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, Alex Woerner Website/FB
Kent Hartmoyer
Pam Hartmoyer
Kelsey Frey
Carter Farmer
TONIGHT

7-7:45pm - Business Meeting / Show and Share
7:45pm - Critter Encounter
8:45pm - Clean-up & Highland Pizzeria
Last Meeting

Toad Migration Walk @ Overlook Park

Thank you LHS
Last Month
Native Plant and Wildlife Festival, Overlook Park
April 29

Thank you LHS
HERPING REPORTS

Herping = Looking for reptiles and amphibians in the wild.
Musk Turtle

Wood Turtle

Spotted Turtle

Snapping Turtle
American Toad

Green Frog

Bullfrog

Pickerel Frog
Timber Rattlesnake
PET UPDATES & TALES

Share stories and photos of your pet herps! Send photos ahead of time to info@lancasterherp.org
Additional Pet Stories?
HERPS IN THE NEWS
4 things to watch for at the Virginia Zoo's revamped "World of Reptiles"

Crocodiles, tarantulas and snakes, oh my!
If you’re a regular Virginia Zoo visitor who’s recently noticed the reptile exhibit is shut down, have no fear. The zoo is undertaking a $2.6 million renovation of its “World of Reptiles,” to open sometime in late 2017. The “world” will combine aspects old and new. The formerly 12,000-square-foot building built in 1974 is keeping its bones, but the zoo is gutting the inside and adding 3,000 square feet. The zoo is still fundraising for $800,000 of the project.

While the work gets under way, the animals are on vacation. More than half were sent temporarily to other zoos, some are in a trailer rented by the zoo, and others are staying in the veterinary hospital.

Here’s what The Pilot learned from a sneak peek with Greg Bockheim, the zoo’s executive director:

1) **There will be new animals.**
More than 200 animals will be on display, with an additional 100 or so behind the scenes. Of those, there will be about 30 new species, Bockheim said. A few examples: a Gray’s monitor lizard from the Philippines, new turtle and tortoise species, and crocodiles – hopefully the rare and “huge” Orinoco variety from South America.

2) **There will be almost 40 new exhibits.**
Zoo officials are knocking out many of the walls and replacing them with windows. Visitors will be able to see much more behind the scenes and ask questions of workers such as those in the reptile nursery and “frog laboratory.” Then there are completely new exhibits, including an area devoted to venomous snakes and a crocodile display with underwater viewing. The zoo also partnered with the Elizabeth River Project for an aquatic exhibit displaying creatures native to Hampton Roads’ waterways.

3) **The surrounding area also will look new.**
Not only are officials adding a “tower” to the building that can be seen from the zoo entrance, they are redoing the adjacent Beastro restaurant to add outdoor seating. Also new: a large, climbable statue of a Burmese python out front.

4) **The monkeys and sloths aren’t going anywhere.**
They might not be reptiles, but they’re popular – especially among donors, Bockheim said. Exiting the reptile building, visitors will still see a sloth exhibit and squirrel monkeys outside. The monkeys will have a wider enclosure.

More information on the new reptile area can be found on the zoo’s website.

Submitted by Zach Barton
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
Zoo Knoxville officials said Saturday that 33 reptiles died at the zoo, including rare and endangered species, from an unknown event earlier in the week.

Zoo workers found 30 snakes and a lizard, all housed in the same building in the zoo’s reptile area, dead on Wednesday morning. The zoo’s animal clinic and veterinarians from the University of Tennessee College of Veterinary Medicine were called in to investigate. The surviving animals were evacuated from the building.

Lisa New, president and CEO of Zoo Knoxville, said Sunday night that the zoo believes the deaths were not due to disease but "an environmental cause," although additional autopsy results are pending.

New said in a news release Saturday that the loss was a tragic event for the zoo, as several endangered or threatened species breeding programs were lost.

“This is a devastating and catastrophic loss to our zoo,” she said. “These animals were important ambassadors who helped so many people understand the role snakes and lizards play in the balance of nature.

“We also lost breeding programs for several endangered and threatened species,” she added. “It is especially difficult for our herpetologists who have dedicated their careers to caring for and advocating for these animals.”

The building where the event happened was home to 52 animals before the event and has been closed while an investigation continues. No other buildings in the reptile area were affected. Three critically endangered species were lost during the event, the Louisiana pine snake, the Catalina Island rattlesnake and the Aruba Island rattlesnake. Popular snakes killed included a forest cobra and an albino Eastern diamondback rattlesnake.

Zoo officials said the building was under inspection by KUB and other agencies to try to determine what caused the deaths. What caused the deaths, however, did not target just snakes, but the building housed a majority of the snake population.

Some of the animals lost were on exhibit in the building, but others were not. So far, no correlation has been drawn between exhibit status and survival.

Submitted by Zach Barton
JAKARTA, Indonesia (AP) — A 25-year-old Indonesian man has been swallowed whole by a python on the island of Sulawesi, villagers and news reports said.

