. The latter will probably look normal, depending upon hidden traits, but breeding these offspring together should result in a variety of possibilities, including young with extra red, amelanistics, hypomelanistics, and ghost. Young are \$15 ea. and will be feeding. Al Winstel 513-729-2563. Could probably bring to meeting.

For Sale: Snakes, 2.0 CB ball pythons (*Python regius*), 1 baby (\$20), 1 yearling (\$30), both feeding; 1 baby Amazon tree boa (*Corallus hortulanus*), eating thawed pinks (\$25); 1 aberrant patterned Pueblan Milksnake (*Lampropeltis t. campbelli*) (\$25), 2 years old. eating thawed pinks, fuzzies. Call Al Winstel 513-729-2563.

Discount: A 10% discount is offered to all card-carrying members of the GCHS at *All Creatures Animal Hospital*. Dr. Dan Meakin, All Creatures, 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

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specimen)

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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			
Advisor	Ray Whitson	(859) 342-8842	Education Conservation Committee Co-Chairman		
				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:

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
Cincinnati, OH 45250**

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