

Approved Meeting Minutes Volume 51 Number 2

New Mexico Herpetological Society (NMHS)

February 6, 2014

American International Rattlesnake Museum

President Scott Bulgrin opened the meeting at 7pm attended by 18 adults and 1 toddler herper. He welcomed all present. He called on Treasurer Letitia Peirce who reported a checking account balance of \$2657.54 and that she had written checks: \$25 to Josh Emms for the Newsletter and \$25 to our speaker in January Jenn Stabile. Scott reminded us that we have a variety of books for sale for \$2 each, also Tropical Fish Hobbyist (TSH) books, and NMHS's 50th Year Celebration DVDs.

Old Business

Scott said that we are asking other herpetological societies for information about displaying venomous reptiles. Options include not displaying them and displaying them in an area apart from NMHS display. We must come up with a uniform written policy and put it to the vote. The idea is to not associate NMHS with the display of venomous reptiles. Scott brought up that the Tucson Herpetological Society should be contacted about their own display policy. Scott said that Tom Wyatt of Santa Fe is doing less outreach through his own presentations about venomous reptiles.

New Business

Scott announced that 2 members had left NMHS. August Breithaupt and Nancy Bush. Nancy served as our Vice-President and Programs Chairwoman before she resigned following a disagreement about the display of venomous reptiles in an incident in December 2013. Josh Emms made a motion that we accept Nancy's resignation. The motion passed. Scott suggested that Josh send out emails asking for nominations for the office of vice-president that Nancy held. Scott assured us that we will have speakers for our meeting in March for a presentation about the Bosque Environmental Monitoring Program (BEMP). At a meeting later in the spring, Carolyn and Sparky Newell will share memories of their trip to Costa Rica in November.

Scott reported that August returned four Vision Cages to the Society. One belongs to the Rattlesnake Museum (30"x12"x24"). Use of the cages is for NMHS members only. They are suitable for venomous or non-venomous reptiles. Cages must be cleaned by users before being returned to NMHS. Each cage does have a secure locking mechanism.

Upcoming Events and New Business

Scott reminded us that the field trip to Dog Canyon in Oliver Lee Memorial State Park near Alamogordo is coming up on Friday March 14 and Saturday the 15th.

Letitia reported that her name appeared in the ALBUQUERQUE JOURNAL Money Section as one of 1700 "Model Citizens" eligible for a grant from the U.S. Health and Social Services Department. Letitia

smelled the model skunk in this and called the newspaper. A JOURNAL reporter uncovered the expected scam. A "Model Citizen" was instructed to send in \$300 to then receive \$9,000 in free cash from the grant program.

Scott announced that NMHS presentations will be given in schools on Earth Day April 24th.

In the same breath he announced that The New Mexico Wilderness Alliance is co-host of the National Wilderness Conference, which will occur October 15-19, 2014, in downtown Albuquerque. [This conference coincides with the 50th anniversary of The Wilderness Act. Audience-specific pre-conference trainings will be offered October 13-15. Locations: Hyatt Regency Albuquerque (conference), Albuquerque Convention Center (exhibitors), and adjacent Civic Plaza (festival) in Albuquerque, NM.] NMHS is invited to exhibit on Saturday from 1-7pm at Civic Plaza. There is no overlap and conflict with the Albuquerque International Balloon Fiesta.]

Scott announced items offered for sale: one 3' Hog Island Boa for \$100; Vision Cage 4' long with tubular lights and heating unit for \$200; also African Leopard Tortoises advertised by the Rio Grande Turtle and Tortoise Society.

He reported recent herp-abuse-in-the-news: 350 dead and decaying pythons being seized at the home of Newport Beach (Santa Ana), California 6th-grade teacher William Fredrick Bachman. Neighbors reported a god-awful stench coming from the carcasses and the large number of rats and mice Bachman was keeping indoors in plastic sweater boxes at 2900 Fernwood Drive.

[www.usatoday.com/story/.../29/dead-pythons...teacher-arrested/5035109A](http://www.usatoday.com/story/.../29/dead-pythons...teacher-arrested/5035109A) Scott also said he had viewed a report on CNN about clever crocodiles in SE Asia that use sticks to lure prey.

[www.smh.com.au](http://www.smh.com.au)

Letitia told us that Matt Eschenbrenner had a log on Facebook about his trip to Africa to look for dwarf crocodiles.

