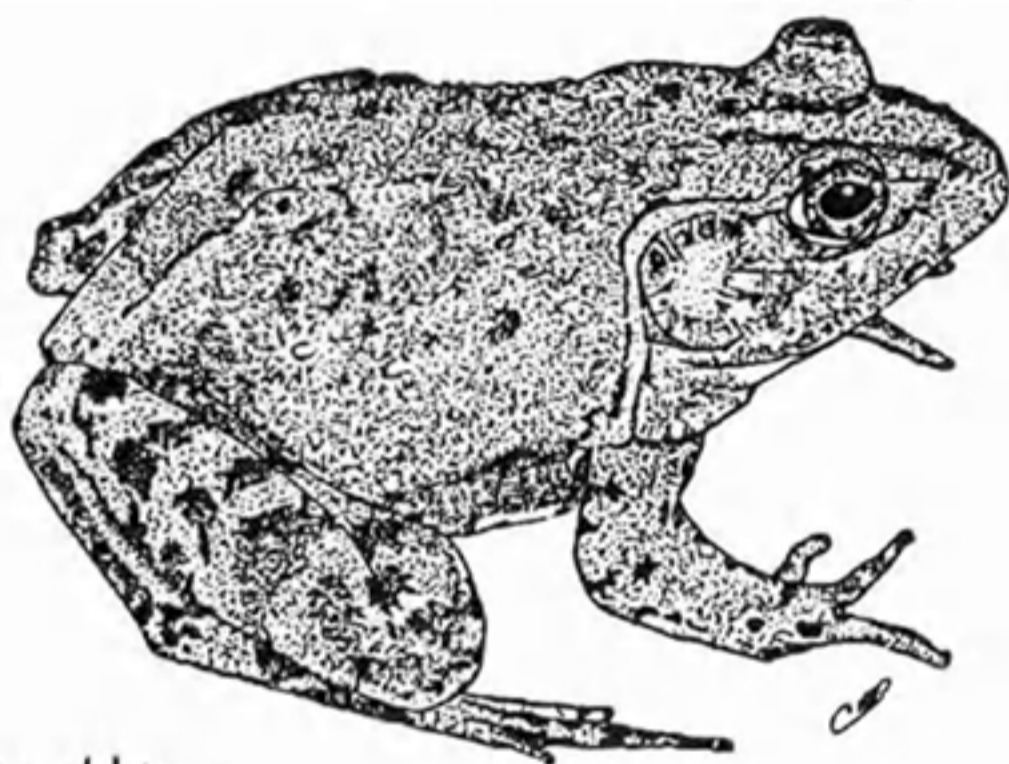


CATESBEIANA



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BULLETIN OF THE VIRGINIA HERPETOLOGICAL SOCIETY

ISSN 0892-0761

Volume 12

1992

Number 1

BULLETIN INFORMATION

Catesbeiana is issued twice a year by the Virginia Herpetological Society. Membership is open to all individuals interested in the study of amphibians and reptiles and includes a subscription to *Catesbeiana* and admission to all meetings.

Dues are \$10.00 per year and include a subscription to *Catesbeiana* numbers 1 and 2 for that year. Dues are payable to: Ronald Southwick, Secretary-Treasurer, 5608 Parkland Ct., Virginia Beach, VA 23464.

EDITORIAL POLICY

The principle function of *Catesbeiana* is to publish observations and original research about Virginia herpetology. Rarely will articles be reprinted in *Catesbeiana* after they have been published elsewhere. All correspondence relative to suitability of manuscripts or other editorial considerations should be directed to Co-editors, *Catesbeiana*, Department of Biology, Liberty University, Box 20,000, Lynchburg, VA 24506.

Major Papers

Manuscripts being submitted for publication should be typewritten (double spaced) on good quality 8½ by 11 inch paper, with adequate margins. Consult the style of articles in this issue for additional information. Articles will be refereed by at least one officer (past or present) of the Virginia Herpetological Society in addition to the editor. All changes must be approved by the author before publication; therefore manuscripts must be submitted well in advance of the March or September mailing dates.

Reprints of articles are not available to authors; however, authors may reprint articles themselves to meet professional needs.

(Editorial policy continued on inside back cover.)

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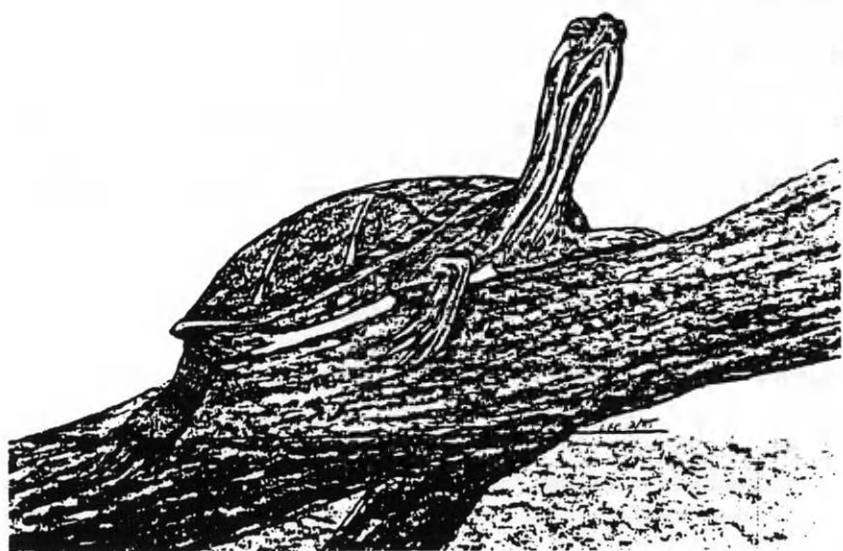
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MEETING NOTICE

The Spring 1992 VHS meeting will be held on 2-3 May 1992 at the Hungry Mother State Park, just north of Marion in Smyth County. See page 35 for details.

Spring Business Meeting and Special Auction, 11 April 1992 at the University of Richmond. See page 16 for details.



The Range of *Plethodon yonahlossee* in Virginia: defined at last?

Richard L. Hoffman
Virginia Museum of Natural History
Martinsville, VA 24112

Among the basic things that need to be learned about the biology of any organism is the extent of its geographic range, from which it is often possible to identify environmental factors limiting or facilitating distributional dynamics, and to deduce whether the species is in an expanding or condensing phase of its life cycle. Some species are better suited to such studies than others, particularly if they happen to be stenotopic, of limited vagility, and above all, easy to collect where they do occur.

Terrestrial plethodontid salamanders admirably meet all three of the criteria mentioned, and a number of studies devoted to distributional phenomena have appeared, notably those by Dr. Richard Highton on species of *Plethodon* (1971, for example). For many years I have maintained a low-key interest in various Virginia species of plethodontids (which occur in the same habitats I search for millipeds and ground beetles), and have opportunistically accumulated data on the local distribution of several kinds.

