

# Lancaster Herpetological Society

Husbandry, Education, Conservation, Community

The Lancaster Herpetological Society ([www.lancasterherp.org](http://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](http://www.northmuseum.org), 400 College Ave., Lancaster, PA 17603) on the 3<sup>rd</sup> 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](mailto:LancHerpSociety@gmail.com)). *Hope to see you there!*

## Upcoming Meetings

<u>Date</u>	<u>Speaker</u>	<u>Topic</u>	<u>Comments</u>
4/15/11	Dr. Walter Meshaka	Frogs & Toads booklet	<a href="#">State Museum of PA</a>
5/20/11	Bill Love	TBA	<a href="#">Blue Chameleon Ventures</a>
6/17/11	Members' Night	Sharing Our Own Herps	Bring Your Own Herps
7/15/11	Zach Barton	Herps in the Classroom	<a href="#">York County School of Technology</a>

Upcoming [Havre de Grace Herp Shows](#): May 7<sup>th</sup>, June 4<sup>th</sup>, July 9<sup>th</sup>

Upcoming [Hamburg Herp Show](#): April 30<sup>th</sup>, June 11<sup>th</sup>

Upcoming [Philadelphia Herp Show](#): June 25<sup>th</sup>

## LHS on Facebook

LHS now has a Facebook page! Come visit us [www.facebook.com/lancasterherp](http://www.facebook.com/lancasterherp).

## New Website

LHS has a new look on the internet! Please visit us at [www.lancasterherp.org](http://www.lancasterherp.org).

## Club Happenings

In January, Harvey Bird of the [Metropolitan Herpetological Society \(NY\)](#) shared a slideshow of a trip he and some members of the Lancaster club took to Florida last spring. Harvey's form of storytelling is very entertaining and we certainly enjoy the opportunity to share experiences between fellow herp clubs. Harvey's trip was instrumental in orchestrating our May speaker: [Bill Love](#)! While on the trip, both Harvey and Jesse Rothacker presented to Bill's club, the [Calusa Herpetological Society of Southwest Florida](#). Indeed, the group was able to spend time at Bill and [Kathy Love](#)'s residence and draw on their decades of experience in the herp hobby.

[Dr. Tim Maret of Shippensburg University](#) shared a powerpoint on vernal ponds in February. We have several other speakers present on this topic as well, but this was perhaps the most appropriate timing as activity in the ponds began shortly after the meeting. The presentation got several members excited for the field herping season which starts with vernal ponds. This was

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the second time Dr. Maret has spoken to us, and it is always an enjoyable experience. We hope to have him for a third!

Bob Bull presented in March on native herps of Lancaster County and shared his experiences as a biological consultant. His presentation was thorough and lengthy, and it was made even longer due to the continuing questions from the audience. Bob was very candid and honest with members about the challenges herps face in Pennsylvania, including the complications of well-meaning regulations from a myriad of agencies and organization. Bob also shared some of his work on the elusive and reclusive bog turtle. Best of luck to Bob with his ongoing research in this field.

Again this year we started our annual membership drive. Yearly dues are a mere \$10, which is less than one dollar for every monthly meeting! If you would like to join, please mail your personal check to Kathy Tyson, Lancaster Herpetological Society Treasurer, 239 N. Pine St., Lancaster, PA 17603. Be sure to include all your contact information as well. Of course, dues can be paid with cash or check to Kathy personally at any regular meeting.

## Hopes for the Herping Season

*Caleb: This year I don't care what I find, I just hope to get out and start herping again since it has been a decade since I have been able to do any.*

*Roy: Over all I'd like to get out more locally and be able to document the species that are found in Lancaster, rather than traveling all around the state and other states looking for herps. Specifically, I'd like to find and document Broadheaded Skinks and Eastern Hognoses in the county.*

*Mark: I want to get out herping as much as I can this year, and go to as many new places as possible. I think the main animals on my list to find would have to be anything venomous since I am very enthusiastic about venomous reptiles, and hopefully an eastern hog-nosed snake. But really any herp is an awesome find for me! I just can't wait to enjoy good times with my herping buddies this year!*

*Adam: This year I would like to see Eastern Hognose, Copperhead, a Milk, and of course any other species nature will bless me with seeing 😊.*

