

The Maine Herpetological Society

Newsletter



Volume 17 Number 5 June 2008

Upcoming MHS Meetings and Regional Events Mark Your Calendar!

- Aug 31 8th Annual Portland Reptile Expo
Holiday Inn West - Portland Maine
<http://www.portlandreptileexpo.com>
- Sept 5 - 7th - Trip to New York - White Plains Show
and Staten Island Zoo
- Sept 7 New York Reptile Expo - White Plains New York
<http://reptileexpo.com/nyfirst.htm>
- Sept 20 Monthly Meeting - Island Apartments
Fairfield, Maine
- Oct 4 New England Reptile Expo - Manchester, NH
<http://reptileexpo.com/nefirst.htm>

Memberships

We would like to thank the following for joining our society.

Judy Kellogg Markowsky Holden Individual

And we thank the following for renewing their MHS membership:

Darlene Anderson	Interlachen, FL	Individual
Paul LaRosa	Winthrop, MA	Individual
Robert Fritsch	Dexter, ME	Individual

*If this is your last issue
PLEASE RENEW TODAY!*

First the bad news

Due to having too many obligations Rick Sisco has decided to step down as our president. Rick stated that he had spread himself too thin to continue on. Thanks Rick for all your help. Rick will still be a Director and he will still be in charge of the Portland Reptile Expo.

And now the good news..... Bob DuBois has taken Rick's position for the remainder of his term.

8th Annual Portland Reptile Expo

It's hard to believe that it has been 8 years. Ben Cole is responsible for getting this off the ground back in 2000 and it has been a success ever since.

Most of the tables have been taken but there are still a few left. If you want one you better contact Rick ASAP. Members who attend get the benefit of a reduced entry fee. Please bring a copy of the newsletter so that the person at the door can verify you're a member. Side Note: This made me think that we should be working on membership cards..

Set-up is at 6:00AM and anyone wishing to help out is welcome. Free entry if you help out. If you live a long distance from Portland the society is reserving two rooms for members to use. If you do take advantage of this you are **required** to help with set-up.

Very Important - The society has 3 tables at the show. One is open for members with just a few animals to use. If you are going to take advantage of this you must contact Rick Sisco or Doug Kranich. Space is limited and it is a real inconvenience for someone to show up at the last minute expecting a spot. Often everyone already there has to shuffle things around to accommodate the stragglers. **For both the rooms, and the tables, you must call ahead to let us know.** Email isn't good enough. Please talk to a live body to make sure you're all set. Doug - 207 723 4108.

Also Very Important - Absolutely no live animals at the show unless you are a vendor. This is not a show and tell session.

This part is just from me. Please keep in mind that the hotel guests may not appreciate herps the way we do. Please don't walk around the lobby with animals exposed. We are all ambassadors for the MHS.

Herping on Santa Catalina Island by Clayton Kern

Hi friends,

As some may know, and others may not know, I recently graduated from Unity College, and got a position on Santa Catalina Island off the coast of California, as a marine science instructor, at the Catalina Island Marine Institute.

I've been out here since the beginning of June, and am having a spectacular time. The marine life is amazing as well as the terrestrial life, especially the herps. We see dolphins out front of our camp almost weekly along with the occasional whale, and go scuba diving, snorkeling, spear fishing, and hiking, almost religiously. I have also been doing lots of herping (not too surprising). Apparently most people out here find it bizarre that I actually go out looking for reptiles and amphibians.

I've actually found more herps on an average day to day basis than when I actually go herping. Maybe it's because I am not used to herping in the desert environment, and herping on the east coast is entirely different. Here it seems most animals look for the shade whereas reptiles in the northeast can usually be found anywhere there is sun.

There are several lizard species, several snake species, and 2 frog species. Other than that the island is rather devoid of herps. This shouldn't be too surprising too anyone with knowledge of small island ecology. This island was formed a relatively short time ago and because of that any organisms that got out here had to either swim, fly, float, or get transported by other means. Most organisms don't do so well swimming in salt water for many miles either.



Side-blotched Lizard



Southern Alligator Lizard



San Diego Gopher Snake, and I

So anyway I've found all 3 lizard species, the Side-blotched lizard, the Southern Alligator Lizard, and the Western Skink. I have also found 2 out of 5 snake species; the San Diego Gopher snake, and the Southern Pacific Rattlesnake. I still have to find the California Kingsnake, two-striped Garter snake, and the Western Ringneck. In the amphibian sector I've caught the Pa-

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cific Treefrog which is very reminiscent of the Barking Treefrog of the southeast. We also have the bull frog which I have yet to observe.