Probably the favored subject of this activity has been the elegantly colored *Plethodon yonahlossee*, which I first encountered in 1950 during a collecting trip with James A. Fowler. At that time, *yonahlossee* was reported in Virginia only from White Top Mountain, so that our discovery of an adult northwest of Independence amounted to a modest eastward extension of the range. Now, forty years later and after many new populations have been located, I think that the distribution of this animal in Virginia has been fairly well established, and that a historical narrative might hold some interest to students of local herpetofauna.

Sequence of Events

Plethodon yonahlossee was described by E.R. Dunn in 1917 from specimens he collected the previous year along the Yonahlossee Road, Grandfather Mountain, N.C. The species had been found much earlier (1902) in the same area by the entomologist Franklin Sherman, but his material had apparently lost much of its coloration before being sent by C.S. Brimley to the U.S. National Museum where it was identified as

Plethodon glutinosus - contrary to Brimley's own perception of it as an undescribed species (this was not the last time a "large eastern *Plethodon*" would be uncritically misidentified as *glutinosus*, as Prof. Highton's researchers have so clearly established.)

Shortly after his initial discovery of the animal, Dunn located it at White Top Mountain, Va., publishing the record in 1920. Thereafter various herpetologists obtained material at this northernmost point in the range, but no other Virginia localities were known until the summer of 1949 when Clifford H. Pope conducted a study of *yonahlossee* and found populations at Comer's Rock and Buck Mountain, in Grayson Co. On June 20, 1950, J.A. Fowler and I obtained a large adult in a rhododendron thicket beside Peach Bottom Creek, 3 miles northwest of Independence and a few miles east of Pope's Buck Mountain site. Just a few months later, a major range extension was established by malacologist Leslie Hubricht, who in October of 1950 obtained a small, dorsally-spotted individual thought to be *yonahlossee* (but not excluded from possibly being a small *P. wehrlei*) at the "Pinnacles of Dan" in western Patrick County. A successful attempt to confirm this record was made in July of 1951 by Walter B. Newman and me, with a much larger and quite typically marked individual of *yonahlossee* captured at Hubricht's site. As Newman later remarked (1954) this find extended the range of the species 45 miles to the east of Buck Mountain, and well across the New River, implicated as a barrier by Pope (1950: 82). The question of how far northeast into Virginia *yonahlossee* occurs again became relevant.

On July 6, 1967, I had the good fortune to locate the species in the gorge of Big Reed Island Creek in the north-central sector of Carroll County. This discovery extended the known range of *yonahlossee* along the northern side of the upper Kanawha River Plateau commensurate with the Pinnacles locality, as shown in my paper on Virginia plethodons (1967, Fig. 2). Not long after this information was published Douglas W. Ogle obtained a specimen at the western end of Mack's Mountain in southernmost Pulaski County, and also located colonies near the base of the Blue Ridge near Lambsburg, Carroll County (Ogle, 1977).

About this time, Steven Q. Croy advised me that he and Donald W. Linzey had found, photographed, and released a specimen of *yonahlossee* near the southern base of Buffalo Mountain, Floyd County. This locality

THE RANGE OF *PLETHODON YONAHLOSSEE*

extended the range about six miles north of the Pinnacles site along the Blue Ridge. In August of 1983 Charles M. Neal, Eugene V. Gourley, and I visited the place kindly spotted on a map by Mr. Croy, and were successful in obtaining a half-grown specimen (now USNM). A second locality in Floyd County was established on May 19, 1987, when I found an adult (USNM) on the SE slope of Mack's Mountain, 4 miles west of Indian Valley (Hoffman, 1988), and a third, about 2.5 miles west-southwest of Indian Valley along Berry's Creek, on 26 May 1990, when several mostly immatures were seen along the top edge of a rocky roadside embankment.

The preceding narrative traces the gradual eastward progression of the known range of *yonahlossee* in Virginia over the past four decades. The New (Kanawha) river valley has proven to be no barrier, nor is the gorge of Big Reed Island Creek. During this time period a large number of localities have been recorded, chiefly in the Iron Mountains through the work of Prof. Highton, and all are mapped in Figure 1. With such a history of on-going discoveries, some temerity may be required to assert, as I do now, that we have come to an end of the process.

What Figure 1 does not show, of course, is the intensity with which neighboring regions have been scoured for woodland salamanders during the past forty years. Many places, deemed to be likely habitat for *yonahlossee*, have been searched repeatedly: at different seasons, day and night, before, during, and after rains. I am now reasonably confident that the species does not occur on Walker or Clinch Mountains, not on Pond-Brushy-Glade Mountain(s) south of Marion or Lick-Sand Mountain(s) south of Wytheville despite its abundance on Iron Mountain only a few miles to the south of the two massifs just named.

Floyd County, in particular, has come in for close scrutiny. Figure 2 indicates the sites at which only *Plethodon cylindraceus* (formerly considered a white-spotted phase of *glutinosus*) has been found, although they embodied all of the obvious features I have come to associate with Virginia localities for *yonahlossee*.

Many of these sites have been sampled repeatedly, nearly all of them on rainy nights, and several on the same night that *yonahlossee* had been found nearby. It is now my belief that *yonahlossee* was actively expanding its range eastward up until two hundred years ago when Floyd

County was settled and its forest cover disrupted. The known localities for the species thus probably represent the actual eastward extent of dispersal up to that time.

Habitat

As pointed out already by Pope, *P. yonahlossee* lives among high mountains but prefers moderate elevations, and rarely occurs in the spruce-fir biome at 5000 ft. and above. Within its range the species may occupy a variety of habitats, but in my experience moist wooded slopes in an oak-hickory (originally oak-chestnut-hickory) community are preferred, at elevations in the 3000-4000 ft. range. On the lower slopes adjacent to streams the broadleaf community grades into another composed dominantly of Canada hemlock and *Rhododendron maximum* and this habitat is particularly favored by *yonahlossee*. I have enjoyed the greatest success with night collecting along roads or trails in or near rhododendron copses, when individuals are either out actively foraging or at the entrance of burrows. During the day, specimens may be obtained by the usual technique of turning flat stones, slabs of bark, and logs in oak-hickory woods.

Apparently this species is subject to extreme changes in local population structure - a given locality may not consistently support large numbers of individuals over a period of years. In my 1967 paper, I noted the discovery of a dense population of *yonahlossee* on Three-Top Mountain, Jefferson Co., North Carolina, where daylight collecting produced yields of about 35 specimens per collector/hour. In June, 1986, the same site was investigated for an hour or more by Prof. Highton and me, with completely negative results! To my eye and recollection, there was no perceptible alteration of the environment, and both ground cover and moisture appeared to be comparable with conditions prevailing at the earlier visit. So far, a follow-up return to the site has not been made, and the status of that population remains uncertain. Quite possibly, however, extreme fluctuations in population densities may occur in the Virginia segment of the species' range.