At our Albuquerque Zoo, "Joe" the crocodile died, perhaps due to liver failure.

Treasurer Letitia suggested that Scott and Cosmos act as co-signers on the checking account and had them add their names and identification information on the bank's form.

Garth Graves reported that the bank made it easy to set up a new checking account for NMHS.

Bill Degenhardt mentioned the Bank of Albuquerque as a bank for NMHS to use.

Chloe Emms celebrated her birthday on Friday January 31st. She measures 34" in height and weighs in at 22lbs 15oz. Nikki let us know that her and Josh's next baby will arrive around September 11.

Cosmos mentioned that Monroe's Restaurant on Lomas is considering accommodating us there for our December Banquet.

Break

Herpers stood up, stretched and made for the cookies and good talk.

## Presentation

Josh Emms presented a photo essay HAWAI'I: PARADISE? about the four years he spent on the islands of Hawai'i where he majored in history and worked at the Polynesian Cultural Center. Josh pointed out the isolation of islands 2000 miles from the nearest mainland, many of their endemic species of animals and plants, and introduced species of plants and animals.

**Reptiles** Yellow-bellied Sea Snake, Olive Ridley Turtle, Green Sea Turtle, Leatherback Turtle, Hawksbill Turtle and Loggerhead Turtle. Hawaii is unique in that there were no land reptiles or amphibians that were able to colonize the islands on their own. Josh went on a whale watch offered by the Deep Ecology Dive Shop and helped in the rescue of a sea turtle.

**Mammals** Hawaiian Hoary Bat - *Lasiurus cinereus semotus* - Hawaii, Kauai, Lanai, Maui, Molokai, Ni'ihau, Oahu is the only terrestrial mammal native to Hawaii. All other land mammal species were introduced by humans. In contrast, all marine mammals found in Hawaii are native.

**Whales and Dolphins (Order Cetacea):** Blainville's Beaked Whale - *Mesoplodon densirostris*; Blue Whale - *Balaenoptera musculus*; Bottlenose Dolphin - *Tursiops truncatus*; Common Minke Whale - *Balaenoptera acutorostrata* - Northwestern Hawaiian Islands; Cuvier's Beaked Whale - *Ziphius cavirostris*; Dwarf Sperm Whale - *Kogia sima*; Eden's Whale - *Balaenoptera edeni* - Northwestern Hawaiian Islands; False Killer Whale - *Pseudorca crassidens*; Fin Whale - *Balaenoptera physalus*; Grampus, Risso's Dolphin - *Grampus griseus*; Humpback Whale - *Megaptera novaeangliae*; Killer Whale - *Orcinus orca*; Melon-headed Whale - *Peponocephala electra*; North Atlantic Right Whale - *Eubalaena glacialis*; Pantropical Spotted Dolphin - *Stenella attenuata*; Pygmy Killer Whale - *Feresa attenuata*; Pygmy Sperm Whale - *Kogia breviceps*; Rough-toothed Dolphin - *Steno bredanensis*; Short-finned Pilot Whale - *Globicephala macrorhynchus*; Sperm Whale - *Physeter macrocephalus*; Spinner Dolphin - *Stenella longirostris*; Striped Dolphin - *Stenella coeruleoalba*.

**Birds** There are 71 known taxa of birds endemic to the Hawaiian Islands, of which 23 are extinct and 30 of the remaining 48 species and subspecies are listed as endangered or threatened.

**Invertebrates** Over 97% of the 5,735 described native species of arthropods in Hawaii are endemic. Of the Hawaiian Endemic Spiders, Josh showed *Theridion grallator*, also known as the happy face spider, in the family Theridiidae. Its Hawaiian name is nananana makaki 'i (face-patterned spider).

At the airport where you arrive in Hawaii you can deposit banned animal and plant items in an Amnesty Bin with a camera mounted directly above it

Josh reported that he had become an Associate Certified Entomologist by passing a certification examination. He was required to have seven years of prior work experience before becoming eligible to take the test. The certification is through The Entomological Society of America (ESA)

<http://www.entocert.org/ace-certification>

Thanks to Josh for presenting a fine program combining his easy-going fact-filled narrative and complementing slides and video.

The meeting adjourned around 9:25pm. Many thanks to the American International Rattlesnake Museum.

Submitted by Cosmos, Secretary, NMHS