

The Newsletter of the

Herpetologist's League

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1997 Winners: Herpetologists League's Graduate Student Competition

Twelve students participated in the HL's Graduate Student Competition at this year's annual meeting in Seattle. The students were judged based on short written papers (four pages of text) and on oral presentations made at the meeting. Six of the participants were chosen as finalists and these students received travel awards to fund their travel to the meeting. One overall winner was selected. Below are short bio's of the six finalists and a brief description of their research in their own words.

Overall Winner:

Kelly Zamudio

Degrees: BA (Zoology), UC-Berkeley (1991);

Ph.D. (Zoology), Univ. of Washington (1996)

Current: NSF Post-Doc at the Museum of Vertebrate Zoology - UC-Berkeley (Wake Laboratory)

Hometown: Stockton, California

In this study I used nuclear microsatellites to determine paternity in the side-blotched lizard (*Uta stansburiana*). I have been collaborating with Dr. Barry Sinervo (UC Santa Cruz) in the study of one population of this species where there are three alternative male mating strategies, each adopting certain behaviors. For example,

Coming Soon! HL Special Publication: Snake Species of the World

HL is publishing a 3-volume compendium packed with information about the world's snakes. The long-awaited series is authored by Jonathan Campbell, Roy McDiarmid, and T Shaka Toure. The first volume should be published later this year. A mailing will be sent to all HL members, so watch for this announcement!

20-Year Index to Herpetologica available soon!

Mac Hardy (LSU-Shreveport) has recently compiled a complete index to the last 20 years of Herpetologica, cross referenced by author, subject, and taxon. Negotiations are under way with a publisher, and we anticipate publication in this fall. All HL members will be notified of publication date and cost (reduced for members) when that information is available.

- Conferences, Conventions, Conclaves -

The Highlands Conference on Plethodontid Salamanders

The Highlands Conference on Plethodontid Salamanders will be held from Friday June 12th to Monday June 15th 1998. The meeting site is in Highlands, North Carolina at The Mountain, a rustic resort that provides housing, meals, and meeting rooms. The program will feature invited and

two of the morphs tend to be territorial, while one morph adopts a sneaking strategy and attempts to copulate with females within the boundaries of territories of the other males. Using molecular markers as a tool to discern paternity of each offspring in the populations, I was able to show the relative success of each strategy in nature. The most exciting aspect of this study is that by inferring paternity in a natural population, we are able to say something about the fitness of different reproductive strategies and, thus, about the evolution of this mating system. Up to this point, this last step has been missing from most studies of vertebrate populations.

Finalists:

Ronald A. Gutberlet, Jr.
 Degrees: BA, Univ. of Maryland;
 MS, Univ. of Texas at Arlington
 Current: Ph.D. student at the Univ. of
 Texas at Arlington;
 Advisor: Jonathan Campbell
 Hometown: Cockeysville, Maryland (near
 Baltimore)

 F. Krause, D. Mink, and W. Brown (Copeia 1996: 763-773) found that in phylogenetic analyses of mitochondrial DNA, one species of hog-nosed pitviper (*Porthidium hyoprora*) did not fall out in a clade with the two other hog-nosed pitvipers (*P. nasutum* and *P. ophryomegas*) in the study. However, the results from the different analyses that they used were not congruent in the phylogenetic placement of *P. hyoprora*. I was therefore very interested to see if I could gather additional data that would allow me to make a strong statement about the relationships of *P. hyoprora* and to evaluate the monophyly of *Porthidium*. Sixty-one morphological characters from crania, vertebrae, scales, hemipenes, coloration, and scale surface microstructure analyzed for 16 pitviper

contributed talks, and evening poster sessions and socials. Registration information and a call for papers will be mailed in early October to everyone who attended the last Conference, and to those who have requested to be on the current mailing list. If you would like to add your name to the mailing list, please send your name, address, and numbers (phone, FAX, e-mail) to: Judy Hill, Highlands Biological Station, P.O. Box 580, Highlands, NC 28741; or; e-mail JHILL@wpoff.wcu.edu. This conference is sponsored by the Highlands Biological Station (Richard C. Bruce, Director).