*Harvey: I'd like to venture down to some spots in Maryland this year. While I am enthusiastic about finding any type of herps, the point for visiting Maryland will be to possibly see Eastern hognose snakes and Eastern chain kingsnakes. I also plan on hiking the Appalachian Trail this year in PA to look for timber rattlers and Northern copperheads.*

*Chad: I'd like to see a Lancaster County copperhead.*

*Zach: Last year, I only made one attempt to field herp with my family on vacation in the Outer Banks. Watching my then four year-old as he attempted to catch toads was hysterical. So this year I want to take my kids herping more (hopefully weekly), and try to hit all the Lancaster County spots.*

*Tim: This year I'll be happy with seeing anything under any rock, log, leaf, or any artificial cover (because it can get awfully frustrating when I don't).*

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Husbandry, Education, Conservation, Community

## Forgotten Friend Rescue Update

By Jesse Rothacker

Greetings from the Reptile Sanctuary!

It is always sunny and 70 degrees in the reptile room at Forgotten Friend, but it is amazing how the animals still know when Spring arrives. Everyone starts eating more and gets more active almost overnight.

This is our biggest Spring for our native turtle garden because we hibernated 5 different species outdoors this year: spotted turtles, eastern box turtles, wood turtles, a red belly turtle, and red ear sliders. The aquatic turtles come out of hibernation slowly over time. It's not unusual to catch them at the surface of the water taking a breath of air (but not leaving the water) every month of the winter. This winter was pretty cold and the ponds were consistently iced over, however, so aquatic turtles didn't appear to surface until March. In March we had days where 8 or more turtles were observed out of the water (spotted turtles, red ear sliders, and wood turtles appear the most cold-tolerant). On April 10 and 11, several eastern box turtles began to emerge from their hibernaculum, which is two feet of dirt, leaves, and compost. April 11 was the first day our red belly turtle decided to fully emerge from the water. It was a beautiful sight to see!



*Red Belly Turtle, a PA threatened species, spent most of April 11 collecting Vitamin D.*

I am very happy to report that every single turtle in the garden seems to be coming out of hibernation happy and healthy. This was our first year hibernating red ear sliders, spotted turtles, and the red belly turtle, so it was a relief to see them all wake up! Ironically, the only casualties of

# *Lancaster Herpetological Society*

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winter in our turtle garden were a wild pair of green frogs that appeared there without any help from us.

On the adoption front, we have a few corn snakes and a ball python available. We always have red ear sliders available. Also we have a CA King Snake that is up for adoption. And we are looking for schools or educational institutions to take eastern box turtles as well (we can't place them with individuals because of their protected status). If you're interested, please apply online at [www.forgottenfriend.org/apply](http://www.forgottenfriend.org/apply).

On a more personal note, some things have been changing with the rescue as a result of us having our first baby human in June 2010. I started job as Children's Pastor at my church on March 1st, which is an amazing opportunity. The church loves what I do with Forgotten Friend and gives me flexibility to continue doing it. Just yesterday I left the church office after a lunch meeting to come home on a hot day and put the tortoises and Larry the Nile Monitor out in the yard to bask. Then I got to monitor the turtle garden, post some pictures to the website for a Spring update, and return to the church office for a few more hours. Very few jobs would give me this kind of flexibility! The new job also gives our family and the rescue more stability as we start a new season of life with raising kids.

However, working a second job naturally cuts into the time I have for the rescue. For now we're not taking in most owned animals, and instead asking owners to list them for adoption through our public adoption forum at [www.forgottenfriend.org/forum](http://www.forgottenfriend.org/forum). This gives owners a chance to use some of the rescue's networking resources without cutting into our time and budget. Then when we get calls for emergency cases, we have more time and resources available to help those animals (who don't have owners already caring for them). For example, we recently took in a CA King snake because it was left with somebody that was not its owner. Another case was a burmese python that was abandoned in an apartment after the owner went to jail. We were glad to take in both of those snakes, because they had no one to care for them.

That's what's new at Forgotten Friend Reptile Sanctuary! Look for our "Critter Cultures" reptile show at every library in Lancaster County this Summer, and more than 40 libraries around the state!

