



Virginia Herpetological Society Newsletter

Volume 22, Number 1

February 2012

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Celebrate, Year of the Lizard!



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Join Us at VHS Surveys!

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*This month's
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Eastern Fence lizard



**What is the
function of an
occipital
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Herp Trivia
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Alert!

**Don't miss VA Living
Museum's "Reptiles!
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event in February!**

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WEBSITE UPDATE! IDENTIFY RATSNAKES 101. PAGE 5!

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Home Page: <http://www.virginiaherpetologicalsociety.com>
 Online Store: <http://www.cafepress.com/vaherpsociety>
 Facebook Page: <http://www.facebook.com/pages/Virginia-Herpetological-Society/>

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Coming Events

EVENT	LOCATION	DATES
VA Living Museum Reptile Wknd	Newport News, VA	Feb 18-20
VHS 1-Day Survey	Fairfax, VA	May 3
VHS Annual Spring Survey & Mtg	Warren County, VA	May 18-20
VHS Annual HerpBlitz	Caroline County, VA	June 23-24
VHS 1-Day Survey	King George County, VA	Aug 18
2013 Calendar Photo Submissions	Merchandise@vaherpsociety.com	Sept 1

VHS BUSINESS

Newly Elected VHS Officers (1)
 VHS 1-Day Survey - Dyke Marsh (2)
 VHS Spring Survey - Shenandoah River (3)
 VHS Annual HerpBlitz – Mattaponi (4)

5) VHS 1-Day Survey - Caledon
 6) VA TerpSearch 2011 Recap
 7) VHS Website Updates
 8) REMINDERS & UPDATES!

1) Newly Elected VHS Officers:

During the VHS Annual Fall Meeting, we voted on several elected officers' positions. Congratulations go to:

Larry Mendoza, our new VHS President;
 Dave Perry, our new VHS Vice President;
 Kory Steele, our new VHS Immediate Past-President; &
 Emily Steele, our continuing VHS Secretary/Treasurer!

Larry was VHS Vice President during the last term and graciously stepped up to run for VHS President for this term.

Dave is the new face in the crowd of officers. Dave has been a very active member in recent years, assisting with Snake Force One and all our surveys. He is sure to be a fine new addition to our officer list.

Kory, of course, was VHS President during the last term. He will be a valuable resource for Larry to tap into in the coming two years.

Emily has been doing such a wonderful job as VHS Secretary/Treasurer that everyone agreed that she should remain in that position. Luckily for VHS, Emily accepted to run again.

Congratulations and a sincere thank you to all of our newly elected VHS officers!



2) VHS 1-Day Survey at Dyke Marsh

Thursday, May, 3

The VHS will hold a special 1-day survey at Dyke Marsh Wildlife Preserve, in Fairfax County, beginning at 10 am. This site is part of the George Washington Memorial Parkway, property of the National Park Service. Dyke Marsh provides habitat for a diverse array of flora and fauna. The trail, known as the "Haul Road," leads visitors into the marsh and is a favorite of birdwatchers, hikers, photographers, and nature lovers. This will be a small survey (up to 20 participant limit), so contact the leader of this survey (below). Also, please keep checking the VHS website, [events section](#), for further details about the event as we get closer to the date.

Location: Located along the west bank of the Potomac River, approximately 95 miles from the Chesapeake Bay, Dyke Marsh Wildlife Preserve consists of approximately 485 acres of tidal marsh, floodplain, and swamp forest.





Host-related websites: <http://www.nps.gov/gwmp/dyke-marsh.htm>
<http://www.fodm.org/>

Contact/Survey Leader: Caroline Seitz (office: 703-560-0257; cell: 703-909-0289); reptilesalive@gmail.com

3) VHS Annual Spring Survey & Meeting

Friday-Sunday, May 18-20

The VHS will hold its Annual Spring Survey & Meeting at Shenandoah River State Park, in the beautiful Shenandoah Valley. The park is 1,604 acres with 5.6 miles of river frontage along the South Fork Shenandoah River. The land is rolling and mountainous with steep slopes and mostly forest habitat. The park also includes scenic vistas overlooking Massanutten Mountain to the west and Shenandoah National Park to the east. Please keep checking the VHS website, [events section](#), for further details about the event as we get closer to the date.

Location: Shenandoah River State Park is in Warren County, 8 miles south of Front Royal and 15 miles north of Luray. It's off Rt. 340 in Bentonville.

Lodging: The park has cabins and campgrounds:
http://www.dcr.virginia.gov/state_parks/and.shtml#overnightfacilities

Or, there are hotels in the nearby town of Front Royal:

- Quality Inn Skyline Drive, 540-635-3161
- Super 8 Front Royal, 540-636-4888
- Skyline Motel, 540-635-5345
- Scottish Inn, 540-636-6168
- Pioneer Motel, 540-635-4784
- Or go to the following link listing these and other lodging options:

http://www.tripadvisor.com/Hotels-g57755-Front_Royal_Virginia-Hotels.html



Host Website and Phone: http://www.dcr.virginia.gov/state_parks/and.shtml (540) 828-8000

Contact/Survey Leader: Larry Mendoza at president@vaherpsociety.com

4) VHS Annual HerpBlitz

Saturday-Sunday, June 23-24

The VHS will hold its Annual HerpBlitz (survey) at the new Mattaponi Wildlife Management Area (WMA) owned by VDGIF, in Caroline County along the beautiful Mattaponi River. This property is 2,542 acres and includes mature upland hardwood and mixed forest, managed loblolly pine stands, wetlands, and rivers. The WMA contains and borders 5 miles of the scenic Mattaponi River and another 1.5 miles of the South River, which include opportunities for canoeing or kayaking. There are also clearcuts, thinned pine stands, and log decks. Old oxbow lakes from the old channels of the Mattaponi River provide excellent aquatic habitat. Wetland habitats are abundant, too. Please keep checking the VHS website, [events section](#), for further details about the event as we get closer to the date.

Location: Mattaponi WMA is in Caroline County, on Paige Road, State Route 605. It is near the town of Bowling Green. From Bowling Green, head north on State Route 2 for 0.3 miles. Turn left on Paige Road which is State Route 605 for 1.5 miles. The property begins at the railroad tracks on the right and the Mattaponi River on the left.

