

THE FORKED TONGUE

THE MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF THE GREATER CINCINNATI HERPETOLOGICAL SOCIETY

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The Editor's Den

The February Forked Tongue features a basic tip on herp keeping and an article on deforestation of a few herp-rich countries.

Calendar of Events

4/5/06 – Monthly Meeting Featuring Carl Brune speaking on Herping in the Deserts of California.

4/21-23/06 Herpetology Weekend at Natural Bridge State Park

5/3/06 – Monthly Meeting Featuring Michael Graziano speaking on Successful Captive Maintenance and Breeding of Salamanders.

Back to Basics

I've recently increased the number of animals I have and often wondered, "When is the last time I fed the female Gray Band Kingsnake?" Of course, I have a great memory and would never forget when I fed each animal in my collection, right? I started keeping an index card for almost every animal I have. I say almost because it's hard to keep track of multiple animals housed in the same cage, geckos in my particular situation. A simple index card listing the unique animal is placed on or near each cage. I record the following: a description of items eaten and refused, (FTP = frozen thawed pink, FKM = fresh killed mouse), sheds, any breeding behavior, or anything unusual or notable. I am sure that my animals are eating much more frequently now that I'm keeping track. This is a very basic practice that will benefit the animals and the keepers.

Deforestation of Herp-Rich Countries

by Grady Calhoun

I found a few articles that illustrate the destruction taking place in third world countries. I personally have wild caught animals from two of these areas. I think we have an ethical dilemma in that we don't like to take animals from the wild, but are they going to survive over there?

Madagascar

<http://rainforests.mongabay.com/deforestation/2000/Madagascar.htm>

22.1% —or about 12,838,000 hectares—of Madagascar is forested. Of this, 80.6% —or roughly 10,347,000

hectares—is classified as primary forest, the most biodiverse form of forest.

Between 1990 and 2000, Madagascar lost an average of 66,900 hectares of forest per year. This amounts to an average annual deforestation rate of 0.49%. Between 2000 and 2005, the rate of forest change decreased by 41.9% to 0.28% per annum. In total, between 1990 and 2005, Madagascar lost 6.2% of its forest cover, or around 854,000 hectares. Madagascar lost 156,000 hectares of its primary forest cover during that time. Deforestation rates of primary cover have decreased 1.5% since the close of the 1990s. Measuring the total rate of habitat conversion (defined as change in forest area plus change in woodland area minus net plantation expansion) for the 1990-2005 interval, Madagascar lost 14.3% of its forest and woodland habitat.

Madagascar has some 1036 known species of amphibians, birds, mammals and reptiles according to figures from the World Conservation Monitoring Centre. Of these, 72.1% are endemic, meaning they exist in no other country, and 15.1% are threatened. Madagascar is home to at least 9505 species of vascular plants, of which 68.4% are endemic.

Solomon Islands

The Solomon Islands, a country of the western South Pacific, have seen drastic increases in logging in recent years, to unsustainable levels that could decimate the nation's tropical forests within a decade, endangering indigenous flora and fauna.

The government has moved to regulate the logging companies, which are principally Malaysian, instituting a moratorium on new export licenses and planning a ban on log exports. However, the extent of the problem, and the necessary countermeasures, are matters of political contention in the country.

The Solomon Islands is a heavily forested country occupying much of the archipelago of the same name, in the western South Pacific. The total land area is less than 11,000 square miles, and the population is only about 375,000. Per capita income is low, about \$700 in 1991, and much of the populace engages in agriculture, for subsistence or export. Significant exports are timber and fish.

The April meeting will be held on Wednesday April 5th at 7:00 pm at the Cincinnati Nature Center

Sustainable timber harvests are calculated to be 325,000 cubic meters per year, and were less than that through 1991. By 1993, however, the harvest jumped to 700,000 cubic meters, and in 1994

possibly as much as 3 million. This was the result of Indonesian and especially Malaysian companies turning to external sources after their own governments placed restrictions on exploitation of local forests. Locked into long-term contracts with Japanese and South Korean importers, the companies had to look abroad, and found ready sources in Papua New Guinea, the Solomon Islands, and Vanuatu.

The World Bank estimated that the Solomon Islands would deplete its current forests in eight years at the rate achieved by the early 1990s, potentially devastating fauna, flora, and the overall living conditions of the country.

Amidst growing external concern, Australia offered in the fall of 1994 to engage in a \$2 million debt-for-nature swap, to protect the Morovo Lagoon from logging. Meeting in the fall and summer of 1994, the South Pacific Forum, a group of fifteen independent South Pacific countries including the Solomon Islands, sought to establish common regulations that would reduce the ability of foreign companies to play countries off on each other, and established the goal of sustainable forestry in the region.

The government of the Solomon Islands, under Prime Minister Hilly, also took action, announcing a moratorium on new logging licenses, and declaring that a ban on logging would go into effect in 1997.