Either way if you ever get out this way certainly give Catalina Island a visit, it's not only a gorgeous place it is also a very protected place, approximately 3/4 of the island is in conservation status, and remains in its original state of desert scrublands, and large rolling mountains. Tons of gorgeous trails just asking to be herped, hiked, and don't forget about the world class scuba diving!

I hope everything is going well in Maine, I may be able to make a surprise visit to a meeting this winter, hope to see you then.
Happy Herping, Clayton Kern

Thanks Clayton it is really appreciated. Hope to see you this winter. Kevin

A friend of Doug's sent this to him. Some of you may have already seen it and the follow-up controversy. Seems the islanders don't care for the fact that they've known about the snake for years and now it is named after someone wife who doesn't live on the island. Here's the original article.

Scientists Find World's Smallest Snake

By Will Dunham

WASHINGTON (Aug. 3) - Scientists have identified the world's smallest snake -- a reptile about 4 inches long and as thin as spaghetti that was found lurking under a rock on the Caribbean island of Barbados.



The new species, named *Leptotyphlops carlae*, is smaller than any of the other 3,100 previously known snake species, according to Pennsylvania State University biologist Blair Hedges, who also had helped find the world's smallest frog and lizard. It is one of about 300 different species of thread-snake and is a dark brownish gray with two yellow stripes, Hedges said. It was determined to be a newly identified species due to genetic differences from other snakes and its unique color pattern and scales, he said.

The snake, which is not venomous, eats termites and termite larvae but little is known about its behavior, including whether it is nocturnal, Hedges said. It was found in 2006 in a forest on the eastern side of Barbados.

"It was under a rock. We got two of them," Hedges said in a phone interview. "It's about as wide as a spaghetti noodle."

The snake is about 0.2 inches (5 mm) shorter than another species from the Caribbean island of Martinique.

"When you get down that small, every millimeter counts," said Hedges, whose findings were published in the scientific journal *Zootaxa* on Sunday.

I believe this next article is about Kevin McCurley's pet shop in Plaistow. I believe a large Sulcata would stick out like a sore thumb in Maine but keep on the look out, just in case.

UNION LEADER (Manchester, New Hampshire) 10 August 08 *Store seeks tortoise thief* (Benjamin Kipple)

Someone has stolen several tortoises from their outdoor enclosure at a Plaistow pet store, according to employees, prompting concern for the animals' safety.

An employee of Zoo Creatures, at 149 Plaistow Road, discovered the theft yesterday about 10 a.m. The reptiles were stolen sometime between the store closing on Friday night and opening on Saturday morning.

The thieves had used wire cutters to cut through the fence protecting the creatures, which were anywhere from 25 to 100 pounds each. The animals were about to be displayed for a birthday party

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when the theft was discovered.

"We have one left, because he was too big to fit through the hole," said Brittany Bradwell, an assistant manager at the store.

Bradwell said the store had filed a report with Plaistow police about the theft. The store had been keeping the animals in an outside enclosure due to the nice weather; it is the first time they have had a problem like this, according to Bradwell.

A tortoise can best be described as a land-dwelling turtle, and certain species can grow to become several feet long. They also have advanced life spans, living up to 200 years. The stolen tortoises, according to Bradwell, were relatively young -- anywhere from 30 to 50 years old.

Workers at the store were quite concerned about the animals' welfare, as tortoises are not simple house pets.

"They need all sorts of special lighting, special food, and special care," Bradwell said. The store has asked anyone with information about the stolen tortoises to call them at 382-3338. Anyone with information may also call the Plaistow police department at 382-6816.

I found this article on line. It kind of caught my eye because it was about Blanding's turtles in the Biddeford area. I didn't know that they found them there. It turns out that they have. It could have been a transplant or it could be a real find. About 25 years ago Helen Purley (the mouse lady) said she caught one in Scarborough. She kept it in her barn for years.

Funds needed to open Blandings Park Sanctuary (Aug. 1, 2008)

By Kevin Robbins

Two years ago Dave and Peggy Ayers founded the Blandings Park Wildlife Sanctuary. Now, the Ayers are trying to raise enough funds to purchase more land and maintain the sanctuary, which has yet to open.

Pool Street, West Street, Guinea Road and Granite Street in Biddeford enclose the proposed area of the sanctuary.

"There has been so much going on, we are doing everything we can," Dave Ayers said.

Dave Ayers said they currently have 130 acres of land; however, they want to eventually have 1,000

acres of land. By the end of the year they hope to have 200 acres. He said the Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife recommends at least 500 acres be devoted to a wildlife sanctuary for it to be viable for turtles, Dave Ayers said. The Blandings turtle, which is endangered and has been seen in the area, is the sanctuary's mascot.