Host website: <http://www.dgif.virginia.gov/wmas/detail.asp?pid=41>

Camping/Lodging: Only primitive camping is allowed on the WMA. There are 2 nearby private campgrounds: [Hidden Acres](#) is closest, and [R&D Family Campground](#) is a bit more southeast. R&D seems cheaper than Hidden Acres:





Or, check out links listing hotels and other lodging in the [Bowling Green](#) and [Fredericksburg](#) areas:

Contact/Survey Leader: Jason Gibson at frogman31@gmail.com

5) VHS 1-Day Survey at Caledon Natural Area State Park **Saturday, August 18**

The VHS will hold a special 1-day survey at Caledon Natural Area State Park, in King George County. Caledon is a national natural landmark, containing many stands of old growth trees. The park includes almost 2600 acres of mixed habitat: hardwood/coniferous forests, hillsides, grasslands, pristine wetlands, and 3.5 miles of Potomac River frontage. Caledon is also a large nesting location for bald eagles, and the young will have fledged by August. We will have access to all areas within the park, including several areas of restricted public access. Please keep checking the VHS website, [events section](#), for further details about the event as we get closer to the date.

Location: Caledon is in King George County along the Potomac River.

When: Start 8:30 a.m., survey as long as possible, perhaps until 2 p.m.

Host website: http://www.dcr.virginia.gov/state_parks/cal.shtml

Camping/Lodging: There is no camping at the site but the Park Manager will permit tenting in a lawn area with porta potties and running water (no electricity or showers available) or near the Potomac river (porta potties only). The nearest state park campground is [Westmoreland](#), which is about 20-25 miles to the east of Caledon. Caledon is about 20 miles to west of historic Fredericksburg, which has many good restaurants and hotels.

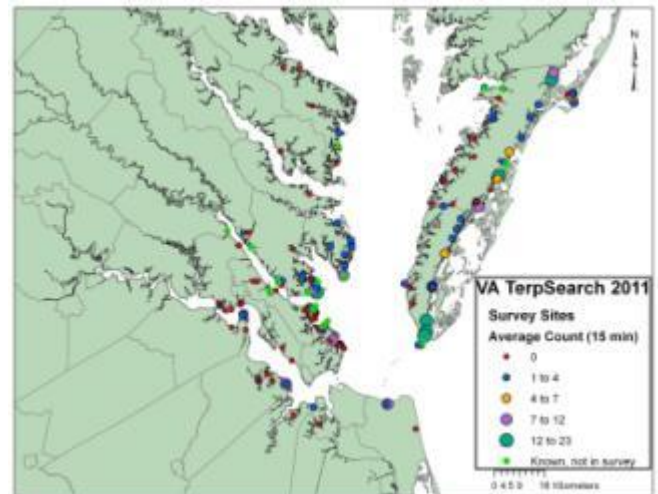
http://www.tripadvisor.com/Hotels-g60824-Fredericksburg_Virginia-Hotels.html



Contact/Survey Leader: Dave Perry at vicepresident@vaherpsociety.com

6) VA TerpSearch 2011 Recap (by Diane Tulipani)

The 2011 survey of diamondback terrapins (*Malaclemys terrapin*) around coastal Virginia, VA TerpSearch 2011, was a very successful first effort. The survey occurred every weekend from June through mid-July at locations around the Chesapeake Bay and ocean-side coastline. Survey sites were selected based on habitat suitability for terrapins (e.g., salt marshes or sandy beaches) with the water's salinity greater than 10 parts per thousand. By its end, over 80 volunteers from the Virginia Herpetological Society, Master Naturalist chapters, the Virginia Zoo, state agencies, and the general public helped to survey 135 sites in 18 counties (see map). Accomack County on the eastern shore had the best coverage with 33 separate locations surveyed. Northampton County (17 sites), also on the eastern shore, had the highest average 15-minute count per site of 6 terrapins and Gloucester County (11 sites) had the second highest with an average 15-count per site of 4 terrapins. The Northampton County average appeared to be influenced by the large population in the vicinity of the Eastern Shore of Virginia National Wildlife Refuge at the southern tip of the peninsula. The Gloucester County average was strongly influenced by an apparently healthy population around the Guinea Marshes area at the mouth of the York River. The distribution pattern that has emerged from this survey of the diamondback terrapin in Virginia indicated that the largest populations were observed in protected areas with healthy marsh systems and in other salt marsh areas with little shoreline development.





As you can see on the map, there are some large areas not reached during this survey. Some areas around the Chesapeake Bay were not well-covered due to lack of public access to the shoreline. I found that much of the western shore of the Bay is either privately owned or not directly accessible via land (e.g., few public boat ramps and parks, or no roads). I encountered this situation as well over a large portion of the bay-side creeks and inlets of Northampton County. Many areas, too, were not included due to unsuitable habitat where I would not expect to see terrapins (e.g., Norfolk and Newport News shipyards).

One thing I would definitely improve on (was I to do this again) would be to schedule some 'field observation' training sessions prior to the survey for volunteers to practice spotting terrapins in the water. Since I've been studying and catching terrapins for over 3 years, I forget how difficult it can be to find the first one's head sticking up above the water. Once you see it, though, it's always easier to find the next one...unless it is a floating pine cone! Despite this, I believe people did very well. Another condition that I was not able to allow for with the timing of the survey was tidal cycle. It is more likely that terrapins would have been closer to shore during high tide, therefore easier to spot and increasing counts.

Nevertheless, it was a *tremendous* effort by all and I am *deeply* grateful for the enthusiasm and eagerness of everyone who showed up early on the Saturdays and Sundays in June and July to look for terrapins. Some of you drove over an hour to get to the staging locations and then drove to your assigned locations and back. It most definitely would not have happened without you! I want to especially acknowledge your society's president, Kory Steele, for all his interest and guidance from the beginning of my crazy idea. Thank you, Kory!

As for a VA TerpSearch 2012, the plan is to go every other week, starting late May, to various locations that were not well covered last summer spending most of the day out looking for turtles. Some may be overnight trips for 2 consecutive days of looking. Please keep checking the [VHS website](#) for updates on this series of events!

7) VHS Website Updates

- a) Check out the updates to our webpage all about the eastern ratsnake (*Pantherophis alleghaniensis*)! Because we receive so many emails regarding the eastern ratsnake, this species' page was updated in hopes of increasing the general public's ability to correctly identify it:

http://www.virginiaherpetologicalsociety.com/reptiles/snakes/eastern-ratsnake/blackrat_snake.htm



- b) The website also has the latest information on timber rattlesnakes in its snake section. Check out the Fall Update and 2011 Timber Rattlesnake Summary

<http://www.virginiaherpetologicalsociety.com/reptiles/snakes/timber-rattlesnake/2011timberrattlesnake.htm>





8) REMINDERS & UPDATES!

a. VHS Members Get Discounts at Zoos!

