Welcome to Lancaster Herpetological Society!

- **RESTROOMS**: Out the doors to the right.
- **TRADING POST**: Closed this month? Check it out next month. Bring your herp related goods to sell/trade!
- **SIGN-IN**: Sign in to make sure you’re on our e-mailing list.
- **T-SHIRTS**: $5 each while supplies last. (SALE!)
- **MEMBERSHIPS**: Memberships available through treasurer, Roy, or online. $15/year or $20/family.
- **HOSTESS**: Thank you Mary Anne for having us at the library!
Lancaster Herpetological Society 2017 Board Members

Dave McNaughton, President
Jesse Rothacker, Vice President
Roy Mellott, Treasurer
Monical Bortz, Secretary
Chris Bortz, Website/FB <- Send news to Chris!

Kent Hartmoyer
Pam Hartmoyer
Kelsey Frey
Carter Farmer
Alex Woerner
TONIGHT

7-7:40pm - Business Meeting / Show and Share

7:40 - Toad Presentation

7:55 - Toad Walk

8:45pm - Clean-up & Highland Pizzeria
Last Meeting (Feb)...
Kurt Regester: Amphibian Disease Research in PA.

Thank you Kurt!!
HERPING REPORTS

Herping = Looking for reptiles and amphibians in the wild.
Common Ribbonsnake
PET UPDATES & TALES

Share stories and photos of your pet herps! Send photos ahead of time to info@lancasterherp.org
Rankings Dragon
New addition to Zach classroom
Tri-colored Hognose snakes
Additional Pet Stories?
HERPS IN THE NEWS
EAST STROUDSBURG, Pa. (AP) — The National Park Service has been closing a road in the Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area in Pennsylvania so mating amphibians don’t get squashed by vehicles as they seek out mates.

Park Ranger Kathleen Sandt tells WNEP-TV that River Road was closed for the first time in February due to the mild, rainy weather that prompts salamanders, wood frogs and spring peepers to mate.

The park service has closed part of River Road overnights during mating season since 2003 so the amphibians can safely cross the highway to breeding pools.

http://fox17online.com/2017/03/02/pennsylvania-road-closing-to-spare-mating-amphibians/

Submitted by Zach Barton
Pumpkin-coloured alligators in US prompt wave of Trump

A number of alligators have been sighted in neighbouring American states coloured bright orange - and locals have been quick to make jokes likening them to the US President.

One of the reptiles was first sighted in Hanahan, South Carolina earlier this month, the Myrtle Beach Online reported.

Another popped up in Calabash, North Carolina on Tuesday local time and locals soon started calling him 'Donny' and 'Trumpgator'.

An official has told the USA Today that the colour could be from a rusty place where the animals spent a winter, like a rusty culvert or pipe.

Alligators shed their skin often, and will likely return to their natural dark green colour soon.
Coldblooded Does Not Mean Stupid

Humans have no exclusive claim on intelligence. Across the animal kingdom, all sorts of creatures have performed impressive intellectual feats. A bonobo named Kanzi uses an array of symbols to communicate with humans. Chaser the border collie knows the English words for more than 1,000 objects. Crows make sophisticated tools, elephants recognize themselves in the mirror, and dolphins have a rudimentary number sense.

And reptiles? Well, at least they have their looks. In the plethora of research over the past few decades on the cognitive capabilities of various species, lizards, turtles and snakes have been left in the back of the class. Few scientists bothered to peer into the reptile mind, and those who did were largely unimpressed.

“Reptiles don’t really have great press,” said Gordon M. Burghardt, a comparative psychologist at the University of Tennessee at Knoxville. “Certainly in the past, people didn’t really think too much of their intelligence. They were thought of as instinct machines.” But now that is beginning to change, thanks to a growing interest in “coldblooded cognition” and recent studies revealing that reptile brains are not as primitive as we imagined. The research could not only redeem reptiles but also shed new light on cognitive evolution.

Because reptiles, birds and mammals diverged so long ago, with a common ancestor that lived 280 million years ago, the emerging data suggest that certain sophisticated mental skills may be more ancient than had been assumed — or so adaptive that they evolved multiple times.

For evidence of reptilian intelligence, one need look no further than the maze, a time-honored laboratory test. Anna Wilkinson, a comparative psychologist at the University of Lincoln in England, tested a female red-footed tortoise named Moses in the radial arm maze, which has eight spokes radiating out from a central platform. Moses’ task was to “solve” the maze as efficiently as possible: to snatch a piece of strawberry from the end of each arm without returning to one she had already visited.