A six-minute video on the website of the Tribun Timur publication shows villagers slicing open the python’s carcass to reveal the legs and torso of the dead victim, named Akbar.

Junaedi, the secretary of Salubiro village in West Sulawesi province, told The Associated Press that villagers began searching for Akbar on Monday night after realizing he hadn’t returned from working on his palm oil crops the previous day. Junaedi said Wednesday that the search party found scattered palm oil fruit, a picking tool and a boot, and then spotted the engorged 7-meter (23-foot) -long reticulated python.

"When its stomach was cut, we first saw his boot and legs near the neck," he said. "It seems he was attacked from behind because we found a wound on his back."

Reticulated pythons grab onto their prey with dozens of sharp curved teeth and then squeeze it to death before swallowing it whole. They are widespread in Indonesia and other parts of Southeast Asia.

Reports of humans being killed by pythons are extremely rare. In the wild they are known to eat monkeys, pigs and other mammals. Junaedi said Akbar's absence wasn't noticed until Monday because his wife was visiting her parents in another province. The alarm was raised when his uncle called on him and found his house locked.

Like many Indonesians, Junaedi uses one name, as did Akbar.
A jungle python addicted to methamphetamine is one of hundreds of animals being rehabilitated at an Australian prison by staff and inmates. The reptile, which the New South Wales Justice department did not name “due to legal reasons”, was discovered during a police raid of a methamphetamine, also known as ice, lab and required six weeks of detoxification while housed at the corrective services NSW wildlife care centre in Windsor west of Sydney. Ian Mitchell, a senior overseer at the John Morony correctional complex, said the python had absorbed the drug through its skin and as a result of its addiction it was more confused, erratic and aggressive than it would normally be. “It just takes time for the drug to leave the snake’s system but through our assistance, we managed to calm it down after several months and bring it back to its routine feeding patterns,” Mr Mitchell said.
Washington DC— April 7, 2017. The United States Court of Appeals, District of Columbia Circuit in the case of the United States Association of Reptile Keepers v. Ryan Zinke, Secretary of The Interior and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Humane Society of the United States and Center for Biological Diversity, ruled in favor of USARK on the question of Lacey Act authority to prohibit interstate transport of species listed as “injurious” under the Lacey Act. The court held that, “the government lacks authority under the shipment clause to prohibit shipments of injurious species between the ‘continental’ States.”

What does all of this mean?
The way has now been cleared to legally resume trade of the Burmese python, North African python, South African python, reticulated python, DeSchauensee’s anaconda, Beni anaconda, green anaconda and yellow anaconda within the “continental United States.” However, it appears that injurious species cannot be transported into the District of Columbia. The shipment clause specifically references the “continental United States,” “Hawaii,” the “Commonwealth of Puerto Rico,” and “any possession of the United States,” and the “District of Columbia” as distinct designations. In the court’s opinion the “District of Columbia” is an expressly separate designation from the “continental United States,” and specifically identified as prohibited in the shipment clause. In conclusion, it appears that there will be no legal transport into Washington, DC without the appropriate permits.

"Congress defined the phrase “continental United States” in a statute enacted by the same Congress in the year before the 1960 addition of the shipment clause. See Pub. L. No. 86-70, § 48, 73 Stat. 141, 154 (1959); see also 1 U.S.C. § 1 note. Under that definition, “[w]henever the phrase ‘continental United States’ is used in any law of the United States enacted after the date of the enactment of this Act, it shall mean the 49 States on the North American Continent and the District of Columbia, unless otherwise expressly provided.""

Keep in mind that all nine constrictor snakes continue to be listed as injurious under the Lacey Act. Export and interstate transport are allowed. However import without a special permit is a felony and strictly prohibited. Violations can carry heavy fines and prison time.

Submitted by Adam Mattel
MIAMI (AP) — U.S. wildlife officials can't legally stop interstate trade of giant exotic snakes such as Burmese pythons, which threaten to eat all the native mammals in the Florida Everglades, an appeals court has ruled.

However, snake owners are cautioned not to move their reptiles just yet, as other legal challenges may remain. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is reviewing the ruling.

The North Carolina-based United States Association of Reptile Keepers sued the U.S. government in 2013, asking a federal court in Washington, D.C., to overturn a nationwide ban on importing certain constrictor species or transporting them across state lines.

Trying to protect native wildlife and prevent non-native snakes from spreading, U.S. wildlife officials banned Burmese pythons, yellow anacondas, and northern and southern African pythons in 2012. The ban was extended to reticulated pythons, DeSchauensee's anacondas, green anacondas and Beni anacondas in 2015.

The first giant snake ban was announced in 2012 in the Florida Everglades, where officials say tens of thousands Burmese pythons have decimated populations of native mammals that had never before encountered such a large predator. Native to parts of Asia, pythons found a home in the Miami-area wetlands after being intentionally let loose by their owners or escaping breeding facilities after Hurricane Andrew in 1992.