VHS is pleased to offer, as a membership benefit, discounts to select zoos and aquariums in Virginia! We hope that having an admission or membership discount will give you incentive to visit these facilities and give them your business. Although \$1 or \$2 off of the price of admission does not sound like a lot, most zoos, aquariums, and museums are expensive to maintain, and it represents a generous offer by the participating facilities. In order to facilitate these discounts, a VHS member must have proof of a current membership. We e-mail membership cards in PDF format, which will only need to be printed, copied and folded. Please have these cards handy when visiting:

Admission Discounts

Virginia Zoo	Norfolk, VA	\$2 discount	virginiazoo.org
Virginia Living Museum	Newport News, VA	\$1 discount	thevlm.org
Leesburg Animal Park	Leesburg, VA	\$2 discount	leesburganimalpark.com
Mill Mountain Zoo	Roanoke, VA	\$1 discount	mmzoo.org
Luray Zoo	Luray, VA	Half off regular admission	lurayzoo.com

Membership Discounts

Virginia Aquarium	Virginia Beach, VA	25% discount off membership levels of Crab, Otter, or Hedgehog	virginiaaquarium.com
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Booking Discounts

Reptiles Alive! LLC	Northern Virginia	\$20 discount off any live animal show	reptilesalive.com
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Now go to the Zoo Updates section (Pages 11-13) to find out the latest news on some of these facilities!

b. Help Support the VHS!

Your support is a beautiful thing!! With simple clicks on the internet you can help support the VHS and our mission to conserve, research, and educate the public on our native herps.

Not interested in a fundraiser, but still want to support the VHS? Donations are always accepted, in any monetary amount. 100% of your donation goes towards our cause and is tax deductible due to our 501(c)(3) tax-exempt status. Donate online via PayPal or send your donation to our Treasurer.

Fundraisers that support our cause:

Bloomin' Bucks with Brent and Becky's Bulbs

It's simple...go to www.bloominbucks.com (with no 'g') and from a pull down menu of all of the organizations registered, select to support VHS! With one click, you are then sent to the Brent and Becky's Bulbs website where you can order whatever you want, in whatever quantity and color you want...books, bulbs, garden tools, plant supplements, gift certificates...ANYTHING...and a percentage of the order goes to support our cause!

GoodSearch and GoodShop

GoodSearch.com is a new Yahoo-powered search engine that donates half its advertising revenue, about a penny per search, to the charities its users designate. Use it just as you would any search engine, get quality search results from Yahoo, and watch the donations add up!

GoodShop.com is a new online shopping mall which donates up to 30 percent of each purchase to your favorite cause! Hundreds of great stores including Amazon, Target, Gap, Best Buy, eBay, Macy's and Barnes & Noble have teamed up with GoodShop and every time you place an order, you'll be supporting your favorite cause.



And if you download the GoodSearch – Virginia Herpetological Society (NEWPORT NEWS VA) toolbar, our cause will earn money every time you shop and search online - even if you forget to go to GoodShop or GoodSearch first! Add the Virginia Herpetological Society (NEWPORT NEWS VA) toolbar at <http://www.goodsearch.com/toolbar/virginia-herpetological-society>

(New this year) GoodDining-You dine. They give.

The GoodDining Program allows members to discreetly earn donations for the VHS at thousands of participating restaurants, bars and clubs coast to coast. When you pay your bill for a qualified dine at a participating restaurant, bar or club using a credit/debit card you've registered with GoodDining, they track your total transaction amount and award donations based on your current Membership Level, which are automatically deposited into your GoodDining account. Sign up here, and don't forget to select the Virginia Herpetological Society as your charity of choice:

<https://www.goodsearch.com/gooddining-rn>

Cafe Press - The VHS Store

In this store you will find an assortment of high quality merchandise intended to celebrate the diversity of amphibians and reptiles native to Virginia. Eventually, we will branch out into other non-herp and non-Virginian related wildlife. If you are visiting this site from out of state, our products are not exclusive to Virginians. Many of the species we feature can be found throughout a large part of the country.

All proceeds from the sale of merchandise on this site go towards funding the VHS's mission.

c. NEED Photo Submissions for the VHS 2013 Calendar!!!

The VHS Store manager, Pattie Crane, needs high resolution pictures in good quality. Images should have the subject in focus and with very little background distraction. Images received by September 1st will be considered for the 2013 calendar, but any late submissions will be saved for consideration in the 2014 calendar. Please send your submissions to Merchandise@vahersociety.com

EVENTS

	Northern Va Reptile Expo	Richmond Reptile Expo
Dates	2/18, 5/12/2012	3/11, 7/29/2012
Location	Prince William County Fairgrounds Manassas, Virginia 20108	The Holiday Inn Select 1021 Koger Center Blvd. Richmond, VA 23235
Admission	\$7 / \$3 child	\$8 / \$3 child
Time	9 am to 3 pm	10 am to 3 pm
Contact	http://www.mdreptilefarm.com/shows/va/nva.asp	http://www.mdreptilefarm.com/shows/va/richmond.asp

HERP TRIVIA

Most of the questions and answers in this edition of "Herp Trivia" are pulled from material that has been posted on the VHS Facebook Page in recent months. Check out the vast information that is being posted on our Facebook Page!

1. Can you name the native frog species that becomes increasingly resistant to copperhead venom as it develops, and then as it reaches adulthood, there is a sharp decrease in venom resistance?



2. Can you identify this snake?



3. Which two Virginia native salamanders loosely resemble the Greek mythological characters they are named after?

4. What is the technical name for the defensive mechanism this fence lizard has had to use?

Bonus: What anatomical adaptations do these lizards have to make it possible? (This photo was taken during the 2009 HerpBlitz survey at Breaks Interstate Park.)



5. Name some of the Virginia native frogs that are capable of freeze tolerance (tolerant of being frozen).

Bonus: What is the name of the chemical that is released by the livers of these frogs that provides the freeze tolerance?

6. Most turtles exhibit Temperature-Dependent Sex Determination, with few exceptions. Which two Virginia native turtles do not use TSD, but use chromosomes instead?

7. What common salamander is notably absent from the Middle Peninsula (Gloucester/Mathews) area of Virginia?

8. Since the Bureau of Vital Statistics has been keeping records (since 1853), how many people in Virginia have died as a direct result of a copperhead bite? How many have died from a cottonmouth bite?



9. Which native Virginia marsupial has an innate immunity to copperhead venom?

10. What is the most energetically expensive activity regularly undertaken by an ectothermic vertebrate?



(Hint: think Virginia native amphibian; and Ectothermic = a more correct term for “cold-blooded”)

11. Which class of animals has one occipital condyle and which has two? Can you describe its function?

12. Can you identify this salamander?



Answers can be found on pages 19-20.

NOTICE: Submissions for *Catesbeiana* Vol. 32 No. 1 are due March 1, 2012!

Please support the VHS by submitting any papers, field notes, or artwork for *Catesbeiana* to: Dr. Paul Sattler, Editor, *Catesbeiana*, pwsattler@liberty.edu.

