

Approved Meeting Minutes

Volume 54 Number 3

March 3, 2016

New Mexico Herpetological Society

We convened at the American International Rattlesnake Museum in Old Town Albuquerque

President Scott Bulgrin called our meeting to order at 7:12 PM and welcomed 17 adult, 1 child, 1 toddler and 1 baby herpers. Scott introduced our speaker of the evening Mitch East, Assistant Data Manager of Natural Heritage New Mexico at our University of New Mexico. Mitch has been with the Natural Heritage Program four years, long enough to have been the herper in 2013 while survey training for the New Mexico Endemic Salamander Team who located a Jemez Mountains Salamander (*Plethodon neomexicanus*), the same salamander first captured and marked as an adult in the 1990s by Charlie Painter

PROGRAM

Mitch East said that he had gotten his Masters studying turtles in Oklahoma before coming to Natural Heritage New Mexico.

Natural Heritage New Mexico collects data and assesses how well species and ecological systems are doing in New Mexico.

He started off the PowerPoint show with a slide of the New Mexico Conservation Information System (NM CIS) and its Conservation Biodiversity Data including NM CIS Data for Herpetofauna. Of conservation concern are some species in the Gila area, a lizard in the southeast and a rare salamander in the Jemez. The ongoing mission of NM CIS is to fill in data gaps. Specimen collection numbers are stored by Natural Heritage.

Tracking of Species is by Conservation Rank as S Ranks. Conservation concerns determine which species are tracked and is up to date, S-1, S-2.

Data Exchange Templates are complete with Collecting Permit Data from our United States Fish and Wildlife Service, clearance surveys and species info from the U.S. Forest Service, site specific data from the Bureau of Land Management and contractors and data from biologists at our New Mexico Department of Game and Fish.

The NM CIS System also draws on data from New Mexico's Environment Department, clearance survey data from the State Land Office and State Forestry Division as well as from private consultants, scientific publications, biologists at the university level, and the United States Bureau of Reclamation, Army Corps of Engineers and Defense Department.

The result are data products. Any query results in the further distribution of data.

State Conservation Ranks give the status of a particular species in state and multi-state natural heritage programs. The Rank Calculator is derived from: 1) Factors of Range; 2) Size; 3) Number of Occurrences; 4) Threats; 5) Population size; and 6) trends.

Qualifiers indicate that taxonomy is in question and a lack of data

Natural Heritage New Mexico has Ranks for some invertebrates and 200 species of plants

S-Ranks and some summary data are available to viewers on the NHNM website

NM CIS has connecting web resources at: 1) global network of natural heritage programs; 2) NatureServe's Global Species Information; 3) NM-Biotics Species/Ecosystem Tracking; 4) NMDGF species account website BISON-M NM; and 5) the gateway web site about endangered and threatened species at the Fish and Wildlife Services ECOS, the Environmental Conservation Online System

The Biota Information System of New Mexico called BISON-M was developed for biologists by the New Department of Game and Fish and the Fish and Wildlife Information Exchange of the Conservation Management Institute at Virginia Tech in Blacksburg, Virginia

BISON-M contains accounts for all vertebrate and many invertebrate species of wildlife occurring in New Mexico and Arizona, including all threatened, endangered and sensitive species. Many accounts are incomplete. Users are cautioned to refer back to the original cited source before using the information.

At the NHNM website <http://nhnm.unm.edu/> is New Mexico's Conservation Information and Resource Center with its New Mexico Crucial Habitat Assessment Tool offering general search, advanced search and Links to more NHNM species information. Status Information is filtered by county and S Rank. Hyperlinks take the user to other sources. "More Info" is a way of seeing what data NHNM has stored from the early 1900s up to 2016. This information gathering system is complete with multiple references

Mitch gave us this for instance of the updated S-Rank for the Boreal Chorus Frog due to recent changes in the frog's distribution in New Mexico. Viewers will find factors, trend info and overall threat to the frog in the northern part of our state by clicking on S-Rank

Mitch told us NMHS herpers that iNaturalist.org offers Keep Track Crowdsourcing as a means towards identifying herps we find by sending digi-photos to <http://www.inaturalist.org>. For the tech-savvy among us, this is an online-based way of tracking observations and locations.

For example, Mitch said that he could upload a photo and data about a toad he found in southwest New Mexico to iNaturalist.org. He could set it up as a project, even add it to the global amphibian bioblitz organizing data using iNaturalist. Curators assigned to the Project identify themselves through "I.D. Please." A New Mexico herp observations project can be for the long-term and open or closed.