I am still unaware of confirmed syntopy of this species with *Plethodon wehrlei*, even though the two have now been found within a mile of each other at Buffalo Mountain and at the Pinnacles of Dan, and nearly that close near Lambsburg and on Mack's Mountain. By inference, the

THE RANGE OF *PLETHODON YONAHLOSSEE*

ranges of the two overlap over most of Carroll County, and a subjective comparison of collection sites yields no obvious differences in habitat selection. The situation is clearly one that invites more thorough (and quantified) investigation.

As shown on Fig. 2, the three known records for *yonahlossee* in Floyd County are confined to its southwestern margin, and within the drainage basin of Reed Island Creek (indicated by the dashed line). There is certainly no reason to suppose a functional correlation, there being no corresponding factors in forest cover, and a low watershed would scarcely impede dispersal of a woodland animal which had obviously crossed more formidable barriers to get where it now is. The fact that the species is apparently not rare at its easternmost range limits suggests active movement up until the arrival of settlers and the fragmentation of forest cover that subsequently occurred. This process is still taking place, as Floyd County is increasingly impacted by residential development and virtually none of it enjoys formal protection.

Regrettably, we can never know how far *yonahlossee* might have spread northeastward had its progress not been stalled two centuries ago by an environmentally disruptive species.

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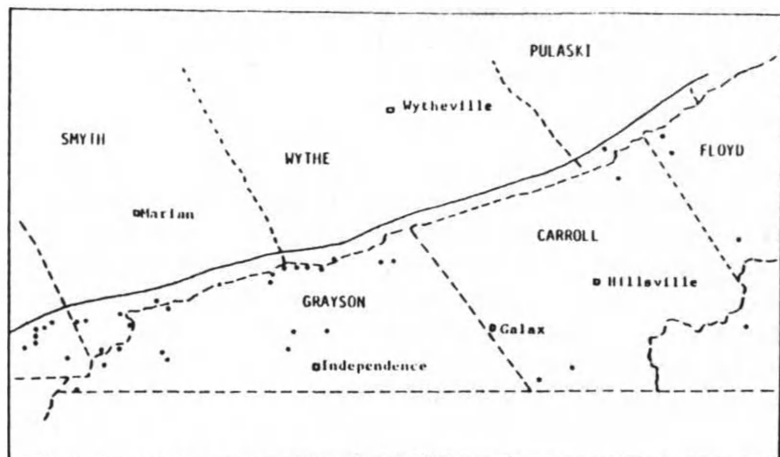


Fig. 1. Grayson, Carroll, and Floyd counties (and parts of some others adjacent) showing all known localities at which *Plethodon yonahlossee* has been discovered.

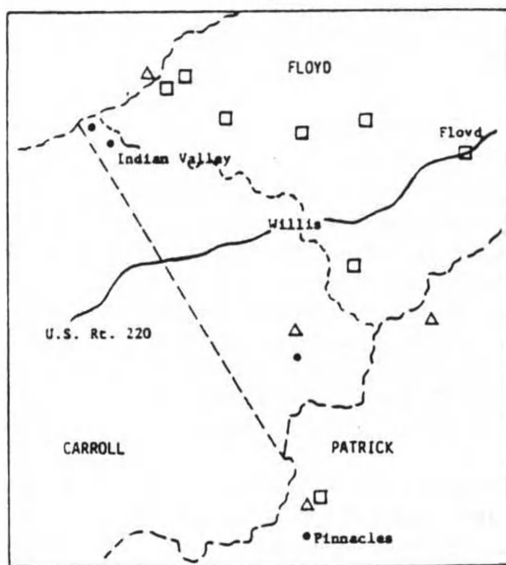


Fig. 2. Eastermost Carroll County and extreme western Floyd County, showing known localities for *Plethodon yonahlossee* (dots), *P. wehrlei* (triangles), and *P. cylindraceus* (squares). The watershed between Reed Island and Indian Creek drainages is indicated by the dashed line.

FIELD NOTES

Rana virgatipes (Carpenter Frog): VA: Caroline County, 0.5 km W Collins Crossing at the Mattaponi River. 27 August 1991. Christopher A. Pague and Kurt A. Buhlmann.

A single male Carpenter Frog was collected on the banks of the Mattaponi River. The frog was one-half immersed in a still backwater area. The substrate was silt with the water depth increasing to greater than one meter deep in three meters distance. The entire back water was ringed with *Nuphar variegatum* (Bullhead Lily). The surrounding floodplain was dominated by *Acer rubrum* (Red Maple), *Ilex opaca* (Holly), *Nyssa sylvatica* (Black Gum), *Quercus phellos* (Willow Oak), and *Carpinus caroliniana* (American Hophornbeam). No other individuals were seen, but associated anurans included *Acris crepitans*, *Rana utricularia*, *R. palustris*, and *R. clamitans*. Carpenter frogs are known from two additional sites in Caroline County, but this record is several kilometers north and west. Most significantly, the fact that this species was found within waters of the mainstem Mattaponi suggests that the population may be extensive throughout this drainage. The apparent high quality of this river below the fall line warrants protection.

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Plethodon hubrichti (Peaks of Otter salamander): VA: Rockbridge County, Blue Ridge Parkway at Thunder Ridge Overlook, 9.1 km S of Natural Bridge Station. 9 April 1991. Christopher A. Pague, Michael Hayslett, and Pete Kramer.

Two adult Peaks of Otter salamanders were observed in approximately 1.5 person hours of collecting just below and north of the parking area of the Thunder Ridge Overlook. The occurrence of this species in Rockbridge County was first reported by Gordon Thurow (1957. A new *Plethodon* for Virginia. *Herpetologica* 13:59-66). However, the identity and exact location of the associated specimen have remained unclear. The earlier specimen, Carnegie Museum No. 93317, was taken from a "ravine head" in "Jefferson Forest" near "Greenlee", a town that once occurred near the James River along the Norfolk and Western Railroad,

FIELD NOTES

C.A. Pague and D.A. Young have collected in the general area several times, finding only *Plethodon cinereus* and *P. cylindraceus*. Richard Highton (1986. *Plethodon hubrichti* Thurow. Catalogue of American Amphibians and Reptiles 292:1-2.) excluded this site and Rockbridge County from the known range of the species. The senior author attempted to find this species at Thunder Ridge in Rockbridge County on seven previous occasions in the past decade, without success and had concluded that the species was in fact restricted to Botetourt and Bedford Counties (Pague . 1991. In K. Terwilleger (Coordinator). Virginia's Endangered Species, McDonald and Woodward Publ. Co., Blacksburg, VA). The discovery of the individuals found on April 9, 1991 confirm the occurrence of this species in southernmost Rockbridge County in habitat that is typical of that for the species. It is noteworthy that *Plethodon cinereus* is not found in syntopy with *P. hubrichti* throughout most of the latter species range; yet, *P. cinereus* was abundant at the Thunder Ridge locality. One specimen was retained as voucher material and is being temporarily maintained in the C.A. Pague collection to be deposited in the Carnegie Museum of Natural History.

