

Approved Meeting Minutes

Volume 54 Number 5

May 5, 2016

New Mexico Herpetological Society

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

President Scott Bulgin called our meeting to order at 7:27 PM and welcomed 21 adult herpers, 2 adult female moral supporters of herpers and 2 pre-teen herpers.

Scott said that programs of the evening will come first. After that we will have a business meeting to include only the Treasurer's Report, our planned outreach in May, and choosing the destination for our Memorial Day Weekend Field Trip. The April 2016 Draft Meeting Minutes have been emailed to members.

Jerry Tuttle introduced presenter Claire Wilkins of Bosque School in northwest Albuquerque Jerry recalled that he brought his herps to the seniors at Bosque School and that Claire was terrified by her own reactions to them. She went on to touch a snake and then overcame her own fears found herself comforted by holding a snake and then proposed bringing snakes to classmates to help them get over their aversions. In addition, she recruited a team of six classmates to help carry out this project.

Claire has presented 6 times including the AZ-NM Annual Joint Conference, the Crawford Symposium, 3 times at Bosque School. She's been a student at Bosque School 7 years, and now is a senior.

Claire presented her project with slides and narrative as well as with a poster.

#### HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS ATTITUDES TOWARD SNAKES WITH EDUCATION ABOUT TAXA

Slide #1. Question/Objective. Why are people afraid of snakes? Lack of exposure. A study by Gurule and Herrera (2014) showed that young students were positively affected by snakes being present during an education session. Does this hold true for older students?

Slide #2. Methods. The classes were divided into two treatment types., both receiving the same general snake education program. Control: Students received the program without snakes present. Treatment: Students received the program with snakes present.

Claire said that she worked with Jerry Tuttle to provide the snakes for treatment classes and provide insight.

Slide #3. Methods Continued. Students were given a pre and post survey to rate their attitudes and willingness to hold a snake.

Slide #4. Analysis:

Two unpaired t tests to compare the students' attitudes towards the snakes between the two treatments: (A) No snake vs. snake (pre-survey) and (B) No snake vs. snake (post-survey).

Two paired t tests to compare students' attitudes towards snakes between the two surveys: (A) Pre vs. Post (No snake) and (B) Pre vs. Post (Snake).

Slide #5. Results: Average positive attitude toward snakes increased more when snakes were present during treatment.

Slide #5. Conclusions: Having a snake in the classroom during an education program about the taxa positively affects the students' attitudes towards snakes significantly.

Willingness to touch a snake is not significantly different between the two classes.

Claire said that her project did not explore differences between girls' and boys' willingness to touch snakes.

Claire created a DVD showing the Jacobson's organ and differences between non-venomous and venomous snakes.

Two team mates plan to continue this project next year.

Tom Eichhorst shared that girls tend to cradle the snakes while boys wave them in the faces of other students.

7:44 PM

Scott introduced Tom Giermakowski who is Senior Collection Manager in the Amphibian and Reptile Division of the Museum of Southwestern Biology at the University of New Mexico Department of Biology in Albuquerque.

Tom said that Lex Snyder of the Fishes Division at UNM-MSB and he put together the presentation and offered to lead NMHS members through the UNM collection.. The oldest specimen in the collection is a snake from Iran preserved in 1910,

American Society of Ichthyologists and Herpetologists and Society for the Study of Amphibians and Reptiles have set standards for preserving museum quality specimens.

REPTILE ECOLOGY AND CONSERVATION: A HANDBOOK OF TECHNIQUES

AMPHIBIAN ECOLOGY AND CONSERVATION: A HANDBOOK OF TECHNIQUES

FISHES, AMPHIBIANS AND REPTILES -- COLLECTIONS IN (MOSTLY) FLUID PRESERVATIVES

Slide #1. Fishes, Amphibians and Reptiles in collections are kept mostly in fluid preservatives. Fix in formalin then store in jars in alcohol.

Slide #2. Museum quality specimens

Slide #3. Collecting museum quality specimens

Slide #4. Field Logistics

Slide #5. Field Collections

Slide #6. Containers

Slide #7. Field Notes. Keep the tag with the specimen

Slide #8. Field Notes: The Grinnell Method includes 3 notebooks: Collected Specimens, Journal, Species Accounts

(More info about the Grinnell Method on the website of the Museum of Vertebrate Zoology at the University of California at Berkeley. Stevens Field Notes. FIELD NOTES IN SCIENCE AND NATURE edited by Michael Canfield includes "Letters to the Future")

Slide #9. Accession accepts specimens and establishes legal custody of specimens.

Slide #10. Managing Data and Data Bases. The 1980s brought the electronic catalog and information that is readily accessible.

Slide #11. Digitizing Field Notes and transcribing them. These can be supplemented with geo-referencing and DNA analysis

Slide #12. Data in Collections. There are no standards for organizing and formatting of data among institutions.

Slide #13. Management of Data. Missing journals and field notes)

Slide #14. Data Dissemination

Data Discovery: Sources of Specimen Data: Global Biodiversity Information Facility <http://www.gbif.org/>, FishNet 2 <http://www.fishnet2.net/>, VertNet <http://vertnet.org/>, GenBank <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/genbank/>, Arctos <http://arctos.database.museum/home.cfm>

Slide #15. Satellite image of state of New Mexico.