The iNaturalist app may be downloaded to I-Phone and Droid.

Mitch was asked if Threats to a species includes climate change. He responded that BISON-M in its management practices sections are listed factors to which a given species is sensitive.

Scott told us that Sandia Pueblo is drawing up lists of all species on Pueblo Land and their vulnerabilities to climate change.

Mitch said that the BISON-M Climate Change Assessment section came from the U.S. Forest Service research of coming changes to the environment along the Rio Grande corridor. With that, Mitch concluded his presentation.

Contact Mitch East for data and questions

505-277-3822 ext 224, eastm@unm.edu

BREAK TIME

BUSINESS MEETING

Scott asked our Secretary Cosmos to read Meeting Minutes of February 4, 2016. Two entries were corrected and the Minutes were approved as corrected by members present.

8:37 PM Scott asked our Treasurer Letitia to report on the financial status of our Society. Letitia told us that the balance in the checking account on March 3, 2016 is \$3,497.10 as a result of Deposits of \$60.00 from Dues, \$40.00 from December Banquet reservations, \$4.00 from the Silent Auction and \$44.00 Donation from Bosque del Apache NWR and Expenditures of \$75.00 to Ted Brown for refreshments and \$25.00 to Matt Eschenbrenner as a speaker honorarium. The Treasurer's Report was approved as read by members present.

OLD BUSINESS

Bob Myers said that he had visited his rancher friend and rattlesnake den over near Santa Rosa yesterday and it was windy. One snake was outside and one inside the den which is located 2 to 3 miles south of I-40 and can be approached within a hundred feet by vehicle. The rancher insists on minimizing damage to his rangeland by limiting the number of herper vehicles going off-road to the den. Scott suggested limiting vehicles to a 4-wheel drive Gator and a large SUV to accommodate 7 herpers. Bob highly recommended 4-wheel drive vehicles. The rancher's son wants to go to the den with us. He is 27 and has been going to the den since he was 14.

VICE-PRESIDENT

Scott brought up our need to elect a Vice-President since Pat Maher has moved to Tucson, Arizona and said that Josh Emms has volunteered to take on the office if he can step down from being Editor of our Newsletter while still maintaining our website. Simultaneously and fortuitously, Jerry Tuttle has volunteered to come on as Newsletter

Editor. In the absence of competition for the offices, Scott nominated both Josh and Jerry and asked for votes in favor. Both nominations were accepted with resounding ayes.

T-SHIRTS

Scott moved on to the topic of T-shirts and the logo design we want this year. There's the horned lizard that we still have the silk screen for that's on our banner and then there's the current glo-in-the-dark snake skeleton. Cosmos said that he opposed adopting a 3-D tTshirt. Scott explained 3-D to our amused audience. Sue Brown recalled that T-shirts with the snake skeleton sold well. Jaci said that a minimum order is 10. Scott made a motion to use the glo-in-the-dark snake skeleton. Tom Eichhorst seconded this motion and members voted in favor of the snake. An order will be sent in soon for an assortment of sizes.

FIELD TRIPS

Josh suggested a group campground at Lemitar that could serve as a base camp for sorties to Bosque de Apache NWR and Las Quebradas, It has a pond, toilet but no water.

Scott said that he will get a list of proposed destinations for our Memorial Day Fieldtrip to Josh to send out this coming week.

NEW BUSINESS

Scott said that the Sandia Mountain Natural History Center would like for us to come up on July 16th to lead a hike and then put on a program indoors. Jerry Tuttle has volunteered to put on his program about Gila Monsters that day. Josh remembered that the program room has no air conditioning.

Scott announced that Bosque School will have its Student Congress in April, on Thursday the 28th in Albuquerque and on Friday the 29th in Santa Fe. Tom said that he will take part. Ted said that he and Sue will work at the Santa Fe one.

Scott announced that the Croc TAG Conference will be held in May as announced by Matt Eschenbrenner in February. TAG stands for Taxonomic Advisory Group. Scott said that Cosmos had sent out this email announcement to officers:

2016 Croc TAG Meetings

The 2016 Croc TAG Meetings will be held on May 6th and 7th and hosted by the ABQ BioPark in Albuquerque, New Mexico. You can register for this event and view hotel information by [Clicking Here](#).

Icebreaker will be the evening of Thursday May 5th at the ABQ BioPark Aquarium. Time TBD

Meetings will begin at 8:30am, Friday May 6th at the Rio Grande Inn Conference Room and last until 5pm. Dinner will be held that evening at the ABQ BioPark Zoo Reptile Building. After dinner we will hold an auction to benefit the CAG. If you wish, please feel free to bring a donation item from your facility to include in the

auction.