NEWS

In Memoriam: Joseph T. Collins (1 | 2) “Reminder: New VDGIF Fee

1) In Memoriam: Joseph T. Collins: Legendary Kansas Herpetologist Joe Collins Dies

By Stan Finger, The Wichita Eagle

As far as Joe Collins was concerned, snakes have had a bad rap ever since the Garden of Eden.

Mr. Collins’ passion for herpetology inspired generations of students and outdoors enthusiasts.

“For 60 years, I have been obsessed with herpetology,” Mr. Collins said in a video shot by Dan Krull. “I make no apologies for it ... the thrill of discovery just can’t be beat.”

Mr. Collins, who founded the Center for North American Herpetology and was a former instructor at the University of Kansas, died Saturday of a heart attack in Florida. He was 72. Mr. Collins and his wife, Suzanne, were on their annual five-week trip to document wildlife – such as snakes, turtles and alligators – when he was stricken. “He was a great mentor to students of all ages, from the very smallest student who might come to him with a tiny little snake to Ph.D. students working on their dissertation,” Suzanne Collins said.

As news of his death spread, many of those who considered Mr. Collins a mentor offered tributes to him on Facebook. “I remember all these excited kids (including me) running up to Joe with pillow cases full of snakes and lizards, and Joe being equally excited to educate them about what they found,” Mike Zerwekh of San Diego wrote in a forum dedicated to Mr. Collins. “Since then, I’ve made a lot of friends and





had some great adventures finding the animals I love. If it wasn't for Joe, I'm not sure any of that would have happened. He was a true inspiration..."

Snakes have a reputation for being evil, which Mr. Collins blamed on the biblical story. But he loved telling audiences how beneficial snakes are to the environment, Suzanne Collins said. They eat enormous numbers of insects and disease-carrying, crop-eating rodents. "He considered reptiles and amphibians to be his animals," she said. "He was so passionate and dedicated his life to it." Travis W. Taggart, curator of herpetology at the Sternberg Museum of Natural History at Fort Hays State University, said Mr. Collins' enthusiasm was infectious. "He really had an eye for people who were wide-eyed about herpetology," Taggart said. "He was really good at nurturing it and feeding those interests." Most people have hobbies, Taggart said, but Mr. Collins didn't. He was focused at all times on herpetology. "He woke up thinking about it, and he went to bed thinking about it," Taggart said.

While Mr. Collins often said he disliked writing, he wrote numerous books. By his own count, he wrote more books about Kansas wildlife than anyone in the history of the state. That's because he knew books were a vital way to convey information, said Bob Gress, director of the Great Plains Nature Center in Wichita. Perhaps Mr. Collins' proudest writing accomplishment was serving as co-author for a Peterson Field Guide: "Reptiles and Amphibians of Eastern and Central North America." Snake enthusiasts consider it the bible of herpetology. "He was one of those special people that could bridge the academia world with the hobbyist," Gress said. "He brought interest to the masses."

Taggart said he would talk to Mr. Collins frequently – about every other day – about one thing or another. "I'll miss those conversations," he said. "You tend to take it for granted. There was a whole lot of wisdom there to tap into. "It's a little scary going forward not having that insight and that push." Taggart said his herpetology decisions will be guided by a simple question going forward: What would Joe have done if he were still here?

Mr. Collins' legacy will continue to blossom in the years ahead, he said. "He's touched so many people, it can't help but go on," Taggart said. "He had so many great ideas and got so many things started."

A memorial service will be held in Lawrence, Suzanne Collins said, but details haven't been finalized.

Reach Stan Finger at 316-268-6437 or sfinger@wichitaeagle.com.

2) Reminder: New VDGIF Fee: User Fee effective January 1, 2012

At their May 3, 2011 meeting, The Board of Game and Inland Fisheries created a facility use permit for Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries (VDGIF) Wildlife Management Areas (WMA's) and VDGIF-owned fishing lakes that went into effect January 1, 2012. So, if you like to use WMA's for herping, birding, hiking, primitive camping, biking, canoeing or kayaking, but do not hunt, fish, or operate motorized boats, you may need to purchase a permit, either daily or annual, to use these facilities. Anyone over 16 years old who does not have an annual hunting, fishing, or trapping license or a boat registration will need this new use permit to access WMA's and DGIF-owned fishing lakes. Users will have the choice of paying \$4 for a daily pass or \$23 for an annual pass to all VDGIF facilities (\$23 is the same price for a basic annual hunting or fishing license). This will allow VDGIF to get new funds from non-traditional constituents to help go towards nongame wildlife-related, including herp-related, conservation and management.

For a list of fishing and hunting licenses and the fees to purchase them, including the cost for non-residents, visit <http://www.dgif.virginia.gov/licenses/fees/>.

Also, here is the press release discussing the new user fee:

<http://www.dgif.virginia.gov/news/release.asp?id=317>

And a webpage all about the user fee:

<http://www.dgif.virginia.gov/access-permit/>

For information about angling, boating, hunting and wildlife watching in Virginia, visit the Department's website at www.dgif.virginia.gov.



Other news and information of interest from VDGIF:

[Legislation Tracking](#); [Multi-Year Licenses](#); and [A Guide to Frogs & Toads of VA](#)



ZOO UPDATES

Virginia Zoological Park

Norfolk

virginiazoo.org



Our biggest change is the completion (or at least functioning) of the new Aldabra tortoise exhibit house. The new building was built adjacent to the popular exhibit which has many features: indoor pool, heated floor, UV penetrating glass windows, Dutch doors to allow tortoise access to inside and outside during cooler weather, and a large public viewing window to allow visitors to see them year round. The tortoises have been doing great with their new winter accommodations which have allowed them to enjoy some of the wonderful “balmy” fall and early winter weather we have had. The new set up allows them to get natural UV from their exhibit without requiring the stress of physically moving them by zoo staff. This is key, because moving the adult male was getting to be quite the task. We recently weighed AJ (adult male), and he came in at a whopping 492 pounds. The tortoises quickly figured out how to get back inside by the end of the work day when allowed access on cool but sunny days. Final phases of the building will be to complete the green roof and walls.

In other herp news, we successfully hatched our 3rd Williams’ dwarf gecko (*Lygodactylus williamsi*), and it is doing great. In December, we had another first with the birth of the Zoo’s first ever Rio Cauca caecilian (*Typhlonectes natans*). These are very cool amphibians in the lesser known order Gymnophiona.

We had temporary guests in the form of 2 hatchling American alligators (*Alligator mississippiensis*) that were confiscated locally. Both were vigorous, but one was quite thin. With a little TLC, both put on some great growth before we located them a permanent (and legal) new home just before the holidays. We took in a donation of 2 juvenile northern diamondback terrapins bringing our total population to 0.2.2. We also accepted an interesting donation of an Agassizi’s desert tortoise from a retired Marine Colonel now residing in Virginia Beach. He found the tortoise in 1983 as a hatchling inside one of his boots outside 29 Palms, CA in the Mojave Desert and felt compelled to keep it so that it would not lose any battles with tanks on the grounds. We also acquired 2 Mexican axolotls which have been quite popular.