- MONEY, MONEY, MONEY -

The Center for Field Research: Proposals for Earthwatch

The Center for Field Research invites proposals for 1998-99 field grants funded by its affiliate Earthwatch. Earthwatch is an international, nonprofit organization dedicated to sponsoring field research and promoting public education in the sciences and humanities. Past projects have been successfully fielded in, but are not limited to, the following disciplines: animal behavior, biodiversity, ecology, ornithology, endangered species, entomology, marine mammalogy, ichthyology, herpetology, marine ecology, and resource and wildlife management. Interdisciplinary projects are especially encouraged as is multinational collaboration. Information can be found at: <http://www.earthwatch.org/cfr/cfr.html> or you may contact: The Center for Field Research, 680 Mt. Auburn Street, Watertown, MA 02272. Telephone: 617-926-8200, Fax: 617-926-8532, e-mail: cfr@earthwatch.org.

**Carnegie Museum of Natural History
 Collection Study Grants in Herpetology**

species strongly suggest that *P. hyoprora* is actually nested within the genus *Bothrops* and that it should be reallocated therefore as *B. hyoprora*. The remaining species of *Porthidium* appear to form a natural group based on synapomorphies from hemipenes, scales, coloration, and scale surface microstructure. These data provide strong evidence that with the removal of *P. hyoprora* the content of *Porthidium* is now stable.

Lara J. Hansen

Degrees: BA (Biology), Univ. California, Santa Cruz (1991);

Current: Ph.D. candidate in Ecology at the University of California,

Davis (Expected completion, Fall 1998)

Advisor: H. Bradley Shaffer

Hometown: Iowa City, Iowa

For the past several years I have been examining the difference between amphibian populations in their response to environmental stresses. Of particular interest is the potential for local population adaptation by *Hyla regilla* to Ultraviolet B (UVB) radiation across an elevational gradient. At the 1997 HL meeting I presented the results of an initial laboratory experiment concerning the sensitivity of a low elevation population of *H. regilla* to five different levels of UVB radiation. These initial data indicated a sublethal sensitivity in this population to levels of UVB that are currently seen at high elevation sites in North America, and may very likely be seen at low elevation sites with continued ozone depletion. The study is continuing with laboratory exposure of *H. regilla* from a high elevation population to the same five levels of UVB.

This work is exciting not only due to the importance of UVB research in general, but also because it attempts to quantify the levels of UVB that are biologically detrimental to a native species of amphibian.

The Carnegie Museum of Natural History is pleased to announce a new grant to support herpetological research by graduate students and foreign scientists. The grant is intended to defray the costs of transportation and lodging associated with visiting and using the collection. The Carnegie's herpetological collection contains more than 195,000 preserved specimens, including one of the largest collections of turtles, and extensive holdings from the West Indies, Mexico, South America, Spain, Africa, India, and the Philippines. Applicants should send the following, in duplicate: 1) a description of the proposed research (including its expected significance and the justification for visiting Carnegie), not to exceed two pages; 2) literature cited; 3) budget; 4) CV. Students should also arrange for two letters of recommendation to be sent. Awards will be made twice a year. Deadlines for application materials are 15 April and 15 November. Send applications to "Collection Study Grants in Herpetology", Section of Amphibians and Reptiles, Carnegie Museum of Natural History, Pittsburgh, PA 15213-4080. For more information contact John Wiens (wiensj@clpgh.org; 412-622-5520; FAX 412-622-8837).

More Herpeto-trivia: Male wood frogs (*Rana sylvatica*) rely solely on glycogen reserves for production of calls, while male spring peepers (*Pseudacris crucifer*) derive about 90% of their energy for call production from stored lipids. Both species begin calling at about the same time, but wood frog breeding lasts only a few days, while breeding of spring peepers can last for up to two months. --Wells, K. D. & C. R. Bevier. 1997. *Herpetologica* 53:70-80.