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Stereochilus marginatus (Many-lined Salamander): VA: Surry County, Cypress Swamp at county road 647, 2.3 km SSE of Spring Grove. 28 April 1991. Michael Hayslett, Christopher A. Pague, Paul Sattler, Kurt Buhlmann, Pete Warney, Joe Mitchell.

Several larval and adult Many-lined Salamanders were collected from Cypress Swamp by the members of the Virginia Herpetological Society who joined in on the Sunday field trips. The specimens were collected from the muck and litter in the stream flowing through the swamp.

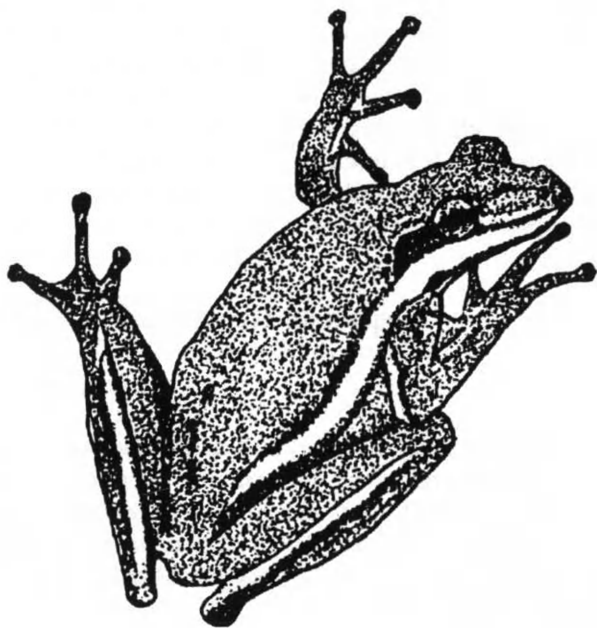
FIELD NOTES

Voucher specimens were deposited in the Liberty University Vertebrate Collection and photographs were taken by C.A. Pague, J.C. Mitchell, P.W. Sattler, and K.A. Buhlmann. This is the first record of this species from Surry County (Frank Tobey. 1985. Virginia's Amphibians and Reptiles: A Distributional Survey, Privately published, Purcellville, 114 pp.)

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Request for Herp Pictures

Good, high-quality slides of Virginia's native species of amphibians and reptiles are being requested for use in "Virginia's Amphibians and Reptiles". It is hoped that the book will enter its final phase of production this Spring or Summer. If you have any slides which you think might be usable, please contact Joe Mitchell at the University of Richmond (804-289-8234).



PRESIDENT'S CORNER

My topic for this issue of *Catesbeiana* is change, because it is my impression that many things going on as I write this column will, in one way or another, affect Virginia herpetology. These include changes in the job status of several people, changes in the regulations enforced by the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries, and proposed legislation in the Virginia General Assembly. It seems like change is in the wind, perhaps a reflection of the changing world scene. Who would have ever thought a year ago that the Soviet Union would not exist today?

It's now official. Christopher A. Pague is leaving Virginia for a new and exciting position in Colorado. He will be working for The Nature Conservancy (TNC) and starting a brand new Heritage Program. As many of you know, Chris is the Heritage Program zoologist here in Virginia. He can be considered an all-round naturalist, as he is versed in birds, herps, and numerous invertebrates. He was directly involved in establishing many of the natural areas protected by the Virginia chapter of TNC. Chris' grasp of conservation biology, especially from a practical side, and his ability to make a convincing argument has allowed him to play important roles in the conservation of some of Virginia's amphibians and reptiles. The Cow Knob salamander and the Peaks of Otter salamander are but only two examples.

A native Virginian from Portsmouth, Chris obtained his bachelor's and master's degrees in biology from Virginia Tech. In 1979 he and I became partners on the, as it has turned out, long-term project to produce a book on the amphibians and reptiles of Virginia. That project is finally approaching the last phase; preparation for publishing. Chris is one of the best field herpetologists I have known. He has contributed to Virginia herpetology in many ways, too many to enumerate here, and I, for one, will miss him.

Chris was the first life member of VHS so he will continue to receive *Catesbeiana* wherever he lives. Let us hope that he does not stay away from Virginia for too long.

Other personnel changes are in the wind. Ron Southwick, our Secretary and Treasurer, has shifted positions from Virginia Beach to Blacksburg. At this writing he spends part of his week in Virginia Beach and the rest in Blacksburg. We will inform you of the change in address once we know it. Our former Vice President, Kurt Buhlmann, works for the Division of Natural Heritage with Chris Pague. He is applying for graduate school outside of Virginia so that he can obtain his doctorate degree in ecology and conservation biology. Nothing is firm at this writing but we all expect him to be taking classes by the time I write this

column for the fall issue. The loss of two active herpetologists creates a void that may be difficult to fill. We need new people, or at least some of our longtime members, to become more active in field work. There is too much to do and too few people involved. Conservation of the state's herps requires continued site inventories, and the education of Virginia citizens requires active VHS members. If there are any other personnel changes that have taken or are about to take place, send the information to me.

In my column in Catesbeiana 11(1) I described changes in regulations that were taking place with the VA Department of Game and Inland Fisheries (DGIF). The update on those issues is that it remains illegal to have more than five individuals of any nonendangered native species without a permit, and beyond that it is illegal to possess any wild animal (that includes all herps). DGIF is seeking to change the latter situation by allowing all wild animals to be possessed so long as all federal, state, and local laws are met, and the species one has is not on the no-no list. This includes African clawed frogs and crocodilians. It means for herp people that it is usually permissible to have most anything unless your local city or county prohibits it. This assumes of course that you do not have endangered or threatened species. There are several places in Virginia that have outlawed venomous and very large snakes. (I have no specifics and would like to hear from anyone if they do.) It will probably remain illegal to sell any native species or subspecies in Virginia, no matter where it came from. We will have a final update once the DGIF Board has passed judgement on the proposed regulations this spring.

Senate Bill 160, designed to force all commercial operations selling vertebrates to adhere to strict cage and animal health requirements and to ensure that pet purchasers are able to buy healthy pets, would have had some impact on people keeping reptiles and amphibians. For instance, this bill would have outlawed the sale of nonweaned mice (pinkies). If this actually went into affect, then it might be difficult to find food for juvenile rodent-eating snakes. My sources tell me, as of mid-February, that the sections of the bill concerning care of vertebrates in pet stores and boarding kennels remain intact and may pass. However, pinkies can be sold as food. The most controversial sections, including a radical, and in my opinion inappropriate, consumer protection clause, were relegated to a study group. Those components that survive may surface again next year in another bill. My pet store owner friends tell me that they back responsible legislation that benefits the animals and the people dealing with them. They remain concerned

PRESIDENT'S CORNER

that customers who don't know how to keep living organisms alive could have their purchases unduly protected. How does one ensure that an animal will live for a year after it was bought when one cannot even be sure the he will live that long? Perhaps we need some way of limiting who can buy the more delicate species. Finally, I presume that, if the bill passes as is, we could then help to prevent the inhumane care of reptiles and amphibians we have seen in some pet stores.