Submitted by Roy Mellott
The lizard family Anguidae is broadly distributed across the Northern Hemisphere (Vitt and Caldwell, 2009). Seven genera and 44 species of anguids are found in México (Uetz, 2016). The genus Gerrhonotus Wiegmann, 1828, is comprised of six species (Bryson and Graham, 2010; Uetz, 2016), including three relatively wide-ranging species (G. infernalis Baird, 1859; G. liocephalus Wiegmann, 1828; and G. ophiurus Cope, 1867) and three narrow-range endemics (G. farri Bryson and Graham, 2010; G. lugoi McCoy, 1970; and G. parvus Knight and Scudday, 1985). Gerrhonotus farri, G. lugoi, and G. parvus are unique among Gerrhonotus in that they all share a miniaturized body plan and smooth, glossy dorsal scales; however, various researchers have placed some of these species in different genera, including Barisia Gray, 1838 (Waddick and Smith, 1974; Smith, 1986) and Elgaria Gray, 1838 (Smith, 1986; Good, 1988). Recent studies based on molecular data strongly support a close relationship between G. parvus and the related species G. infernalis and G. liocephalus (Conroy et al., 2005). Molecular data are still lacking for G. farri and G. lugoi.
Indian Frog Secretes Virus-destroying Compound Through Its Skin

A peptide secreted by a species of Indian frog can destroy variants of the influenza virus. Frogs, with little defensive weaponry to rely on, have armed themselves with a chemical arsenal that gets leached out through their skins. In some frogs, this takes the form of deadly poisons; in others, the chemicals have been known to possess psychoactive properties. *Hydrophylax bahuvistara*, a species of fungoid frog found in India, secretes a substance that protects against viruses.

Researchers studying the frogs introduced their slimy secretions — obtained via a mild electric shock — to colonies of the H1 variant of the influenza virus. The compound stopped the influenza in its tracks, the work of a specialized peptide produced by *H. bahuvistara* that is able to destroy the virus. The researchers named the compound urumin after a kind of wicked whip-sword found in the region, and published their findings Tuesday in the journal *Immunity*.

They also gave a concentrated dose of the peptide to mice before infecting them with a deadly dose of influenza. Around 70 percent of the mice survived, an indication that urumin might work in humans, as well. Tests with human blood cells in the lab also indicated that it doesn’t appear to be toxic to us at functional doses.

**Urumin is welcome news for doctors and researchers seeking alternative methods to combat viruses.** Vaccines can be effective, but supplies would likely be insufficient in the face of a pandemic, and scientists don’t always match their yearly update of the flu vaccine to the most prevalent strain. Looking to mechanisms already deployed in nature offers a tried-and-true method of combating disease. There are some difficulties in mass-producing peptides of this sort, because enzymes in our bodies often break them down. The researchers hope to conduct further research in an attempt to create a version of urumin that can withstand our bodies’ defenses, in addition to widening their search to include other species and other peptides that may be effective against different diseases.

Submitted by Zach Barton
Forgotten Friend Reptile Sanctuary is a 501(c)(3) reptile rescue and education organization from Amish country, Pennsylvania. Our mission is to give reptiles a chance, by rescuing reptiles that need our help, and by providing fun outreach programs to spread our love of reptiles.
Adoptable Pets at the Rescue
- Ball Pythons
- Red Tail Boas

PENDING
- African bullfrog
- Russian Tortoise
- Bearded Dragon
Upcoming Events

- **May** - Critter Encounter!
- **July** - Crocodilians!
- **August** - Corn Snake Genetics!!
- **September** - Kids Night!
Any Additional upcoming Events?

• That Fish Place Dates: 7/16, 8/12, & 9/16
• Lancaster Native Plant and Wildlife Festival - April 29th, 2017!
• Northeast PARC - Pokomoke, VA 2nd week of August
Lancaster Native Plant & Wildlife Festival

Saturday, April 29, 2017
9 a.m. - 4 p.m.
Overlook Park
Across from the Manheim Township Public Library
595 Granite Run Drive, Lancaster

PRESENTATIONS...
Zoo America  Native PA Animals
Catherine Zimmerman  Creating Habitat Heroes Across the Nation
Claudia West  Wild and Neat: Native Plants that Bridge the Gap between Horticulture and Ecology

SEVERAL Native Plant Vendors
*Children’s Activities  
*Live Animals  
*Local Conservation Organizations  
*Wildlife Art and Crafts Vendors  
*Speakers & Workshops

CHECK OUT OUR WEBSITE FOR FULL SCHEDULE AND DETAILS  www.habitatmt.org

9:30 am
Native Pennsylvania Species

Pennsylvania’s wildlife heritage is presented in this program, highlighting native Pennsylvania animals and discussing the common, as well as the uncommon species which reside in our forests, fields and towns.