There are 94,000 specimens in the UNM Amphibian and Reptile collection of which 45,000 were collected in New Mexico. They are held long term. Emerging technologies and techniques make every specimen even more valuable. For example, even sheds now yield analyzable DNA.

The latest grant to the collection was to provide shelving.

Josh asked about adding specimens to the collection. Tom unenthusiastically suggested freezing them asap.

Scott asked about preserving specimens in 90% alcohol. Tom said that this dehydrates the specimen.

Tom said there is a lack of biodiversity data from Indian Reservations.

Scott said that he would like to contact tribes, ask, do you study amphibians and reptiles? which are important in your culture?

Tom said that horned lizards are important in the cultural traditions of Native Americans up around Shiprock.

8:19 PM

Lori King told us about preparations cranked up in the past three weeks for a “really big, really wonderful” event coming up this summer.

It's the FIRST ANNUAL CHARLES W. PAINTER GRANT IN HERPETOLOGY FROM THE CHIRICAHUA DESERT MUSEUM BIOBLITZ AND BARBEQUE FUNDRAISER to be held at the Chiricahua Desert Museum near Rodeo, New Mexico and seven miles from Portal, Arizona on July 29<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup>. Funds raised will be for the Grant to be awarded in 2017. The GRANT has a designated website: CWPBioBlitz.com.

Bob Ashley of the Museum expects 250 participants at the event.

Samantha Cordova at UNM received the GRANT in 2016

The BIOBLITZ also advances grassroots education and citizen science

Lori said that sponsors will include herp societies, businesses, Arizona Game and Fish Department and our New Mexico Department of Game and Fish.

There will be a Photography Workshop by Bill Love, Silent Auctions, a Zydeco Band, Walks and Surveys, searching for Gila Monsters in Granite Gap, mist netting of bats, invertebrate studies, even a prize given out for finding locations of invasive Bullfrogs. A speedy harvest will ensure that bullfrog legs are on the barbeque menu.

Scott suggested that any volunteers from NMHS be on site starting Friday afternoon July 28<sup>th</sup> and then asked our Treasurer Letitia to report on the balance in the NMHS checking account.

#### TREASURER'S REPORT

Letitia said there is \$3,342.

Scott asked for suggestions about how much NMHS can afford to donate to the Charlie Painter event and started spirited bidding at \$1.00! In the end NMHS donated \$300.00 to the BIOBLITZ, BARBEQUE and GRANT and Letitia wrote the check

#### .BREAKTIME

Ted and Sue Brown laid out a spread of cookies and cold juice that satisfied every herper present.

#### BUSINESS

Scott said that Josh will email the Secretary's Draft Meeting Minutes of April to members for corrections and approval.

Letitia read a letter of gratitude from our New Mexico BioPark Society for our donation to the Cote d' Ivoire catafractus project.

Scott said that Graphic Connection will print our NMHS T-shirts.. They are dark gray with glow in the dark graphic of the snake skeleton and Zia symbol. Jaci said that the glow is still there in glow-in-the-dark T-shirts she's had for four years.

We ordered: Kids Large 5; Adult Small 5; Adult Medium 5; Adult Large 10; Adult X-Large 16; Adult 2X 5; Adult 3X 4 for a total of 50 T-shirts.

Tom Eichhorst said he found a company that will make two 33" X 80" vinyl retractable banners for \$125 each. Tom offered to do the layout and come up with a TIF after we get all of the photographs needed to him. Scott asked us to think about the species we want to show on the banners and bring suggestions to our June 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting.

8:55 PM

Scott said that he got permission from the Governor of Sandia Pueblo at 3 PM today for NMHS to begin the 2016 Survey. Scott said that he, Tim Smith and Cosmos will meet at the Field Station at 8:45 AM tomorrow and activate 16 to 20 pitfall traps tomorrow,.

Scott said that on June 2<sup>nd</sup> we need to discuss liabilities to NMHS members for display of venomous as well as non-venomous herps.

Tom said that we need to incorporate as an LLC and have been slow to accomplish that because we don't allow in dollar-hungry bottom-feeding lawyers.

Sue said that the cost for forming an IRS 501 (c) 3 is \$1000.

Carolyn Newell said that liability insurance with one million dollar coverage costs them \$630 per year.

Josh said that NMHS could incorporate as ABQ-NMHS

Scott said that we will brainstorm how to attract more herpers, especially at UNM, to become members.

Scott said that we have to decide on the destination for our NMHS Memorial Day Weekend Field Trip. Ted suggested Los Quebrados. The nearby Socorro Nature Center has a restroom but no water and can be reserved. In a fairly rare preemptive presidential executive action of his own, Scott declared Los Quebrados to be the destination. Ted and Scott said that they will show up there on Friday evening.

Our Summer Potluck will be on July 9<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 PM at Jaci's. This is okay with Jaci even though she might not be there because her daughter is expecting a baby on July 17<sup>th</sup>.

9:20 PM

Scott said that on Saturday May 21<sup>st</sup> from 3 to 7 PM he will be at Valle de Oro NWR with his display during their Environmental Justice Day.

And he offered containers and aquariums to anybody who needs them.

ADJOURNED into raucous chatter.

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

These Draft NMHS Meeting Minutes of May 5, 2016 were read and submitted by Secretary Cosmos and were accepted, corrected and approved by members present on June 3, 2016

President Scott Bulgrin

Vice-President Josh Emms

Secretary Cosmos

Treasurer Letitia Peirce

Newsletter Editor