We continue to work on revamping and updating herp exhibits in our Exhibits Building. This can be challenging due to the archaic infrastructure and current exhibit limitations, but we are making strides where possible. Some of the newer exhibit renovations (VA venomous, Rio Fuerte beaded lizard) have been going well and the visitors have thoroughly enjoyed them.

Herp staff started getting more involved with herp field conservation this past year. Staff assisted Diane Tulipani with her diamondback terrapin census project on several outings and locations. Two of us also made a trip to SW North Carolina to assist staff from the North Carolina Zoo and the NC Wildlife Commission with their hellbender project. This was quite the experience being much different than most types of field work with herps. Wet suits, SCUBA masks, and logging equipment were necessary as we snorkeled through very cold mountain streams in search of elusive snot otters.

Our goals are to continue to better ourselves with exhibits, collection diversity, and education. With that in mind we are aiming to add some new animals in the future: vinegaroons, Mexican red-knee tarantulas, emperor scorpions, and Iranian newts. We are also looking to acquire a new species of poison dart frog to work with.

– Craig Pelke



Reptiles Alive!

Northern Virginia & DC Area

www.reptilesalive.com



**Reptiles Alive LLC and the Delmarva Discovery Center Present:
The 3rd Annual DelMarVa Reptile Festival
Saturday, February 25
Delmarva Discovery Center, Pocomoke City MD**

Celebrate reptiles (and amphibians) from the Delmarva and beyond during this festival which has become an Eastern Shore family favorite.

Reptiles Alive will be performing wildly exciting and educational live reptile shows appropriate for all ages throughout the day. Visitors will also have opportunity to meet the Discovery Center's resident native Delmarva herps, make a children's craft, have your face painted, and learn about the Maryland Amphibian and Reptile Atlas! Activities are free with paid admission to the Discovery Center.

The Delmarva Discovery Center is located City, MD about 45 minutes south of Ocean Virginia border. This small town museum world-class exhibits of the cultural and history of the Delmarva peninsula.

Check out www.delmarvadiscoverycenter.org or www.reptilesalive.com call 410.957.9933 or 703 560-0257 for details!

– Caroline Seitz



in Pocomoke City, near the features natural

Virginia Living Museum

Newport News

thevlm.org



Reptiles! Bizarre & Beautiful

Enjoy three days of native and exotic reptiles at the Virginia Living Museum, Newport News, Feb. 18-20. See exotic reptiles from around the world and reptiles native to Virginia, including a Siamese Crocodile, cane toad, day geckos, diamondback rattlesnakes and sulcata tortoises.

Also see the Virginia Living Museum's permanent residents ranging from alligators to tree frogs in special exhibits and live animal programs. Turtle Cove will be filled with Turtle and Tortoise-related live information, activities and live animals including African Spurred Tortoises, Red Footed Tortoises, Chicken Turtles, Box Turtles and Diamondback Terrapins.

Exhibitors include FIRST Iguana Rescue, Reptile and Amphibian Ecology International VIIPER, Virginia Herpetological Society and Wildlife Responses, Inc.

Audubon/Together Green will have an exhibit and information about the Great Backyard Bird Count Feb. 17-20.

New this year will be a guest speaker on each of the three days (recommended for ages 12+):

- Saturday at noon John Kleopfer of the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries will present: Life History and Ecology of the State Endangered Canebrake Rattlesnake (*Crotalus horridus*) Coastal Plain population.
- Sunday at 3 p.m. Kory Steele of the Virginia Herpetological Society will present: Frog Calls of Hampton Roads.
- Monday at noon VLM Aquarium Curator Chris Crippen will present: Sea Turtle Husbandry at the VLM.

Reptiles are perhaps the most misunderstood and most feared creatures on earth, but the staff at the Virginia Living Museum wants the public to see their fascinating and attractive aspects as well.



There



will be live reptile programs, reptile feedings and children's crafts and activities throughout the weekend. "A Sky Full of Scales" will be shown in the Abbitt Planetarium. This live program explores how various reptiles use celestial objects for survival and discusses how to scan the skies for starry reptiles hiding above us. It will be shown at 12:30 p.m. all three days, plus 11:30 a.m. Saturday and Monday.



Hours are: Saturday and Monday 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., Sunday noon to 5 p.m.

Cost: \$17 adults, \$13 children (ages 3-12); ages 2 and under and VLM members free. Planetarium shows are an additional \$4 for non-members, \$2 for vouchers for members.

non-members, \$2

The museum is located at 524 J. Clyde Morris Blvd., Newport News, I-64, exit 258A.

For more information visit www.thevlm.org or call 757-595-1900.

"The environment is where we all meet; where all have a mutual interest; it is the one thing all of us share. It is not only a mirror of ourselves, but a focusing lens on what we can become."

-Lady Bird Johnson

CONSERVATION KEY

Loudoun Amphibian Monitoring Program (LAMP)

Article by Nicole Hamilton, LAMP Coordinator

Starting a new monitoring program is a significant effort — one that requires developing new materials, testing protocols, developing approaches, and creating training materials. But in 2006, a small group of volunteers with Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy did just that. In particular, we had some great support from our intern Rachelle Hill in "groundtruthing" frog call routes, and helping to organize our pilot kick-off; and we pulled in expertise from Mike Hayslett, Liam McGranaghan and Cliff Fairweather to teach us about the lifecycles and habitats of our Loudoun amphibians.



Vernal pool talk by Mike Hayslett

For those already involved in amphibian monitoring and knowledgeable of the various frog call surveys, you may ask, "why set up a new monitoring program"? The answer for us was that the existing programs did not meet our goals. The mission of the Loudoun Wildlife Conservancy is to promote the preservation and proliferation of healthy wildlife habitats in Loudoun. As such, we need to know the diversity and population sizes of all the

amphibian species of Loudoun and what specific habitats the animals were using so that we could take action if needed in order to protect them.

Because salamanders and newts do not "peep" or "trill", a frog call survey would not provide us with information on those species.



Furthermore, the frog call survey would not give us information on the health of the habitat or the migration routes that amphibians were using, and needed to survive.

As a result, we designed the Loudoun Amphibian Monitoring Program (LAMP) to have three tracks: a frog call survey, a site survey, and migration mapping/road crossings. In addition to providing our program with the data needed on



Jefferson salamanders

frogs, toads, salamanders and newts, having three tracks allows volunteers to engage in different ways.

Our pilot for this program began in June 2006 and over a dozen citizens participated.