11:30 am
Catherine Zimmerman
Creating Habitat Heroes Across the Nation

Zimmerman and film crew spent two years traveling the country to create the documentary film: Hometown Habitat, Stories of Bringing Nature Home. This presentation is a behind the scenes look at making the film and the impetus behind story choices. Using clips from segments of the film Catherine will share those success stories and works in progress, that re-awaken and redefine our relationship with Nature. The goal: Build a new army of habitat heroes and make natural landscaping the new landscaping norm.

1:30 pm
Claudia West
Wild and Neat: Native Plants that Bridge the Gap between Horticulture and Ecology

So you think natives plants are weedy and messy? This lecture debunks this myth and explores the aesthetic value of native plants and their highly attractive cultivars. You’ll be fascinated by the range of colors and textures found in our native flora. Numerous design examples and plant combinations demonstrate the beauty, elegance, and diversity created by using regionally appropriate native plants in our landscapes. We will explore how native species grow in the wild and translate this knowledge into powerful design principles for your garden. Enjoy and be inspired!
The Toads of Pennsylvania

- American Toad
- Fowler's Toad
- Eastern Spadefoot Toad
American Toad

- Most Common Toad in Pennsylvania
- Spotted Chest
- Large Warts on Lower Leg
- Sounds Like an Angry Computer
Fowler’s Toad

- Clean Chest – No or Few Spots
- Sounds Like a Crabby Old Man

Credit: Chris Petersen
Eastern Spadefoot Toad

- State Threatened Species
- Very Rarely Above Ground
- Breeds in Heavy Rains

Credit: Seth Berry
Life Cycle

- Eggs
- Tadpoles
- Pollywogs
- Toads
Migrating Amphibians

"Life Size" Amphibians

Commonly Seen During Early Spring Migration in North Jersey

- **Spotted Salamander**: Up to 9" long
- **Jefferson Salamander**: 4-8"; brownish-grey with blue speckles on sides; long toes; broad head
- **Red-Spotted Newt**: Juvenile is orange; adult is olive
- **American Toad**: 2-4"; rough, warty skin
- **Spring Peeper**: 1" long; gray frog; X on back
- **Wood Frog**: 2-3" long; white belly with black spots
- **Pickevil Frog**: 2 rows of square white dots on back
- **Four-Toed Salamander**: White belly with black speckles; 4 (not 5) toes on hind feet
- **Red-Back Salamander**: Broad tail; occasionally seen
- **Ocellated Salamander**: Occasionally seen
- **Green Frog**: Up to 4" long; brownish with brown head; white belly; tympanum: croaking

Prepared by Madison Hill, Conserves Wildlife Foundation of NJ
Handling Toads

- Toads on the road not in the water
- Open hands, light holding
- Washing hands
- Defensive toads
TOAD WALK
INSTRUCTIONS
1. Do not step into wetlands or ponds! Do not disturb toad eggs.
2. Only help toads that are crossing roads get to the other side.
3. Handle toads with care with two hands.
4. Look both ways before crossing the road. Traffic can be moving fast.
5. Venture along the paths on your own or with an LHS board member leader. Library will be locked behind us?
Thank you for caring about amphibians!
Crocodile farmers ‘running out of space’, rogue reptiles could be refused

CROCODILE farmers are warning they will soon be unable to take rogue reptiles captured in the wild. Queensland has 10 licensed crocodile farms but several already refuse animals removed under the state government’s crocodile management plan.

Hartley’s Crocodile Adventures group operations manager Michael O’Brien said territorial male crocodiles needed to be kept in separate enclosures with farms limited in both space and finances.

Mr O’Brien did not rule out culling as a means of keeping the population in check.

“My way of thinking is the government has to look at all the options.

“The removal of crocs for a number of years has been somewhat effective, but maybe we’re getting to the point where that won’t be sufficient.”

Former Hartley’s manager Geoff McClure said culling hurt the Far North’s eco-tourism brand.

Submitted by Zach Barton