- ANNOUNCEMENTS -

New Master's Program in Conservation Biology

Peter V. Lindeman

Degrees: BS (Zoology), BA (Honors German), Eastern Illinois Univ. (1985); MS (Zoology), Univ. of Idaho (1988); Current: Ph.D. student in Environmental Biology through a cooperative program between Murray State Univ. and the Univ. of Louisville

Advisor: David S. White

Also Associate Professor of Biology, Madisonville Community College (KY)
Hometown: Louisville, Kentucky

The research that I presented in Seattle concerned the evolution of relative head and alveolar surfaces in map turtles (*Graptemys*), a group long informally divided into broad-headed and narrow-headed species. Mine was the first study to analyze these variables for all described species of *Graptemys*, with over 2200 specimens measured, and the first to formally consider the allometry of these variables. I analyzed sexual dimorphism in head width and alveolar width, and also superimposed my data on a phylogeny of the genus that was recently published by Lamb *et al.* in *Systematic Biology*. My conclusions concerning ecological and evolutionary aspects of the trophic morphology of *Graptemys* are very similar to those of recent studies of *Anolis* lizards in the northern Lesser Antilles in that character displacement is shown to have occurred at most once in the radiation of *Graptemys*, with character assortment occurring thereafter.

Matthew James Parris

Degrees: BA (Biology), St. John's University, Collegeville, Minnesota;
Current: Ph.D. student at the University of Missouri (Columbia);
Advisor: Raymond D. Semlitsch
Hometown: Esko, Minnesota (near Duluth)

Ephemeral aquatic habitats often vary considerably in hydroperiod duration both temporally and spatially. The ability of

The State University of New York at Albany is offering an interdisciplinary Master of Science degree that prepares students for careers requiring knowledge of both biology and public policy, in matters pertaining to biological conservation. The Biodiversity, Conservation and Policy Program teaches students how basic concepts in conservation biology, policy analysis, planning, and the political process interact during efforts to preserve species diversity and endangered habitats and ecosystems. This program features focused course-work, emphasizes original research that analyzes (rather than directly generates) scientific data, and provides opportunities for off campus internships. For more information, contact: Dr. Margaret M. Stewart, Biodiversity Program, Department of Biological Sciences, University of Albany, State University of New York, 1400 Washington Ave., Albany, NY 12222.

- New Societies -

SafeHerp Society

SafeHerp Society is a society for the betterment of captive reptile husbandry. The society has membership, meetings, newsletters, and projects. Rather than being based geographically, the society specifically functions via your computer. All meetings, projects, and correspondences are done in this manner.

SafeHerp sponsors projects that parallel the interest of the membership. Currently, the society is sponsoring a pet store evaluation project. This project reaches all parts of the world. Individuals wanting to make a difference are encouraged to participate. For further information see the website:

<http://www.geocities.com/RainForest/9216/>.

Comparative Nutrition Society

Comparative Nutrition Society (CNS) is a newly established society created to

amphibian larvae to adapt to a potentially drying pond environment is critical for survival and metamorphosis. I used an artificial pond experiment to analyze the effects that a variable pond hydroperiod has on larval fitness in two species of temporary pond-breeding leopard frogs, *Rana blairi* and *Rana sphenocephala*. When exposed to a drying regime, *R. blairi* ponds exhibited higher survival and metamorph production than *R. sphenocephala* ponds, suggesting that *R. blairi* may be better adapted to aquatic environments with short hydroperiods. However, larvae of both species responded adaptively in drying ponds by reducing their larval period lengths relative to constant high water level ponds, thus escaping potential death by desiccation in drying environments. Such adaptive phenotypic plasticity in life-history trajectories in relation to environmental parameters has not been demonstrated in the genus *Rana* previously.

Leslie Rye Degrees: BSc (Wildlife), Univ. of Guelph (1984);
 Msc (Parasitology), Univ. Of Guelph (1987);
 Current: Ph.D. student at the University of Guelph;
 Advisor: Jim Bogart
 Hometown: Born in Ottawa, Ontario;
 Grew up in Montreal, Quebec

I am studying gene flow in areas where different lineages of the common garter snake, *Thamnophis sirtalis*, have made contact following postglacial dispersal. *Thamnophis sirtalis* is widely distributed throughout much of North America and shows considerable phenotypic variation throughout its range. In addition to contributing to the understanding of the geographical distribution of various morphological features and life history attributes of *T. sirtalis*, my research is also examining aspects of speciation. Gene flow at these areas of contact can theoretically range from none, if the

foster communication among laboratory and field scientists from various disciplines with interests in comparative nutrition. The society will provide a means for establishing and promoting a professional concept of comparative nutrition, and will encourage education and professional development in this area. The interests represented in the society include, but are not limited to, the disciplines of nutrition, physiology, metabolism, biochemistry, animal science, wildlife and marine biology, ecology, and all taxa including insects, fish, amphibians, reptiles, birds, and mammals. An invitation for membership is extended to all individuals engaged in research, education, or application of comparative nutrition; to those pursuing studies in degree granting institutions; and to individuals who support the goals and mission of the society. Biennial symposia will be held, the first of which took place 2-6 August in Leesburg, VA. Proceedings of the first CNS symposium are available. The next symposium is scheduled for the summer of 1998. For more information about membership in the CNS, or to order proceedings, please contact the CNS Secretary: Charlotte Kirk Baer, PO box 3835, Silver Spring, MD 20918 USA; Phone: 202-334-1978; e-mail: ckirk@nas.edu.