This pilot gave us the opportunity to test some monitoring locations, evaluate our materials, and identify gaps that needed filling. Since our pilot began, we also received grant funding from the Chesapeake Bay Restoration Fund. This funding enabled us to print the program notebook, order the training supplies needed, and conduct public outreach on the importance of amphibians and the data they provide on the health of our ecosystem.

As we headed into March 2007, ready to launch this program for its first full year, Wood frogs began calling and moving into vernal pools; Jefferson Salamanders traversed the snow –

covered woodlands to reach their breeding pools, and Spring Peepers awoke from their winter slumber. In preparation for this, we held our program orientation and kickoff meeting and provided our volunteer monitors with training on the protocol and amphibian identification tips by sight and sound.

Since 2007, we have held an annual kickoff to provide continuing volunteers with refresher training and new volunteers with this introduction to amphibian monitoring. We have also added some summertime night hikes to listen to frogs and toads and visit wetland habitats at times when people often feel uncomfortable going outside. These night hikes proved to be especially fun for the kids who come out, and we've discovered that they are excellent nighttime spotters.

As we enter into our 6th year of the program, we continue to train new volunteers and teach people about amphibians and their habitat needs. We continue to identify new sites of vernal pools as well as permanent wetlands, and we learn about where the different species reside.



Nicole teaching others

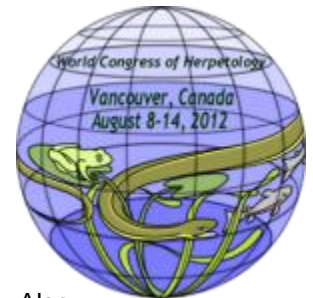
HERPCETERA

The World Congress of Herpetology, 2012 (1 | 2) Celebrate: Year of the Lizard!

1) The World Congress of Herpetology, 2012

The World Congress of Herpetology invites all the world's herpetologists, as well as ichthyologist colleagues from ASIH and AES to the World Congress of Herpetology in 2012, in Vancouver:

<http://wch2012vancouver.com/>



2) Celebrate: Year of the Lizard!

PARC and other conservation groups have designated 2012 as the Year of the Lizard. Also check out the latest newsletters and calendars on the YOL website:

www.yearofthelizard.org





*...truth is it's harmless, unless you're rolling around with it, like an idiot...like me.
~Jeff Corwin*

NEW BOOKS

**Invasive Pythons in the United States (1)
Reptile Biodiversity Standard Methods (2)
for Inventory and Monitoring**

**3) Venomous Reptiles of the US, Canada, &
Northern Mexico: Crotalus (Volume 2)**

1) Title: Invasive Pythons in the United States: Ecology of an Introduced Predator
(Paperback)

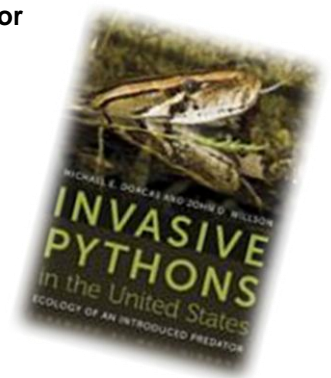
Author: Michael E. Dorcas and John D. Willson, Foreword by Whit Gibbons
Price: \$24.95

Description from HerpDigest: The first detailed, comprehensive study of this invasive predator. Most people think of pythons as giant snakes in distant tropical jungles, but Burmese pythons, which can reach lengths of over twenty feet and weigh over two hundred pounds, are now thriving in southern Florida.

These natives of Asia are commonly kept as pets and presumably escaped or were released in the Everglades. Pythons are now common in this region; widespread throughout hundreds of square miles, they are breeding and appear to be expanding their range. Pythons are voracious predators that feed on a variety of native wildlife including wading birds, bobcats, white-tailed deer, and even alligators. Their presence has drawn dramatic media attention and stoked fears among the public that pythons may threaten not just native species but humans as well.

Despite this widespread concern, information on pythons has been limited to a few scientific publications and news coverage that varies widely in fact and accuracy. With *Invasive Pythons in the United States*, Michael E. Dorcas and John D. Willson provide the most reliable, up-to-date, and scientifically grounded information on invasive pythons. Filled with over two hundred color photographs and fifteen figures and maps, the book will help general readers and the scientific community better understand these fascinating animals and their troubling presence in the United States.

Features information on: General python biology; biology of Burmese pythons in their native range; research on pythons in the United States; history; status of introduced pythons in Florida; risks pythons pose in Florida and elsewhere; methods to control python populations; and other boas and pythons that may become or are already established in the United States.



2) Title: Reptile Biodiversity Standard Methods for Inventory and Monitoring (Hardcover)

Authors: Roy W. McDiarmid (Editor), Mercedes S. Foster (Editor), Craig Guyer (Editor), J. Whitfield Gibbons (Editor), Neil Chernoff (Editor)

Price: \$75.00 (discount at [Univ. of CA Press](#)); \$95.00 (regular)

Description from Univ of CA Press: From tiny, burrowing lizards to rainforest canopy-dwellers and giant crocodiles, reptile populations everywhere are changing. Yet government and

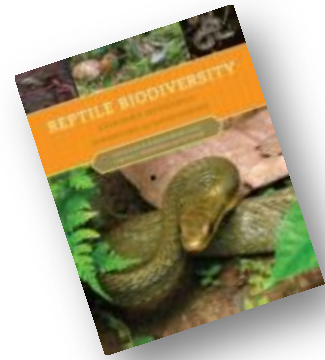


conservation groups are often forced to make important decisions about reptile conservation and management based on inadequate or incomplete data. With contributions from nearly seventy specialists, this volume offers a comprehensive guide to the best methods for carrying out standardized quantitative and qualitative surveys of reptiles, while maximizing comparability of data between sites, across habitats and taxa, and over time. The contributors discuss each method, provide detailed protocols for its implementation, and suggest ways to analyze the data, making this volume an essential resource for monitoring and inventorying reptile abundance, population status, and biodiversity.

Reptile Biodiversity covers topics including:

- terrestrial, marine, and aquatic reptiles
- equipment recommendations and limitations
- ethics of monitoring and inventory activities
- statistical procedures
- designing sampling programs

using PDAs in the field



3) Title: Venomous Reptiles of the US, Canada, & Northern Mexico: Crotalus (Volume 2)
(Hardcover)

Authors: Carl H. Ernst and Evelyn M. Ernst Price: \$75.00 (or get a discount for both volumes, when you buy both at once through HerpDigest by February 15th, get both for only \$120)

Description from HerpDigest: Carl and Evelyn Ernst have completely revised their landmark reference Venomous Reptiles of North America to present the most comprehensive review of these animals in years. A review that now needs two volumes to complete. ;Volume One of this definitive work presented dramatically improved species accounts of the venomous lizards and elapid and viperid snakes found north of Mexico's twenty-fifth parallel.