Finally, we had a bit of a scare with House Bill 971 in early February. Apparently some citizens from southwestern Virginia tried to have legislation proposed that would cause the DGIF endangered species program to be limited to only those species listed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. If passed, it would have wiped out the state-level endangered species program. Fortunately, this part of the bill did not make it out of the subcommittee (of the House Committee on Conservation and Natural Resources). Some people will try anything to gut endangered species laws, thinking that their money-making operations would be jeopardized. The important point here is that we all need to be aware of any move to restrict these important laws that protect, at least in a small way, our rare species. Personally, I am very concerned that my children and my grandchildren might live in a Virginia that lacks some of the species our ancestors encountered. Virginia's natural heritage means as much to me, if not more, than her cultural heritage. Certainly, the latter developed within the context of the former.

Changes come in many forms. We have seen cultural changes never considered by our parents and grandparents. We have seen changes in our natural heritage not anticipated by them in the listing of endangered species. We will see more, perhaps dramatic, changes in the next decade in the quality of our natural environment. Let us all keep vigilant and use our individual talents to insure that our decedents will be able to study and enjoy Virginia's rich herpetofauna.

SPRING VHS BUSINESS MEETING AND AUCTION

The spring field trip meeting will be held in Hungary Mother State Park in SW Virginia on May 2-3. This is also the meeting at which we had said we would auction our backlog of regional society newsletters and other material. Because we would expect a small crowd in SW VA, the VHS executive committee deemed that the Business Meeting and the Auction will be held on April 11, 1992, at the University of Richmond (Gottwald Science Center on the west side of Westhampton Lake, Rm. E-107). See below for travel information. The Business Meeting will start at 1:00 PM, followed by a combined Auction and social. We must elect a new Vice-President and ratify the new Constitution.

TO BE AUCTIONED:

1. Virginia's Endangered Species, 1 copy of new book on all of the state's rare species. Published Dec. 1991. Donated by publisher Jerry McDonald.
2. Regional Newsletters:
The Forked Tongue, Greater Cincinnati Herp. Soc. (Vols 3-14)
Connecticut Herp. Soc. Newsletter (Vols. 1-7)
New York Herp Soc. Newsletter (12 issues)
Turtle Trust, Occasional Papers (18 issues)
St. Lewis Herp. Soc. Newsletter (Vols. 1-10)
Greater Dayton Herp. Soc., Herpwise (Vols. 1-8)
North Carolina Herp. Soc. Newsletter (39 issues)
Minnesota Herp. Soc Newsletter (Vols. 2-8)
Kansas Herp. Soc. Newsletter (22 issues)
Massachusetts Herp. Soc. Newsletter (27 issues)
Michigan Herp. Soc. Newsletter (53 issues)
Chicago Herp. Soc. Newsletter (34 issues)
Bull. Oklahoma Herp. Soc. (newsletters & bulletin, 31+ issues)
Maryland Herp. Soc. Bull. (1976-1981)
New Mexico Herp. Soc. Newsletter (Vols. 7-27)
Notes from NOAH (Vols. 4-29)
Plus other misc. smaller runs
NOTE - ITEMS NOT AUCTIONED WILL BE RECYCLED.
3. Copeia 1947-1952 (complete vols.), 1946(3), 1953(1).
4. Other items of herpetological interest. Please bring a donation.

PRESIDENT'S CORNER

DIRECTIONS TO AUCTION AT THE UNIVERSITY OF RICHMOND

Date: April 11, 1992

Place: Gottwald Science Center, Room E-107

Time: 1:00-5:00 PM

Directions: From south of the James River - travel across Huguenot Bridge (Rt. 147) to River Rd. and turn left at the first stoplight (at end of shopping center). After sharp turn, go past shopping center (again but on other side) and take next right on UR Drive. Proceed to stop sign, turn left, to next stop sign and turn right. Park in parking lot C on right about 175 yards.

From north of the James River - take I-64 to Glenside South (University of Richmond) exit (186C). After exit, stay on Glenside Rd. south. At the fourth stoplight turn left (note UR signs) onto Three Chopt Rd. Proceed through one stoplight and turn right (about 0.4 mi) on Boatwright Rd. After going through the switchback stay straight (do not take the second left [1st one is a parking lot] on Campus Drive). Because of special events you must enter through the Westhampton Gate. Pass the lake on your left and up the hill take the next left. Turn right at the fork in the road, then proceed to the stop sign, take a right on Westhampton Way and the next right on UR Drive, then a left into Parking Lot C.

Enter the Science Center from either the front side (facing the lake) or through the corner glass door near the upper loading area (take concrete steps and bear left) and proceed E-107 in first floor.

Information: Joseph C. Mitchell, Dept. of Biology, University of Richmond, Richmond, VA 23173 (804-289-8234).

The following resolutions were passed by the VHS at the Fall 1991 meeting and were read to the Board of Commissioners of the Virginia DGIF, in Roanoke by President Joe Mitchell at the public hearings last November regarding new regulations on the collection, possession, and sale of native wildlife.

Support of Virginia's Endangered and Threatened Species

- Whereas** Virginia contains a rich and varied herpetofauna that is unparalleled by any other state at the same latitudes; and,
- Whereas** populations of most species of amphibians and reptiles have declined due to loss of habitat and other factors; and,
- Whereas** these species represent integral parts of our historical and natural heritage;
- Be it Resolved** that the Virginia Herpetological Society, representing over 130 amateur and professional herpetologists around the Commonwealth, supports and endorses VR 325-01. S 13 that proposes listing the canebrake rattlesnake (*Crotalus horridus atricaudatus*) as an endangered subspecies, and the wood turtle (*Clemmys insculpta*), the eastern glass lizard (*Ophisaurus ventralis*), the barking treefrog (*Hyla gratiosa*), and the Mabee's salamander (*Ambystoma mabeei*) as threatened species.

Resolution of Support for Prohibition of the Sale of Native Species and for Importation Restrictions on Selected Exotic Species

- Whereas** the collection and sale of many of Virginia's amphibians and reptiles is an established fact; and,
- Whereas** removal of these animals from the wild for commercial profit has contributed to the decline of native populations in the Commonwealth, an example of which is the collection of some 5000 eastern box turtles (*Terrapene carolina carolina*) from central Virginia largely for export to European countries; and,
- Whereas** in our opinion Virginia's native fauna belongs to the public and should not be sold for personal profit;

RESOLUTIONS

Be it Resolved that the Virginia Herpetological Society (henceforth VHS), representing over 130 amateur and professional herpetologists around the Commonwealth, supports and endorses the definition of the term "native species," that prohibits the sale of native species in Virginia, and VR 325-01-1. S 19 that prohibits the importation, possession, sale, etc. of any wild animal, unless specifically permitted by law or regulation.