Peggy Ayers said a new Web site is in development and should be operating by the end of the year. She also said the main entrance to the sanctuary will be constructed sometime in fall 2008. As of now, there is no public entrance into the park, though there are existing unmarked trails that can be accessed on foot.

Both Dave and Peggy Ayers sit on the park's board of directors along with Brady Construction owner Paul Brady and Biddeford resident Mary Ellen Charles. In addition, there is an advisory board, a land stewards committee, and an outreach committee.

Brady said he is examining the land for potential trail locations; However, equipment is needed to create trails and the organization cannot bring equipment in the park until the main entrance has been created, Dave Ayers said.

In order to raise awareness about the sanctuary, the Ayers have hosted lectures at McArthur Library in Biddeford. A lecture in July showcased reptiles and amphibians in "The Mysteries of Water and Wildlife." The lectures were free and geared toward children. Blandings Wildlife Park Sanctuary is currently accepting donations to purchase more land. The sanctuary is classified as a public benefit 501(c)3 land trust, which means any donations to the

Important if you want Rodents

We will be bringing rodents to the Portland Reptile Expo for sale to non-members as well as members. The current inventory and prices are in the classified section of this newsletter, and on our website. In order to get these prices you must call or email me to reserve you order. See the classifieds for info.

At the show the prices will be higher than posted here and we won't be able to give you the discount just because you're a member. The prices here are basically our cost and obviously it wouldn't be much sense to sell at cost at the show. So help me out and pre-order. That way I can have it ready for you. Also we will have a freezer there so don't worry about rodents thawing while you're enjoying the show.

Expo Flyers

It probably is self explanatory but within this newsletter is our 2008 Expo Flyer. Please help us out by putting yours in a conspicuous place in your town. Make copies, email me for copies, if you need more. Thanks - Maine Herp Society.

Repster Shipping

Anyone that only ships herps a few times a year and isn't FedEx or Delta certified may want to check out www.repster.com. Repster offers a service that allows anyone to ship all herps via FedEx. You don't need to be certified by FedEx to do so, but you do have to register with Repster, and watch their instructional video.

In reading some of the forums most people like the service. The shipping is evidently 20-40% less if you shipped on your own. For a small fee they send you all your shipping supplies. These used to be free actually but too many people were taking advantage of it and just getting the supplies and not

using the service. So now they have reduced the shipping costs and charge for the supplies.

This is not an endorsement from me or the MHS though. Everyone needs to check it out and decide on their own, if it is something that will help them.

You can read about it here for a more impartial evaluation than you'll find on the Repster web site.

<http://www.faunaclassifieds.com/forums/showthread.php?t=112529&page=1&pp=40>

There are some rumors that UPS will follow FedEx and allow Repster to use them also.

Classified Advertisements

Classified advertisements are free to dues paying members. The format for the ads should be as follows: 1.1.1 The first number represents the number of males, the second represents the number of females, and the third, the number of unknown sex. Please use the species name whenever possible. The Maine Herpetological Society is not responsible for content, prices, or errors in classified ads, nor do we receive any compensation from the sales resulting from these ads. ** MAINE PERMIT REQUIRED

For Sale: 2.0 Nicaraguan boas \$125; 2007 Okeetee Corns \$75; 2007 Ball Pythons \$75; 2007 ; Contact Kevin Murphy kmurphy70192@roadrunner.com or 207-576-0157

MHS Rodent Supply -- Mice 100 Small pinkies - .19 each; 100 Large pinkies . 19 each; 340 Fuzzies - .22 each; 646 Hoppers - .36 each; 900 Adults - . 51 each; 225 Extra Large Adults - .61 each Rats - 20 Small - .99 each; 20 Medium - 1.39 each; 15 Large - 1.49 each.

We will be able to bring rodents to the Portland Reptile Expo (see article page 4) - Please call me 207-576-0157 or email kmurphy70192@roadrunner.com so we will reserve your order. Below is our current inventory.

For Sale: 100's of Balls, Boas & Colubrids Available. Largest variety around. Inventory changing constantly if you are looking for something call. Thanks, J&J Reptiles sales@jnreptiles.com (207)479-6658 Check out our website at: www.jnreptiles.com

Adopt or Surrender a Reptile or Amphibian The New England Amphibian & Reptile Rescue (NEARR) provides permanent placement & adoption to herps of all sorts; including, but not limited to; snakes, lizards, frogs and turtles. Contact Information: Phone: 207-399-4631 Email: rescue@reptilerescue.net Website: <http://www.ReptileRescue.net>