The ruling does not change the ban on importing these snakes or other "injurious" species, nor does it affect state laws such as Florida's prohibition against keeping pythons as pets. **The entire ban was unnecessary because the vast majority of exotic snakes sold in the U.S. are bred domestically, and they could only survive in the wild in a handful of counties in Florida and Texas,** said Phil Goss, president of the reptile keepers association.
New Sherriff in town in Avondale, AZ


Submitted by Jesse
ISLE OF PALMS, S.C. – Two dead leatherback sea turtles have been discovered along South Carolina's coast. The Post and Courier reports (http://bit.ly/2q93SQF) that the large sea turtles are rarely seen in the area. One was found dead on the beach in front of Fort Moultrie on Friday, while another was first spotted already decomposing behind a sea wall on Isle of Palms on Saturday. South Carolina Department of Natural Resources sea turtle recovery coordinator Michelle Pate says both turtles were hit by boats. She says that 14 leatherbacks have washed up dead since January, with 10 of those in the past three weeks. Most of the turtles, which are endangered, had died from boat strikes.

Submitted by Zach Barton
HARRISBURG – Even salamander lovers would agree that the candidate for the state amphibian in Pennsylvania is plain ugly. The brown, slimy hellbender could join the likes of the white-tailed deer, brook trout, Pennsylvania firefly and ruffed grouse as Pennsylvania's official icons. State Senator Gene Yaw, R-Williamsport, has proposed the eastern hellbender as the state amphibian. The aquatic salamander can grow to be more than 2 feet long.

“They are a natural barometer of water quality and they live where the water is clean,” said Yaw, recalling his days as a youngster catching hellbenders in the local creek. “If they are surviving in the streams in this area, that is a good sign for the water quality. Here is nature's own testing kit for good water quality.”

Much of what remains of a depleted hellbender population in Pennsylvania can be found in waters within Yaw’s district -- which includes Bradford, Lycoming, Sullivan, part of Susquehanna and Union counties.

The campaign on behalf of North America’s largest salamander is the brainchild of the Chesapeake Bay Foundation’s Student Leadership Council. The students have studied the hellbender extensively, wrote the first draft of Senate Bill 658, and are working for its passage.

Submitted by Zach Barton
Girl, 10, shoves fingers up alligator’s nostrils to escape its jaws

Juliana Ossa used a trick she learned at Gatorland in Florida after the nine foot reptile clamped on to her left leg as she swam in shallow water in Orlando on Saturday.

After unsuccessfully striking the alligator on the head she remembered the trick that would eventually save her life.

“I tried hitting it on its forehead to let me go,’ she told NBC. ‘That didn’t work, so I thought of a plan they taught in Gatorland. The guy was wrestling the alligator with its mouth taped, and in this situation it was the other way around.
A snake hunter who survived 12 venomous bites is killed by his wife, police say

A North Carolina man who claimed to be the world’s first “snake hunter for hire” – and the survivor of 12 venomous snake bites – met his demise over the weekend in the most unexpected of ways.

Dean Ripa’s wife reportedly shot and killed him, say police in Wilmington. The Wilmington Star reports Regina Ripa, 40, shot her 60-year-old husband Saturday afternoon in an apartment over the couple’s so called “Serpentarium” in Wilmington. He died at the scene, according to media outlets.

Regina Ripa is charged with first-degree murder in what investigators say may have been a domestic-related homicide.

Dean Ripa’s biography refers to him as a “herpetological-wunderkind” who suffered his first venomous snake bite at age 13. He was in intensive care for two weeks. “His adventures have taken him to five continents and more than 30 countries, and they have sometimes been harrowing,” says his biography on CapeFearSerpentarium.com. “He has been wracked by malaria, schistosomiasis and dysentery, lost in Amazonian jungles, stranded in the New Guinea highlands, and held up at gun point during military coups in West Africa and Suriname. He has survived twelve venomous snakebites to date.”

Author William S. Burroughs reportedly described Ripa his book “The Western Lands” as someone who could have been a character in a Joseph Conrad novel. Ripa earned his living as a “snake hunter for hire” for zoos, laboratories and private interests, before founding the Cape Fear Serpentarium in 2001, says his website.

Ripa claimed to be the first herpetologist in the world to watch venomous bushmasters mate....and was bitten by them at least seven times in his life.

Submitted by Dave McNaughton
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.
Channel 11 News renewed our weekly “Reptile Report” Summer Series for June through August 2017!

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3NrkAB2f3Js
Adoptions of the Month

65 pound Sulcata Tortoise, Bucks County, PA

15 year old Russian Tortoise, York, PA
Adoptable Pets at the Rescue

- Ball Pythons
- Red Tail Boas

PENDING
- African bullfrog
- Russian Tortoise
- Bearded Dragon
Adoptable Pets on Facebook.com/forgottenfriend
Upcoming Events

- **July** - Crocodilians!
- **August** - Corn Snake Genetics
- **September** - Kids Night