WANTED: INFORMATION ON DEFORMED FROGS

Reports of deformed frogs and salamanders have increased sharply since 1995, and US government scientists are seeking information about occurrences. Reports of frogs with misshapen limbs, missing or shrunken eyes, and smaller sex organs have been received from areas including Minnesota, Wisconsin, South Dakota, and Vermont, and from Quebec in Canada. Theories range from pesticides to parasites to radiation due to ozone

lineages have speciated, to extensive. It has been suggested at various times that what is now called *Thamnophis sirtalis* is, in fact, several species. It is at these contact areas that this question can be answered.

***Thanks to all of the student participants and judges for their hard work and congratulations to the winners!

Sites of Future Meetings

1998 - University of Guelph

1999 - Penn State University

DIRECTORY OF HERPETOLOGISTS

HL, along with SSAR and ASIH, are preparing to issue a joint directory of herpetologists. This directory will be made by merging the membership lists of the three societies. If for some reason you DO NOT wish to be listed in the directory, please tell us by e-mail (Harold Dundee: <dundee@plato.museum.tulane.edu>) or by snail mail (Dr. Harold Dundee, Tulane University Museum of Natural History, Belle Chasse, LA 70037-3098; FAX 504-394-5045). The default option is to list everyone. Also, if you receive journals at your home address, but wish instead to have an institutional address published, please advise as above. THANKS.

Results of the HL Student Questionnaire

The questionnaire mailed to all HL student members in November 1996 resulted in 118 responses. The students ranked receiving the journals as the highest benefit to their membership.

depletion.

The North American Reporting Center for Amphibian Malformations has been established at the US Geological Survey's Northern Prairie Science Center in Jamestown, ND. The center is asking the public to report sightings of deformed frogs.

The center has established a computer site to collect reports, including a form to fill out and submit. The site is located at: <<http://www.npsc.nbs.gov/narcam>> The center's toll-free phone number is 1-800-238-9801.

- PUBLICATIONS -

Amphibians in Decline: Canadian Studies of a Global Problem

Ed. by David M. Green. 1997. This is the 1st volume in a new series on Conservation by the Society for the Study of Amphibians and Reptiles. This volume contains 52 contributors, 29 chapters, and approximately 350 pages. Topics included are of worldwide interest and application, including dispersal, fluctuations, genetic diversity, monitoring of natural populations, as well as effect of temperature, acidity, pesticides, UV, forestry practices, and disease. Published by SSAR and the Canadian Association of Herpetologists. Price (USA): \$39 + \$3 Shipping and Handling; Price (Canada): \$55 + # S & H.

For order information contact: Dr. Robert D. Aldridge, SSAR Publications Secretary, Dept. of Biology, St. Louis University, St. Louis, MO 63103, USA; Phone: 314-977-3916 or -1710; Fax: 314-977-3658; e-mail: ssar@slu.edu.

For Canadian orders, contact: Dr. Patrick T. Gregory, Biology Dept., Univ. Of Victoria, PO Box 1700, Victoria, BC V8W 2Y2 Canada; Phone: 604-721-7103; e-mail: thamnoph@uvvm.uvic.ca.

*BIOLOGY OF THE REPTILIA, VOLUME
19: Morphology, Volume G: The Visceral*

Attendance at the annual meetings and participation in a professional society also ranked high. However, less than a third of the students attend annual meetings on a regular basis, most citing cost as the primary factor. Many students listed research and travel grants, which we have not been able to afford, as the most important activity that HL could add to the list of services for students. Students were about evenly split in their opinion of whether HL should meet with SSAR or SSAR and ASIH at its annual meetings. A report on these and other results pertaining to the 25 items in the student questionnaire will be available in the near future on HL's website:

<http://fishead.by.ua.edu/HL/student.html> -
Joe Mitchell

GRAD SCHOOL NEWS...