Be it Further Resolved that the VHS recommends that one species in VR 325-01-1. S 19, Part E, the African clawed frog (*Xenopus laevis*) be changed to read "*Xenopus* sp." to encompass all species of that genus. Doing so insures that other potentially injurious species of clawed frog will not go unregulated.

Resolution on Limitations on the Take and Possession of Amphibians and Reptiles for Private Use

Whereas most of Virginia's species of amphibians and reptiles have experienced population declines since colonization by Europeans and some of these animals continue to be mistreated and exploited; and,

Whereas public sensitivity to these animals and Virginia's environment in general depends on the maintenance of some individuals in captivity; and,

Whereas the Virginia Herpetological Society has pursued three courses of action during its 33 year involvement with the Commonwealth's amphibian and reptile fauna - namely Conservation, Education and Research;

Be it Resolved that the Virginia Herpetological Society (VHS) offers the following comments and recommendations to the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries pursuant to VR 325-03-5. S 1:

1. (Subsection A). The VHS supports the limit of five individuals of any species of amphibian or reptile, except those listed as endangered or threatened, for personal possession without a permit. Because the executive committee of the VHS recommends keeping the limit to three, the Society recommends that the limit of five not be increased in the future.

2. (Subsection B). The VHS is very uncomfortable with the allowed limit of 50 salamanders for personal use as fish bait. This goes along with our grave concern for the number of bullfrogs (*Rana catesbeiana*) that can legally be taken in Virginia and the complete lack of regulation on the take of snapping turtles (*Chelydra serpentina*). We maintain that the collection of large numbers of salamanders from a single tributary or seepage area may be detrimental to the population and ecological community from which they are taken. One or two fishermen collecting salamanders from the same area over the course of time could drive local populations to extinction. One species in particular used as fish bait in southwestern Virginia, the black-bellied salamander (*Desmognathus quadramaculatus*), is a predator on other salamander species. Removal of large numbers of this predator could significantly and negatively impact the structure and dynamics of the aquatic community. Thus, the VHS strongly recommends that, unless all take of salamanders for fish bait is prohibited, the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries commission a scientific study to determine the effects of the removal of large numbers of individuals from natural populations. The results of such a study would provide the kind of information needed to determine whether some realistic possession limits could be allowed.

3. (Subsection E). The VHS fully supports and endorses the prohibition on the taking of salamanders from Grayson Highlands State Park and the adjacent designated areas as proposed. However, we recommend that scientific research involving collecting be permitted provided justification is made to all appropriate agencies requiring permits (Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries, Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation, and the U.S. National Forest Service, as appropriate).

VHS CONSTITUTION

The VHS Constitution was ammended at the Fall 1991 meeting (see Minutes of the Fall 1991 VHS Meeting). The complete Constitution is printed here in its ammended form.

Articles of Incorporation:

ARTICLE I. Name

Section 1. The name of this organization is the Virginia Herpetological Society, hereafter referred to as the "Society".

ARTICLE II. Purpose

Section 1. To work to perpetuate the conservation of reptiles and amphibians through education and dissemination of scientific information through the facilities of the Society.

Section 2. To encourage conservation of wildlife in general, and of reptiles and amphibians in particular.

Section 3. To promote research in herpetology by the sharing of information among members and through cooperation with amateur and professional herpetologists.

Section 4. To educate the public and members, and to exchange information and resources with other herpetological societies by means of a bulletin and specific activities such as field trips or speakers.

ARTICLE III. By-laws

The Society shall establish by-laws concerning the organization and procedures to be followed.

ARTICLE IV. General Prohibitions

Notwithstanding any provision of this Constitution or the By-laws which might result in a contrary interpretation:

1. the Society shall be organized and operated exclusively for scientific and educational purposes;
2. no part of the net earnings of the Society shall or may under any circumstances inure to the benefit of any private shareholder or individual;
3. no substantial part of the activities of the Society shall consist of carrying on propaganda, or otherwise attempting to influence legislation;
4. the Society shall not participate in, or intervene in (including publishing or distribution of statements), any political campaign on behalf of any candidate for public office;
5. the Society shall not be organized or operated for profit;
6. the Society shall not:

- a. lend any part of its income or corpus, without the receipt of adequate security and a reasonable rate of interest;
- b. pay any compensation, in excess of a reasonable allowance for salaries or other compensation for personal services actually rendered;
- c. make any part of its services available on a preferential basis
- d. make any purchase of securities or any other property for more than adequate consideration in money or money's worth from;
- e. sell any securities or other property for less than adequate consideration in money or money's worth to; or
- f. engage in any other transactions which result in a substantial diversion of its income or corpus to; any officer, or substantial contributor to the organization.

The prohibitions contained in this subsection 6 do not mean to imply that the organization may make such loans, payments, or sales to or purchases from anyone else unless such authority be given or implied by other provisions of this Constitution or By-laws.

ARTICLE V. Amendments

Section 1. Amendments to the constitution may be proposed by a petition to the secretary signed by 25% of the membership.

Section 2. Proposed amendments must be passed by a 2/3 majority of the members in attendance at a meeting of the Society.

ARTICLE VI. Distribution on Dissolution

Upon the dissolution of the Society, the officers shall, after paying or making provision for the payment of all of the liabilities of the Society, dispose of all of the assets of the Society exclusively for the purposes of the Society in such manner, or to such organization or organizations organized and operated exclusively for charitable, education, religious, or scientific purposes as shall at the time qualify as an exempt organization or organizations under section 501 (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954 (or the corresponding provision of any future United States Internal Revenue Law), as the officers shall determine. Any such assets not so disposed of shall be disposed of by the Court of Common Pleas of the county in which the principal office of the Society is then located, exclusively for such purposes or to such organization or organizations, as said Court shall determine, which are organized and operated exclusively for such purposes.

CONSTITUTION

VIRGINIA HERPETOLOGICAL SOCIETY BY-LAWS

ARTICLE I. Members

Section 1. Membership shall be open to all persons who shall make formal application to the Secretary and pay the Treasurer the prescribed dues.

Section 2. The officers of the Society shall have the right to refuse any new member or to terminate the membership of an existing member for cause and without prior notice. However, a terminated person may appeal to the general meeting of the Society. Termination of memberships: Based upon request, lack of support for the VHS program, or evidence that the individual is engaging in activities that are contrary to the stated objectives of the VHS.

Section 3. Each paid membership is entitled to one vote.

ARTICLE II. The Officers

Section 1. The officers of the Society shall be of two kinds, elective and appointive.

a. The elected officers shall be President, President-elect, Secretary-Treasurer, and the immediate Past-president.

b. The appointed officers shall be Editor of *Catesbeiana*, Editor of the Society newsletter, and the chairpersons of the standing committees, and shall be appointed by the President in consultation with the other elected officers.

Section 2. No one individual may hold two or more elective offices concurrently.

Section 3. The terms of office for all elected officers of the Society

shall be for two years.