In Volume Two they cover the twenty-one rattlesnakes found in the United States, Canada, and, for the first time, species found only in northern Mexico.

As in Volume I, in Volume II they present the latest research on Crotalus in the United States, Canada, and northern Mexico and feature an extensive bibliography of literature on the subject. These volumes contain a wealth of information for anyone with an interest in venom, snakes, or herpetology in general.

Venomous Reptiles of the United States, Canada, and Northern Mexico Volume I & II, provides facts on each animal's diet, reproductive behavior, physiology, ecology, and conservation status. The book also covers details on snakebite, how venom is delivered, venom composition, antivenom production, and medical treatments of envenomation. Each species account includes vivid photographs that aid with identification and detailed maps that show the species range.

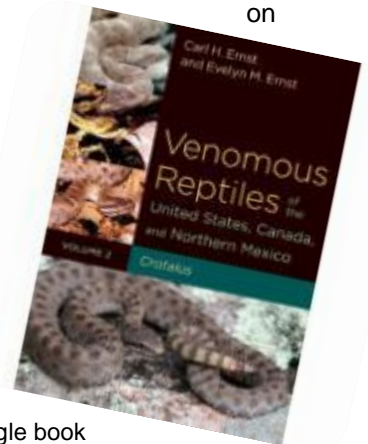
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1) Send a check to Herpdigest/Allen Salzberg/67-87 Booth Street-5B/Forest Hills, NY 11375. Make the check out to Herpdigest.

2) By Paypal - our account is asalzberg@herpdigest.org (If you are not a member of Paypal you can still use it with your credit card.)

3) By credit card, Master or Visa, Discover and Amex, only, send us your credit card number, expiration date, billing and shipping address to asalzberg@herpdigest.org. (Though I haven't heard of this happening, a credit card number stolen from an email, I'm told to prevent this send ccard number divided into two emails.)

And don't forget to include those 3 numbers from the back of the credit card.

*It is not half so important to know as to feel when introducing a young child to the natural world.
~Rachel Carson*

A note from VHS President Larry Mendoza:

"The Va Herp Society does not support the new ban ([Senate Bill 477](#) and [House Bill 1242](#), neither yet passed, SB477 still in committee, HB1242 has been continued to next year) on certain reptiles in Virginia. We believe that the legislation, as written continues to perpetuate the negative stigma associated with reptiles. We also believe that this legislation is not based on science or facts but is driven by a knee jerk reaction by exploiting ignorance and fear of those who do not understand reptiles. We are finalizing a letter to the legislature to explain to them that this bill would have a negative effect on reptiles and to explain to them how science and facts must dictate legislation, not fear. We are a 501c3 non-profit and cannot engage in substantial lobbying, but we can engage in some lobbying. As such, we feel that this bill requires our attention and we are finalizing a letter. We will post the main points of the letter on the [VA Herp Society facebook page](#). Thank you for your understanding."

Also, a copy of the letter that was sent to legislators regarding HB1242 is on the [VHS Website](#).



VIRGINIA LITERATURE

These selections represent articles published or in press during the period August to December 2011. Included articles are focused on (1) studies performed within Virginia, (2) studies on reptiles or amphibians native to Virginia, or (3) additional herpetological topics that are of general interest. Compiled by Susan Watson.

Reinert, Howard K., Gylla A. MacGregor, Mackenzie Esch, Laretta M. Bushar, and Robert T. Zappalorti. Oct 2011. Foraging Ecology of Timber Rattlesnakes, *Crotalus horridus*. *Copeia*. Vol. 2011(3): 430-442.

Perry, Gad, Mark C. Wallace, Dan Perry, Howard Curzer, and Peter Muhlberger. Dec 2011. Toe Clipping of Amphibians and Reptiles: Science, Ethics, and the Law. *Journal of Herpetology*. Vol. 45(4): 547-555.

Skerratt, Lee F., Diana Mendez, Keith R. McDonald, Stephen Garland, James Livingstone, Lee Berger, and Richard Speare. Dec 2011. Validation of Diagnostic Tests in Wildlife: The Case of Chytridiomycosis in Wild Amphibians. *Journal of Herpetology*. Vol. 45(4): 444-450.

Duncan, Michael B., Sarah E. DuRant, Brett J. K. Ostby, James H. Roberts, and John D. Willson. Sep 2011. A Multi-Taxa Biological Survey of Passage Creek, Virginia. *Northeastern Naturalist*. Vol. 18(3): 357-369.

Burke, Russell L. and William Capitano. Dec 2011. Eastern Box Turtle, *Terrapene carolina*, Neonate Overwintering Ecology on Long Island, New York. *Chelonian Conservation and Biology*. Vol. 10(2): 256-259.

Raithel, Christopher J., Peter W. C. Paton, Penelope S. Pooler, and Francis C. Golet. Mar 2011. Assessing Long-Term Population Trends of Wood Frogs Using Egg-Mass Counts. *Journal of Herpetology*. Vol. 45(1): 23-27.

Lawing, A. Michelle, and P. David Polly. Dec 2011. Pleistocene Climate, Phylogeny, and Climate Envelope Models: An Integrative Approach to Better Understand Species' Response to Climate Change. *PLoS ONE*. Vol. 6(12): e28554. doi:10.1371/journal.pone.0028554

Vieyra, Michelle L. Dec 2011. Olfactory Receptor Genes in Terrestrial, Freshwater, and Sea Turtles: Evidence for a Reduction in the Number of Functional Genes in Aquatic Species. *Chelonian Conservation and Biology*. Vol. 10(2):181-187.

Langford, Gabriel J., Joel A. Borden, and David H. Nelson. Dec 2011. Ecology of the Eastern Ribbonsnake (*Thamnophis sauritus*) in Southern Alabama with Evidence of Seasonal Multiple Broods. *Herpetological Conservation and Biology*. Vol. 6(3):400-409.

Furman, Benjamin L. S., Brett R. Scheffers, and Cynthia A. Paszkowski. Dec 2011. The Use of Fluorescent Powdered Pigments as a Tracking Technique for Snakes. *Herpetological Conservation and Biology*. Vol. 6(3):473-478.





Answers from pages 7-9.

TRIVIA ANSWERS

1. Can you name the native frog species that becomes increasingly resistant to copperhead venom as it develops, and then as it reaches adulthood, there is a sharp decrease in venom resistance?
- **American bullfrog (*Lithobates catesbeianus*)**; Tadpoles have a LD50 of about 2mg/kg, as the limbs emerge - 5mg/kg, a month after postmetamorphosis - 180 mg/kg, and as an adult - 120mg/kg.

2. Can you identify this snake ?

- **Eastern cottonmouth (*Agkistrodon piscivorus piscivorus*)**.
(The photo helps illustrate that using head shape alone to differentiate a venomous snake from a harmless species can be misleading.)