Ecology, Evolution, and Behavior Group at the University of Missouri: Featuring the Laboratory of Ray Semlitsch

The Division of Biological Science at the University of Missouri (MU) in Columbia features an active Ecology, Evolution, and Behavior (EEB) Group with nine faculty members, a handful of master's students, six post-doctoral researchers, and more than 30 Ph.D. students. Within the group, interests include molecular systematics (from corn to cave fish), natural selection in wild populations of plants (from alpine to the tropics), ecology of neotropical migrant birds, chemical ecology of terrestrial arthropods, and the ecology, evolution and behavior of amphibians. Currently, the group holds grants from a number of different sources including NSF, NIH, USFS, NBS, Oak Ridge Associated Universities, the Swiss National Fund, the Nature Conservancy, and the Missouri Department of Conservation.

Leaving behind his faculty position at the University of Zurich in Switzerland, Dr. RAY SEMLITSCH joined the EEB group in 1993. Ray began his career at the

Organs Ed. by Carl Gans and Abbot S. Gaunt. 1997. Now published by the Society for the Study of Amphibians and Reptiles. This volume summarizes the major organs situated in the coelomic space, organs that function in metabolism or are involved with endocrine and reproductive activities, including the pulmonary system, the cardiovascular system, the liver and the spleen. Each chapter includes descriptive morphology combined with discussions of function and of ecological and evolutionary relationships. Price (USA): \$58 + \$3 S & H; Price (non-USA): \$58 + \$6 S & H; make checks (in USA funds or international money order) payable to SSAR

Send orders to: Dr. Robert D. Aldridge, SSAR Publications Secretary, Dept. of Biology, St. Louis University, St. Louis, MO 63103, USA; Phone: 314-977-3916 or -1710; Fax: 314-977-3658; e-mail: ssar@slu.edu.

A Guide to the Snakes of Papua New Guinea By Mark O Shea. 1996. Independent Publishing, Port Moresby, PNG. 239 pp, including 48 spot distribution maps, 129 color photographs, and 165 b/w figures. The first comprehensive guide to the snake fauna of Papua New Guinea with a section on snakebite treatment in Papua New Guinea by Prof. David A. Warrell and Dr. David G. Laloo. USA \$59.95 (softcover; hardback is sold out). Internet web site: <<http://www.internetnorth.com.au/travel188/png/book.htm>> E-mail orders (Australia): <travel188@internetnorth.com.au>; Author (UK): <Oshea@snakemos.demon.co.uk> Publisher (PNG): Independent Publishing, Fax: 675-325-2506.

Snakes: The Evolution of Mystery in Nature By Harry W. Greene. 1997. University of California Press. 351 pages plus many color plates. This volume provides an up-to-date summary of the biology of snakes on a global basis. Topics

Savannah River Ecology Lab (SREL) studying the ecology of amphibians and reptiles. He developed an interest in life history dynamics of amphibians with complex life cycles, particularly the ecology of life history pathways in the mole salamander *Ambystoma talpoideum*. While in Switzerland, Ray studied inter-clonal selection in the hybridogenetic water frog complex (*Rana esculenta*) and behavioral ecology of amphibian larvae. Currently, Ray is interested in the integration of behavioral ecology and life history evolution. He is also involved in establishing a new interdisciplinary program in Conservation Biology at MU. Since his arrival at MU, Ray's lab has undergone rapid development and diversification to include seven students pursuing their Ph.D.'s, one chasing a master's degree, a post-doc, and a dozen undergraduates (or so it seems at times). Each year, a couple of undergraduates conduct original research in the lab through the Hughes Education Fellowship and Arts & Sciences Research Mentorship Program. The students' research projects reflect Ray's interest in all things herpetological, and then some...