Day 2 of meetings will begin at 8:30am on Saturday May 7th at the Rio Grande Inn Conference Room and will last until noon. The afternoon will be spent at the ABQ BioPark Zoo.

If you would like more info on this great event please contact this site at:

cag@crocodylia.com

Scott said that Bruce had announced a SWPARC Southwestern Partners in Amphibian and Reptile Conservation conference coming up in Alpine, Texas.

Scott said that he will put in purchase orders to the Governor of Sandia Pueblo for our herp surveys. Tara asked whether some traps could be moved closer to Sandia Mountain. Scott said no, not for 5 years.

Scott launched into news about 1) a hunt for pythons in the Florida Everglades with 106 Burmese Pythons caught, one team caught 33, largest was 15'.; and 2) a 23-year old Florida male found a 3.5' alligator along the road, got it into his car then when he got to a Wendy's Hamburgers he threw it into the order window. Security cameras caught the action, police arrested the man and released the alligator and Wendy's banned the prankster from all Wendy's.

Scott asked Cosmos to hold up the poster showing NEW MEXICO RATTLESNAKES which was donated by Kevin Holladay at New Mexico Department of Game and Fish. Scott pointed out that a larger pull-up poster would be easier to use. Cosmos found out from Game & Fish that a second printing of this out-of-stock poster would cost \$5,000 for 10,000 posters. Ditto for the Department's turtles poster. Tom Eichhorst said that we could make up our own poster of larger dimensions with a map of the State of New Mexico as a background for photographs of rattlesnakes as well as captions and legends. This could be sent as a TIF file to Reprographics or VistaPrint for printing.

Scott said that Jerry Tuttle had arranged for Claire Wilkins, a senior at Bosque School, to present her herp project at our April 7th meeting.

Ted Brown said that he and Sue will be at Ute Lake State Park on July 16th for their annual Prairie Fest. A Show N Tell inside the Visitor Center will be followed at sundown by a live one down by the lake.. Last year a young fellow, JayLynn, and several Plains Indian dancers from Oklahoma were there. Young JayLynn fell in love with Bubbles, the Brown's Bullsake.

Cosmos asked where are NMHS Vision Cages. Scott said that he has one, Kelly has two. All are accounted for.

Cosmos said Tom Giermakowski of the University of New Mexico -Museum of Southwestern Biology Division of Reptiles and Amphibians has offered to put on a program.. Scott suggested that Tom come to our May meeting.

Cosmos said another venue for NMHS is Mesilla Valley Outdoor Expo held in the Las Cruces Convention Center.

Cosmos answered Scott's question on February 4th about which sea turtle gives off vivid colors by reading recent news. *National Geographic* reports the discovery that the hawksbill sea turtle (*Eretmochelys imbricata*), the most endangered of all marine turtles, is *biofluorescent*: it absorbs blue light from the ocean and, after that light is transformed into different light by photosensitive molecules, it's reflected back as a panoply of different colors. This differs from *bioluminescence*, which is the emission of *nonreflected* endogenous light produced wholly by chemical reactions within the organism's body.

Seemingly satisfied, Scott then asked Cosmos to find out how many Olms salamanders have hatched and report that back at our meeting in April. Cosmos and Google accepted the assignment.

Cosmos reported that, with donations from Bill Degenhardt, Ted Brown, Letitia Peirce and Tom Eichhorst, he had collected and put into binders most NMHS Newsletters from 1964-2015. Josh suggested digitizing all pages using a camera phone. Scott suggested using an office copier. How long might the job of scanning each page take? Cosmos said that his only comparable recent experience might have been in copying 214 pages from Newsletters in two hours. Letitia added that the Newsletter project so far has also produced lists of past presidents and field trips taken.

Scott closed our meeting by promising that emails about field trips and rattlesnake den will be in our inboxes soon.

Our meeting adjourned at 9:31 PM.

These Draft Meeting Minutes of March 3, 2016 are submitted under the auspiciousness of a New Moon on April 7, 2016 by Secretary Cosmos.

Thank you very much Bob and Lorraine Myers for hosting us this evening in your American International Rattlesnake Museum.

NMHS OFFICERS

President Scott Bulgrin

Vice-President Josh Emms

Treasurer Letitia Peirce

Secretary Cosmos

Newletter Editor Jerry Tuttle

NMHS Draft Meeting Minutes of March 3, 2016