Section 4. The duties of the elective officers shall be as follows:
a. The president shall preside at meetings of the Society and its officers; shall be nominal head of the Society; shall rule on questions of procedure that may arise; shall appoint ad hoc committees at his/her discretion; the President or his/her designee shall be the VHS representative to the Eastern Seaboard Herpetological League voting board.

b. The President-Elect shall fulfill the duties of the President when the latter is absent. He/she shall assume the Presidency should that office become vacant during a term. He/she shall select the meeting sites for the Society. The President-Elect shall assume the Presidency for a two year term upon expiration of the current President's term.

- c. The Secretary/Treasurer shall maintain the records of the Society and its offices; shall notify the membership of pertinent business; shall be responsible for all general correspondence of the Society; shall be responsible for keeping the mailing list, accepting and processing applications for membership, and putting out all PR for soliciting members; shall keep records and accounts of the Society including all monies received and disbursed, shall collect the annual dues and maintain the membership roster; and shall be responsible for all financial reports required by the business of the Society. The Secretary/Treasurer shall make a report to the membership at each meeting.
- d. The President will appoint member(s) to fill vacated office(s) until the next scheduled election.

Section 5. All records and implements of the office shall be turned over by any officer to his successor immediately subsequent to the latter's assumption of the office.

Section 6. The duties of the Editor(s) of *Catesbeiana* shall be as follows:

The Editor(s) shall be responsible for all phases of its publication and may appoint staff members to assist him/her. *Catesbeiana* is devoted to the natural history of Virginia's Reptiles and Amphibians.

Section 7. The duties of the Editor(s) of the Newsletter shall be as follows: The Editor(s) shall be responsible for all phases of the Newsletter's publication and may appoint staff members to assist him/her. The Editor(s) is obligated to publish all communications of the Society and its officers on first priority and to include, as space permits, other items consonant with the stated objectives of the Society. The Newsletter is devoted to broader issues in herpetology and is the medium for news and announcements.

The editor(s) shall report annually to the officers to whom they are responsible.

ARTICLE III. The Executive Council of the Society

Section 1. The Executive Council of the Society shall consist of the President, President-Elect, Secretary/Treasurer, immediate Past-president, the Editor(s) of the Society's Publications, and chairpersons of the standing committees.

Section 2. The Executive Council shall be empowered to manage the affairs of the Society.

Section 3. The Executive Council shall fill any vacancy occurring among officers, except that of President, by an appointment for the unexpired term.

CONSTITUTION

Section 4. The Executive Council shall be specifically responsible for any publications of the Society and shall set policy as is needed to coordinate the contents of the various media so as to further the stated objectives of the Society and to insure the availability and distribution of the several items.

ARTICLE IV. Elections of Officers

Section 1. The President shall appoint members of the Society to serve as a nominating committee.

Section 2. The Nominating Committee shall present a slate of at least one candidate for each office to be filled. The slate must be presented at the fall meeting, at which time nominations may be made by the membership.

Section 3. The Nominating Committee or a member of the Society, proposing a nominee, shall obtain the consent of the candidate to serve if elected.

Section 4. Voting shall take place at the fall meeting. The Secretary/Treasurer shall count the votes and the results of the election shall be communicated to the membership via the Newsletter.

Section 5. The Secretary/Treasurer shall inform the elected candidates of their election. Newly elected persons will take office immediately following the election.

ARTICLE V. Meetings

Section 1. The Society shall hold a meeting at a time and place set by the Executive Council of the Society.

Section 2. The membership shall be informed in writing of the time and place of the meetings not later than one month prior to the opening of the meeting.

Section 3. Special meetings may be called by vote of a majority of the Executive Council, or on a petition of a quorum of the membership. The time and place of such special meetings must be announced to the membership in writing at least two weeks prior to the meeting.

Section 4. 50% of the paid membership will constitute a quorum to petition for a special meeting.

Section 5. All meetings shall be conducted under Robert's Rules of Order.

ARTICLE VI. Dues

Section 1. The Executive Council shall be authorized to establish such dues as are compatible with the financial status of the Society.

Section 2. A member in arrears for payment of dues for a period of 6 months after conclusion of the current membership year shall be dropped from the role after due notice from the Secretary.

ARTICLE VII. Fiscal Year

Section 1. The fiscal year of the Society shall embrace the period of 1 January through 31 December of the same year.

ARTICLE VIII. Amendment of the By-laws

Section 1. Amendments may be proposed by the Executive Council or by petition to the Secretary by 25% of the members of the Society.

Section 2. Proposed amendments by petition must be submitted in writing to the Secretary/Treasurer at least three months before the general meetings at which time they are to be discussed.

Section 3. Such amendments shall be submitted in writing by the Secretary/Treasurer to the general membership at least one month prior to the meeting at which they are to be discussed.

Section 4. To be approved, an amendment must receive a positive vote by two-thirds of those voting at the general meeting.

Section 5. Any adopted amendment shall become an integral part of the by-laws and published in the next scheduled issue of the Newsletter.

ARTICLE IX. VHS Seal

The official seal of the Virginia Herpetological Society (VHS), shall be a perfect circle representing the total membership and it shall enclose the outline or silhouette of the Commonwealth of Virginia; the circle shall touch upon the eastern shore, the Great Dismal Swamp, and the extreme southwestern tip of the state in the vicinity of Cumberland Gap National Historical Park; above the state outline in the space made by the greater arc, is a silhouette of a black rat snake (*Elaphe o. obsoleta*) to represent the reptilians native to Virginia; in the lower arc beneath the state outline is a likeness of the spotted salamander (*Ambystoma maculatum*) to represent all indigenous amphibians. Both of these species are believed to be statewide reflecting the geographic limits of the society. The seal dates from the founding of the society in March of 1958, and is affixed hereto:

MINUTES OF THE FALL 1991 VHS MEETING

Liberty University hosted and provided an excellent facility for the Fall meeting held on October 5, 1991. An excellent "herp" workshop was put together by the Blue Ridge Herpetological Society, which attracted several inquisitive herp enthusiasts both young and not so young. Members of the B.R.H.S. provided many examples of both native and exotic amphibians and reptiles so that all in attendance got a good look at and "feel" of the herps.

Business Meeting:

The business meeting was opened by President Joe Mitchell at 10:55 am, and was attended by 16 members. The minutes of the Spring meeting were accepted as written. Ron Southwick presented the Treasurer's Report.

Editors' Report:

Paul Sattler reported 180 copies of *Catesbeiana* No.2 were printed with 133 mailed out at a total cost of \$285.00. Paul thanked those members who contributed material for the bulletin. Joe Mitchell commented on the "old" application forms in the latest issue and suggested we send all members news of the dues increases with the renewal notices.

Doug Eggleston reported that 200 copies of the latest newsletter were printed and 150 mailed at a cost of \$79.29. There was some discussion of newsletter printing and costs. It was decided to continue with the current printer. Doug reminded members that the deadline for submissions to the newsletter are three weeks prior to printing. Newsletters are printed the first week of November, February, May and August. Suggestions for the newsletter included more educational material, newspaper articles of interest to the membership, and "herp" literature updates.