The first crop of students are Ph.D. candidates, all beginning their fourth year of study. TINA BRIDGES (one-half of the Sevin-Sisters) is examining differences among ranid species in their sensitivity to an agricultural chemical (Sevin, of course), in order to determine whether there is a great discrepancy between declining and nondeclining species in their responses to chemical contamination. Tina is also looking at responses of *Rana sphenocephala*, both within and among populations, in order to determine the extent of variation present within a single species. With the results from this study, Tina hopes to shed light on the role of chemical contamination in amphibian population declines as well as the degree of possible evolutionary response. MATTHEW PARRIS has devoted his graduate career to investigating hybridization between two species of

include general snake biology (anatomy, feeding, venoms, predation and defense, social behavior, reproduction, evolution, and conservation), and a survey of the major snake groups (including blindsnakes, boas, colubrids, stiletto snakes, cobras, seasnakes, and vipers). \$45 (cloth).

Practical Exotic Animal Medicine By Karen L. Rosenthal, DVM, MS, reviewer. 1997. Veterinary Learning Systems. 276 pages. The best knowledge on clinical evaluation, diagnoses, and husbandry of a wide range of species, including reptiles, and fishes, has been brought together then updated and expanded in this practical reference guide. Order from Veterinary Learning Systems, 425 Phillips Blvd., Suite 100, Trenton, NJ 08618. Phone: 800-426-9119; Fax: 800-556-3288; e-mail: Books.vls@medimedia.com. \$51 (softcover); price valid in the USA, Canada, Mexico, and the Caribbean.

The Exotic Animal Drug Compendium By Keath L. Marx, DVM, and Margaret A. Roston, BSRN. 1996. Veterinary Learning Systems. 394 pages. Order from Veterinary Learning Systems, 425 Phillips Blvd., Suite 100, Trenton, NJ 08618. Phone: 800-426-9119; Fax: 800-556-3288; e-mail: Books.vls@medimedia.com. \$54; price valid in the USA, Canada, Mexico, and the Caribbean.

Behavioral Approaches to Conservation in the Wild Ed. by Janine R. Clemmons and Richard Buchholz. 1997. Cambridge University Press. 382 pages. \$69.95 (hardcover), \$29.95 (paperback). This book contains 15 chapters divided into three parts: (1) Problems and issues, (2) Conservation and the four levels of behavioral study, and (3) Examples and case histories.

Amphibians and Reptiles of the Great Lakes Region By James H. Harding. 1997. University of Michigan Press. 378 pages, including numerous color plates and maps. Paperback, price not given.

leopard frogs (*Rana blairi* and *Rana spehnocephala*). He seems to have found his niche using an artificial-pond approach to address questions concerning the relative fitness of parental and hybrid genotypes under a variety of experimental conditions. When not busy with his pond work, Matthew also spends time each spring studying the ecology and population status of the rare and elusive northern crawfish frog (*Rana areolata circumlosa*) in Missouri. ALLISON WELCH, a Ph.D. candidate co-advised by CARL GERHARDT, is interested in sexual selection and the evolution of female mate choice. She is studying the effects of female mate choice on offspring fitness in the gray treefrog, *Hyla versicolor*. So far, she s found that offspring of preferred males show better larval performance than offspring of nonpreferred males. Allison is also interested in inducible anti-predator morphology in gray treefrog tadpoles. Breaking with amphibian-based research, SHELLY BALL's dissertation research focuses on aquatic insects and the function of sex. She studies the evolutionary ecology and population genetics of facultative parthenogenesis in mayflies. After spending the last three years in real streams, she is now using artificial streams to determine the relative fitness of sexually and parthenogenetically produced offspring to understand how mixed sexual/asexual populations persist. Her ties to the amphibian world include research investigating mechanisms responsible for the maintenance of facultative paedomorphosis in *Ambystoma talpoideum*.

The second wave of the lab reflects Ray's ties to SREL and his desire to establish an MU-SREL pipeline to keep a fresh supply of students. MICHELLE BOONE, a former SREL technician and the other Sevin-Sister, is a third year Ph.D. student. Her research involves the effects of a common insecticide on amphibian communities under different levels of biotic stress. Michelle s

Amphibians and Reptiles of Trinidad and Tobago By John C. Murphy. 1997. Krieger Publishing Company. 245 pages, including 172 color plates and 111 maps. \$72.50 (cloth).

Horned Lizards By Jane Manaster. 1997. University of Texas Press, Austin, Texas. 81 pages plus 11 color plates. \$17.95 (hardcover)

Ancient Marine Reptiles Ed. by Jack M. Callaway and Elizabeth L. Nicholls. 1997. Academic Press. 501 pages (covering 17 chapters). \$64.95 (hardcover).