## **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](mailto:LancHerpSociety@gmail.com)).

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

If you wish to contribute to the newsletter, please contact Zach Barton ([zbarton@ycstech.org](mailto: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 Summer 2011 Newsletter is approaching fast!



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Husbandry, Education, Conservation, Community

For more information go to [www.lancasterherp.org](http://www.lancasterherp.org)

E-mail us at [LancHerpSociety@gmail.com](mailto:LancHerpSociety@gmail.com)

Follow us on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/lancasterherp](http://www.facebook.com/lancasterherp)

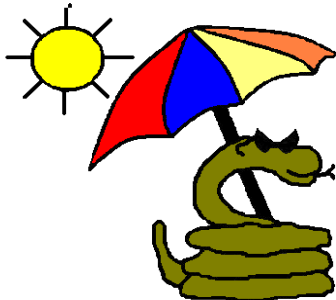
Join our Yahoo Group at <http://pets.groups.yahoo.com/group/LCHerp>

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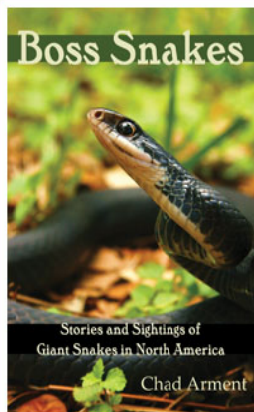
Lancaster Herpetological Society would like to thank our sponsors and partner organizations:



## FORGOTTEN FRIEND

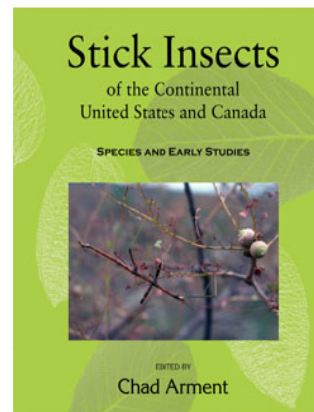


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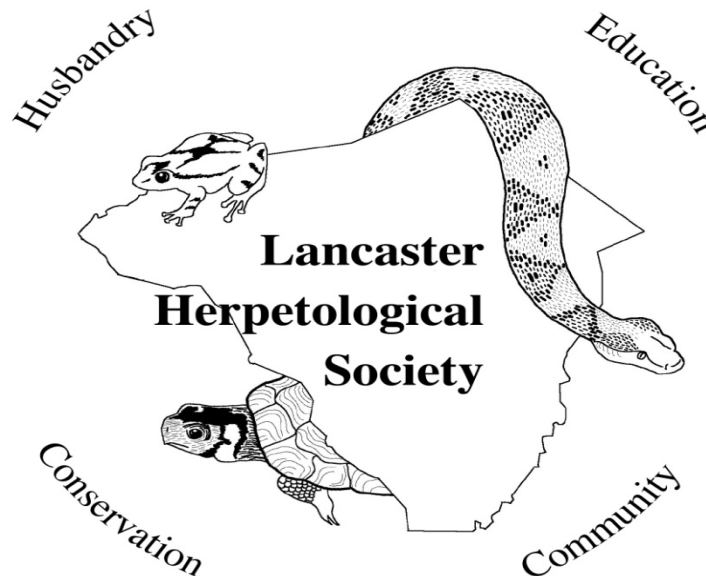


Spring 2011 Newsletter  
[www.lancasterherp.org](http://www.lancasterherp.org)

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*Meet new people with the same interests at*



on the

## **3rd FRIDAY OF EACH MONTH**

**7 p.m. at the North Museum**

**Located at the corner of College and Buchanan Aves,  
Lancaster, PA**

Enter through the rear door at the Buchanan Ave parking lot.

Ring doorbell if a door watcher is not present

*Joins us for:*

- GUEST SPEAKERS
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- FIELD TRIPS TO LOCAL "HERPING" SPOTS
- STUDIES OF TAXONOMY AND NOMENCLATURE
- STUDIES OF BIOLOGY AND ECOLOGY
- AND MUCH MORE

Spring 2011 Newsletter

[www.lancasterherp.org](http://www.lancasterherp.org)