3. Which two Virginia native salamanders loosely resemble the Greek mythological characters they are named after?

- **Greater Siren (*Siren lacertina*)** and **Eastern Lesser Siren (*Siren intermedia intermedia*)**

4. What is the technical name for the defensive mechanism this fence lizard has had to use?

Bonus Points: What anatomical adaptations do these lizards have to make it possible? (This photo was taken during the 2009 HerpBlitz survey at Breaks Interstate Park.)

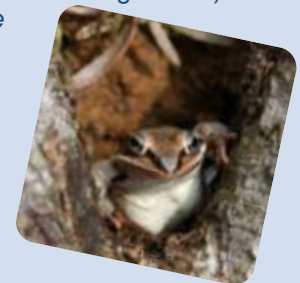


- **Caudal autotomy**. Bonus +: **Break points along vertebral column and arterial valves. They have sphincters in the blood vessels that can shut close to prevent blood loss. Despite common knowledge, their tail does not simply grow back. The tail that does grow back can no longer break off, and it removes the animal's fat storage. Also, females select against males with broken tails and often reproduction has to be sacrificed while regrowing the tail.**

5. Name some of the Virginia native frogs that are capable of freeze tolerance (tolerant of being frozen).

Bonus Points: What is the name of the chemical that is released by the livers of these frogs that provides the freeze tolerance?

- **Wood frog (*Lithobates sylvaticus*)**, **spring peeper (*Pseudacris crucifer*)**, **gray treefrog (*Hyla versicolor*)**, and **Cope's gray treefrog (*Hyla chrysocelis*)**; **Glycogen** is the chemical used for freeze tolerance.



6. Most turtles exhibit Temperature-Dependent Sex Determination (TSD), with few exceptions. Which two Virginia native turtles do not use TSD, but use chromosomes instead?

- **Wood turtle (*Glyptemys insculpta*)** and **eastern spiny softshell (*Apalone spinifera spinifera*)**.



7. What common salamander is notably absent from the Middle Peninsula (Gloucester/Mathews) area of Virginia?

- **Eastern red-backed salamander (*Plethodon cinereus*).**



8. Since the Bureau of Vital Statistics has been keeping records (since 1853), how many people in Virginia have died as a direct result of a copperhead bite? How many have died from a cottonmouth bite?

- **None and none!**



9. Which native Virginia marsupial has an innate immunity to copperhead venom?

- **Virginia opossum (*Didelphis virginiana*),** which is the ONLY marsupial in North America.

10. What is the most energetically expensive activity regularly undertaken by an ectothermic vertebrate? (Hint: think Virginia native amphibian; and Ectothermic = a more correct term for “cold-blooded”)

- **Producing advertisement calls by males.**

11. Which class of animals has one occipital condyle and which has two? Can you describe its function?

- **Reptiles have only one while mammals and amphibians have two. It's basically a joint that helps move the head.**

12. Can you identify this salamander?



- **A newly metamorphosed marbled salamander (*Ambystoma opacum*).**

Send ideas for Herp Trivia to newsletter editor, Susan Watson, newsletter@vaherpsociety.com.



Join the Virginia Zoo Volunteer Team and Become a FrogWatch USA™ Volunteer!



04 March 2012, Sunday at 5pm

What is FrogWatch USA™?

- **A long-term frog and toad volunteer monitoring program with over ten years of data.**
 - For over ten years, volunteers who want to get involved with their community have been trained to enter their **FrogWatch USA™** information that has been used to help develop practical strategies for the conservation of these important species.

Why Frogs and Toads?

- **Frogs and toads are important and they are in trouble!**
 - Healthy Amphibians mean a healthy environment.
 - Frogs and toads also play an important role, serving as both prey and predator, in wetland ecosystems and are considered indicators of environmental health.

Anyone can become a FrogWatch USA Volunteer at the Virginia Zoo!

- **WE NEED YOU!**

- All you need is an interest in frogs and toads, willingness to learn and identify their distinct calls, and the ability to make several evening visits to a local wetland. Maybe even your own backyard.
- Join the Virginia Zoo's FrogWatch USA Chapter and help out our local wetlands too. Call/Email "Max" to reserve your pad and find out more at (angela.maxwell@norfolk.gov) or (757) 441-2374 x278.



**FROG
WATCH** | USA

- Find out more about FrogWatch USA at:

- www.virginiazoo.org
- www.frogwatch.org
- frogwatch@aza.org

- **Virginia Zoo FrogWatch USA Training Dates are:**

- 5pm on 11 March 2012, Sunday
- 5pm on 18 March 2012, Sunday



VIRGINIA NATIVE

The purpose of **Virginia Native** is to highlight native species that are deserving of recognition. Additional information can be found on the website of the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries (VDGIF). <http://www.dgif.virginia.gov/wildlife/information>.

Eastern Fence Lizard (*Sceloporus undulatus*)



Characteristics

This is a medium-sized, rough-scaled in. (10-18.4 cm). The scales are not glossy, are on the dorsum of the head, body, and tail are brown to gray in a pattern of undulating crossbands. The sides are light gray, brown, or black, and the chin, throat, and belly are lighter or cream-colored. Males are usually brown and have an iridescent blue to green-blue patch on the side of the belly and a broad blue patch at the base of the throat. Females are mostly gray with a defined pattern on the back, and have smaller light blue spots on the side of the belly and throat. Mating starts in mid-April and 6-10 eggs are laid in rotten logs or sawdust piles in late spring. Eggs hatch in mid-summer. There may be second clutch. It often runs along fences, rotting logs, stumps, and up trees.

lizard that reaches total lengths of 4-7 1/4 heavily keeled and pointed, and overlap. Colors

Distribution

This species is found statewide in Virginia. It inhabits open pine woods, mixed hardwood and pine forest, mixed deciduous forest, woodlots in old fields and urban areas, near houses and barns and on rock piles.

Foods

This lizard preys on a variety of invertebrates by waiting for prey and then pouncing from a perch. A sample taken in Henrico County found prey to consist of wood boring beetles, blow flies, stink bugs, leafhoppers, ants, moths, short-horned grasshoppers, long-horned grasshoppers, roaches, spiders, millipedes, and snails.



Common Name: Eastern Fence Lizard

Scientific Name: *Sceloporus undulatus*

Genus: *Sceloporus* is derived from the Greek word *scelos* meaning "leg" and the Latin word *porus* meaning "hole", referring to the pronounced femoral pores found in this group of lizards.

Species: *undulatus* is from the Latin words *undulatus* meaning "wave" the *tus* suffix means "pertaining to", in reference to the dark wavy lines on the dorsum.

Average Length: 4 – 7.2 in. (10 - 18.4 cm)

Virginia Record Length: 7.5 in. (19 cm)

Record length: 7.5 in. (19 cm)