The Field Guide to the Birds of New Zealand By Barrie and Hugh Robertson. 1997. Oxford University Press. 432 pages. \$39.95 (paperback). **Herpetotrivia:** When Iberian rock lizards (*Lacerta monticola*) lose their tails, males decrease their home range sizes and decrease their time spent moving. In contrast, the activity of females is not affected by tail loss (females show low levels of activity regardless of tail condition). -- Martin, J. & A. Salvador. 1997. *Herpetologica* 53:117-125

POLICY FOR ADVERTISEMENT OF NEW BOOKS _ As a service to our readers, Communications is pleased to publish announcements of new books of interest to HL members. However, we do not accept formal "advertisements". We will include the "standard" information (title; author; publisher; price (HB/PB); no. of pages, maps, illustrations), plus, optionally, a very brief 1-2 sentence description of the book and an address for orders. This information should be sent to the editor of Communications. Announcements will be included as space allows and content may be edited.

COMMUNIQUE...S TO COMMUNICATIONS

Target dates for distribution of Communications are March and September. Herpetologically-relevant announcements are included as space allows. Send submissions/

experiments use a variety of larval anurans subjected to predation pressures and chemical stressors. She is rearing juveniles from these experiments to determine whether these stressors affect overwinter survival and size. These data will be used to model community-level responses of anurans exposed to sublethal levels of short-lived acetyl-cholinesterase inhibitors. RUSS BODIE, also a former SREL technician and now a master's student, is currently knee-deep in the Big Muddy investigating aquatic turtle ecology at multiple scales within a 175-mile section of the Missouri River flood plain in Missouri. Specifically, Russ is correlating habitat disturbance regimes with population and movement data through mark-recapture and radiotelemetry and is investigating possible negative effects of current Missouri River management practices on juvenile turtle survival. In addition, blood and tissue samples are being collected for a landscape-level analysis of genetic relatedness within two abundant turtle species. JOHN KRENZ completed his Ph.D. while in residence at SREL and is currently a Post-Doctoral Research Fellow in the Molecular Biology Program at MU. He is interested in the evolution of amphibian mating systems using molecular markers to study behavior in the field. Current work includes the development of microsatellite DNA markers for parentage determinations in studies of mate choice in the gray treefrog, and experiments on the sexual strategies of ambystomatid salamanders. John is also a lecturer in Introductory Biology and Community Biology at MU. TRAVIS RYAN is a Ph.D. candidate who, in the spirit of free-trade, has been sent off to SREL to finish his dissertation. Travis is interested in the evolution of life histories and, in particular, complex life cycles and their deviations (e.g., paedomorphosis and direct development). After exhausting the patience of everyone in the lab with his rants and jublations, he has gone to South Carolina to continue his research on the

questions/comments to: Dr. Alicia Mathis,
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sam477f@vma.smsu.edu.

inheritance, expression, and fitness consequences of life histories in *Ambystoma talpoideum*. Travis' recently vacated desk has made space for...

...the newest member of the lab, NATHAN MILLS. Nathan just completed his master s degree at Southwest Missouri State University, and has joined the lab in search of a doctorate. Nathan's master s research was focused on the effects of a hypoxic environment on the embryonic development of two species of *Rana* and two species of *Ambystoma*. Nathan is currently preparing that work for publication (so stay tuned...), and is involved in a couple of other projects in the lab while he settles on a dissertation topic.

The Semlitsch lab works in close association with Dr. CARL GERHARDT's lab, located just across the hall. In addition to Carl, the lab currently houses three post-docs (Drs. BUCK BUCHANAN, SARAH BUSH, JOSH SCHWARTZ) and five Ph.D. students (MARK BEE, SARAH CONDITT, MONTOYA GREGORY, MIKE KELLER & VINCE MARSHALL). Carl and his people study acoustic communication of anurans (including physiology and behavioral ecology), the evolution of courtship behaviors in anurans, and speciation in the *Hyla chrysoscelis/versicolor* complex.- Diligently compiled by Travis Ryan

Herpeto-trivia:

Nocturnal gekkos (*Thecadactylus rapicauda*) from the western Amazon region are often found in buildings and prey mostly on cockroaches. - Vitt, L. J. & P. A. Zaini. 1997. *Herpetologica* 53: 165-179.

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