This did not sit well with voters and pro-logging forces. Foreign companies would often approach the local populace in a target area, and offer to build schools, airfields, and other facilities that the government was unable to provide. Restrictions on logging threatened to cut off these arrangements.

In October of 1994, Prime Minister Hilly lost majority support in parliament, and was replaced by Solomon Mamaloni, who was reportedly backed by logging interests. From 1989 to 1993, Mamaloni's previous term, logging rates had tripled. Mamaloni generally downplayed the possibility of there being an ecological problem in the Solomon Islands and has expressed hostility to Australian interest in his country's environmental affairs, including debt-for-nature swaps. The logging ban that was to have taken effect in 1997 was moved back to 1999. However, his government has so far retained the moratorium on new logging licenses. The Solomon Islands does not appear to be on a clear path to sustainability, with potentially dire results for the country's natural systems and populace. Unrestricted logging could result in devastated forests, severe erosion,

local climate change, loss of water resources, and disruption of marine environments.

Whole-sale logging could imperil one of the country's most promising economic activities, tourism, which grew 6.8% in the region from 1988 to 1993, substantially faster than in the rest of the world. A degraded environment, and the disruption in traditional culture that this would bring, will greatly decrease the Solomon Islands' attractiveness to tourists. It may be that the populace itself does not currently wish to live with the restrictions that sustainability would require, instead wishing to obtain the immediate gain that one-time sale of their tropical forests would bring.

<http://www.american.edu/projects/mandala/TED/solomon.htm>

Borneo

In the 1980s and 1990s Borneo underwent a remarkable transition. Its forests were leveled at a rate unparalleled in human history. Borneo's rainforests went to industrialized countries like Japan and the United States in the form of garden furniture, paper pulp and chopsticks. Initially most of the timber was taken from the Malaysian part of the island in the northern states of Sabah and Sarawak. Later forests in the southern part of Borneo, an area belonging to Indonesia and known as Kalimantan, became the primary source for tropical timber. Today the forests of Borneo are but a shadow of those of legend.

The southern half of Borneo contains some of the richest and most unique ecosystems on the planet. Indonesian Borneo, known as Kalimantan, is also one of the most environmentally threatened places on Earth. While many scientists have come to study this region, opportunities for observation are becoming increasingly scarce with the current perils facing the forests of Kalimantan. Dr. Lisa Curran has spent a good portion of her professional career studying ecosystems in this area. From 1984 to 2001, she led a comprehensive study documenting the rate of forest loss in Western Kalimantan and surveyed an area of over four million hectares (about 9.9 million acres). The results of her work were published last February and her findings are numbing.

The report estimates that "protected" lowland forests have decreased by more than 56 percent, meaning some six and a half million acres are gone forever. Parks supposedly off limits to loggers have fallen as laws are ignored by timber barons with political connections, while large areas of forest in Kalimantan have been cleared for palm oil plantations that, in many cases, have yet to be planted.

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Classified Advertising 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 advertised. The Society also reserves the right to refuse any ad considered inappropriate.

Requirements for Submitting Articles to the Forked Tongue

Articles can be submitted via 3.5" floppy disk or hard copy to Editor, GCHS 11470 Gatch Hill Road, Aurora, IN 47001.

Articles may be e-mailed to Grady Calhoun at gradycalhoun@earthlink.net.

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.

All time dependent submissions must be in the editors possession no later than the meeting previous to the demaled publication.

Classifieds

For Sale: 1.0 Captive bred and hatched grey-banded king snakes, Blair's phase. \$75 each. Hatched 7/19/05. Eating live pinkies. Call Grady at (812) 926-1206.

Rats and Mice for sale. Reasonable price. Call Jesse or Tom (513) 876-0579.

For Sale: 3.3 Normal Adult Okeetee Corn Snakes \$50 each. 2.1 Banana California Kingsnakes, adult proven breeders, \$100 each. 0.0.10 Cornsnake hatchlings of last year, \$30 for amelanistic, \$25 for normals. Call Mike Matthews at (513) 734-1336.

For Sale: 3.3 South Carolina Corn Snakes (*elaphe guttata guttata*). These were bred by me, and are approx. 1.5 years old. All are nice looking, but a few have exceptional orange and red coloring, and all are feeding very aggressively on f/t mice. I am asking between \$40-\$50 each. Very healthy snakes. Feel free to call me at 228-0293 or e-mail at kdobrien76@aol.com with any questions. Ask for Kevin.

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 specimen)

Currently Held Positions

President	Grady Calhoun	(812) 926-1206	Vice President	Dean Alessandrini	(513) 347-0099
		(513) 564-6041	Editor	Grady Calhoun	(812) 926-1206
Treasurer	Peggy Fille	(513) 528-4452			(513) 564-6041
Sergeant-at-Arms	Bruce Fille	(513) 528-4452	Education Committee Chairman		
Advisor	Vacant		Peggy Fille		(513) 528-4452
Secretary	Kyle Becker	(513) 831-4898			

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	\$15.00	Sustaining	\$25.00
Family	\$20.00	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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