

Lancaster Herpetological Society

Husbandry, Education, Conservation, Community

The Lancaster Herpetological Society (www.lancasterherp.org) is a small club that meets once a month to discuss herps and herp-related issues. The club meets at the North Museum (www.northmuseum.org, 400 College Ave., Lancaster, PA 17603) on the 3rd Friday of every month. Meetings are open to the public, free of charge (donations accepted), and begin at 7pm. Please feel free to attend by entering through the back door (ring bell if locked). The membership requests that all children under the age of 16 be accompanied by an adult. For more information, contact Roy Mellott (LancHerpSociety@gmail.com). **Hope to see you there!**

Upcoming Meetings

Date	Speaker	Topic	Comments
10/21/11	Aura Stauffer	Update on Timber Rattlesnake Research	PA DCNR
11/18/11	Members' Night	Sharing Our Own Herps	Bring Your Own Herps
12/16/11	Caleb Hulse	Salamanders	LHS Vice-President
1/20/12	TBA	TBA	

Upcoming [Havre de Grace](#) Herp Shows: Nov 5th, Dec 17th, Jan 14th

Upcoming [Hamburg](#) Herp Show: Dec 3rd

Upcoming [Philadelphia](#) Herp Show: Nov 12th

Club Happenings

In July, LHS's very own Zach Barton shared his experience with using herps in the classroom. Not limited to just herps, Zach showed how living specimens can simultaneously engage students and connect with curriculum. Zach plans to share his presentation at the PA Science Teachers Association Convention this year in Hershey, and was very appreciative of all the feedback he received from the LHS audience.

The day of the August meeting was a very busy one for LHS.

Fall 2011 Newsletter
www.lancasterherp.org

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First LHS hosted a herping trip in the Jim Thorpe area. Many black rats and copperheads were found that day, but sadly no rattlesnakes were seen. Luckily, the topic that night was timbers, and the speaker, Richard Bonnett, did a good job of showing us what we had missed. Though we have had many timber rattlesnake presentations, the subject never gets old do the fascinating habits of this creature. Richard brought some unique pictures, including a wonderful fight sequence between two males!

Finally, in September, our very own president, Roy Mellott, shared his experiences with designing and building a snake garden. Though the concept of a

wildlife garden or even a native garden is hardly new, Roy's expressed intent to attract herps is novel. Still a work in progress, Roy showed and explained in vivid detail what he had done and what he yet wanted to do. Though many presentations have described hibernaculums, Roy's was the first to show how to build one on your property. We hope that Roy's plan will be successful in attracting native herps; it certainly was attractive to LHS herpers!

Forgotten Friend Reptile Rescue Update

As always, Forgotten Friend has several reptiles listed for adoption at www.forgottenfriend.org, including a red tail boa that was wandering Lancaster County Central Park earlier this month!

Book Review

"Stolen World: A Tale of Reptiles, Smugglers, and Skulduggery" by Jennie Erin Smith was a thoroughly captivating read! Based largely on first person interviews, Smith paints an honest, unflattering, yet compelling picture of the traders in illegal reptiles.

Smith focuses largely on the unlawful exploits of two contemporary individuals, Henry Molt and Tom Crutchfield, yet manages to cover two hundred years of natural science history and the institutions surrounding it. Both Molt and Crutchfield, as relayed by Smith, have deep character flaws and yet are so interesting that the reader will be challenged to put the book down.

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Smith has a good understanding of the reptile trade (and its current focus on morphs), and does not confuse the actions of a few individuals as representative of the herp community. However, no individuals or institutions come off unscathed under Smith's thorough reporting. Claims by government organizations on the scope of animal smuggling are scrutinized and rebuffed as exaggerated, and US Fish & Wildlife is accused multiple times of making smugglers out of ordinary citizens. Zoos and museums are also implicated in tacitly and contradictorily supporting both smuggling *and* law enforcement confiscations. Indeed, Smith exposes how many now captive bred and common animals in the herp hobby have dubious origins. Far from caught in the middle, Molt and Crutchfield are depicted as opportunistically obsessed with rare reptiles for both personal and economic reasons.

With no true heroes, "Stolen World" is a genuine, honest portrayal of the tensions inherent between conservation and education. Born a hundred years earlier, Molt's and Crutchfield's passion may have caused them to be hailed as heroes. Today, they are convicted smugglers, and great subjects for a book.

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Requests

LHS exists solely as a volunteer organization. The club would not survive without the constant and continual input of its members. Arranging speakers, organizing field trips, and producing the newsletter take volunteered time. If you have ideas for and are willing to take the lead in arranging speakers or field trips, please contact Roy Mellott (LancHerpSociety@gmail.com).

If you wish to contribute to the website, please contact Caleb (bursur83@gmail.com).

If you wish to contribute to the newsletter, please contact Zach Barton (zbarton@ycstech.org). Possible original contributions include: book reviews; species care sheets; notes from a field herping trip; herp news summaries; and opinionated essays. The deadline for the Winter 2012 Newsletter is approaching fast!

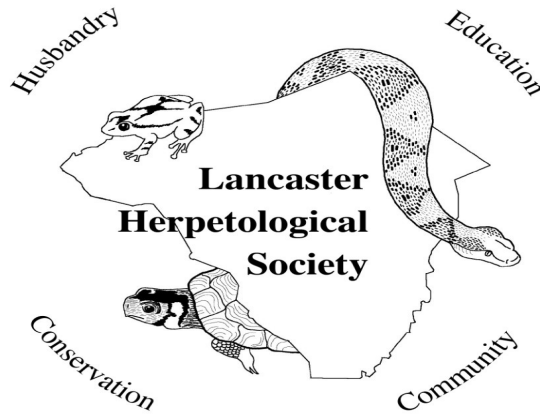
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Northern Copperhead from the LHS picture library

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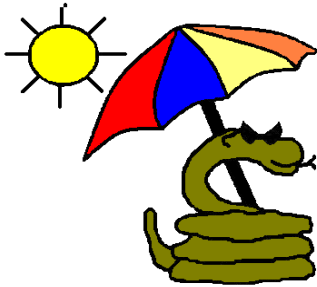
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FORGOTTEN FRIEND



REPTILE SANCTUARY



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