Old Business:

Joe initiated a discussion of VHS involvement in the Eastern Seaboard Herpetological League. The consensus of those present was to continue our low level of involvement.

Ron Southwick gave a progress report on the VHS poster. The Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries has expressed interest in a

joint venture. It was decided to put together a "Virginia Venomous Snake" poster. Joe appointed a committee (Mitchell, Eggleston, Buhlmann, Bruenderman and Southwick) to get things rolling.

The question came up on what to do with the large collection of past newsletters the VHS receives from other herp organizations. A motion was made by Richard Hoffman (seconded by Terry Spohn) to auction the newsletters at the Spring 1992 meeting. The motion was passed, and ads will be forthcoming in both the newsletter and *Catesbeiana* with more details.

Election of Officers:

Joe opened the floor for nominations for President-elect and Secretary/Treasurer. Because of the change in officers to President, President-elect and Secretary/Treasurers, and the lack of nominations for President-elect it was decided to solicit nominations for the Spring Meeting. Current officers will continue to serve until the Spring of 1992. The total membership will be queried by mail to generate nominations for officers at the Spring business meeting.

Spring Meeting:

Kurt asked for ideas for a Spring meeting site. He proposed setting a meeting date for late April to increase chances of better weather for herp collecting.

Break for lunch.

Paul Sattler presented changes in the VHS Constitution and Bylaws proposed by the Executive Committee. The changes were primarily with the makeup of the Executive Committee and terms in office for the officers (as discussed at the Spring 91 meeting). Terry Spohn made a motion to approve the changes (seconded by Richard Hoffman). The motion carried and the revised Constitution and Bylaws will be published in the next issue of *Catesbeiana*.

New Business:

Special publications by the VHS. Joe proposed a couple of possibilities which included a compilation of papers by VHS members, and publishing

MINUTES OF THE FALL 1991 VHS MEETING

some of Roger Rageot's unpublished manuscripts and art work. Roger is a true naturalist and long time member of VHS. Joe suggested this would be a good way of publicizing and making a little money for VHS.

Joe proposed that the VHS write a resolution in support of the Department of Game and Inland Fisheries non-game and endangered species regulations. The regulations were read and discussed, and the members unanimously adopted 3 resolutions supporting the regulations. The resolution to support the regulation changes on take and possession will also include concerns of the VHS on the liberal take of salamanders, bullfrogs and snapping turtles, and to encourage the VDGIF to continue to monitor these species to ensure that over-harvest does not occur.

Joe thanked the Blue Ridge Herpetological Society for putting together the morning workshop.

There was no further business and the meeting was adjourned at 2:15 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Ron Southwick, Secretary and Treasurer

VIRGINIA HERPETOLOGICAL SOCIETY
TREASURER'S REPORT
Fall 1991 Meeting

The balance in the treasury reported at the Spring Meeting was \$2426.91 which included 1025.00 (CD) and 1401.91 (checking).

Expenditures since that time included:

4/27/91 ck. #120	Charge for Spring meeting site	60.00
5/16/91 ck. #121	Newsletter - Vol. 1 #4	125.37
8/12/91 ck. #122	Newsletter - Vol. 2 #1	86.84
ck. #123	<i>Catesbeiana</i> and printing charge	285.95
	Check charge	.60
Total Expenditures		<u>\$558.76</u>
Receipts from dues		\$123.50
Interest		29.82
Total Receipts		<u>\$153.32</u>
Balance in checking as of 10/04/91		<u>\$996.47</u>
Total money in treasury as of 10/04/91		<u>\$2021.47</u>

The Society has a current membership of 138 members.

Respectfully submitted,

Ron Southwick
Secretary and Treasurer

**ANNOUNCEMENT
SPRING 1992 MEETING OF THE
VIRGINIA HERPETOLOGICAL SOCIETY**

The annual spring meeting of the Virginia Herpetological Society will be held on 2-3 May 1992. The meeting place will be Hungry Mother State Park, just north of Marion in Smyth County. We have reserved 3 cabins with kitchens for Saturday night and will also have use of the conference cabin for the weekend. Each cabin holds 6 people and costs \$80.00/night (\$13.50/per person). Additional reasonably priced motels are available in Marion.

This spring meeting will be a field foray for herps. The environments of Mt. Rogers and Whitetop with their salamander diversity lie to the south. The rivers of the Tennessee drainage with their fauna of map turtles, softshell turtles, and hellbenders are also nearby. Any sandstone cliff could produce a green salamander.

Let Kurt Buhlmann know if you plan to attend and when you could arrive. (804) 786-7951 (W), (804) 360-4688 (H). Knowing when people are arriving will determine the planning and timing of field excursions. Those coming from the eastern portion of the state may want to consider heading out west on Friday evening. Marion is located off I-81 roughly 2 hours west of Roanoke. Signs for Hungry Mother State Park are on I-81.

We recommend that participants bring any field gear they may think they will need, including: waders, hiking boots, dip nets, binoculars, buckets, cameras, flashlights, cool weather clothes and warm weather clothes. Plan on making your own lunch arrangements on Sat. and Sun., we'll plan Sat. supper and Sun. breakfast at the cabins together.

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

I wish to initiate renew membership in the Virginia Herpetological Society for the year 19____.

I wish only to receive a membership list. Enclosed is \$1.00 to cover the cost.

Name _____

Address _____

_____ Phone _____

Dues Category: Regular Family Under 18 Life
(\$10.00) (\$12.50) (\$6.00) (\$150)

Interests: Reptiles Amphibians Captive Husbandry
 Distribution Research
 Specifically _____

Make checks payable to the Virginia Herpetological Society and send to the treasurer: Ronald Southwick, 5608 Parkland Ct., Virginia Beach, VA 23464.



Field Notes

This section provides a means of publishing natural history information on Virginia's amphibians and reptiles that does not lend itself to full-length articles. Observations on geographic distribution, ecology, reproduction, phenology, behavior, and other areas are welcomed. Reports can be on single species or fauna from selected areas, such as a state park or county. The format of the reports is 'species' scientific name (common name): State abbreviation: County, locality. Date. Observer(s) or collector(s). Report or observations given one line below the data mentioned above. Author(s) name and address are given one line below the report or observation. Consult published notes or the editor if your information does not readily fit this format.

If the note contains information on geographic distribution, a voucher specimen or color slide should be sent for verification and deposited in a permanent museum or sent to the Virginia Herpetological Society. Species identification for observational records should be verified by a second person.

The correct citation format: Tobey, F.J. 1989. Field notes: *Coluber constrictor constrictor*. *Catesbeiana* 9(2):35.

Herpetological Artwork

Herpetological artwork is welcomed. If the artwork has been published elsewhere, we will need to obtain copyright before we can use it in an issue. We need drawings and encourage members to send us anything appropriate, especially their own work.