LANCASTER HERPETOLOGICAL SOCIETY
HUSBANDRY, EDUCATION, CONSERVATION, COMMUNITY

SPRING CALENDAR

APRIL 18, 7pm
Toad Crossing Walk and Salamanders of Lancaster County Presentation
with Ray Mellott Jr.

APRIL 26, 9am-3pm
Lancaster Native Plant and Wildlife Festival

MAY 4, 12-4pm
Pet Day, Fred F. Groff, Inc Life Celebration Home

MAY 16, 7pm
PA Amphibian and Reptile Survey with Brandon Rubie

JUNE 7, 11am
Coming out of your Shell, Appalachian Trail

JUNE 20, 7pm
Critter Encounter

JULY 18, 7pm
Crash Course in Corn Snake Genetics with Zach Barton

AUGUST 15, 7pm
Kids Night

SPRING IS HERE!

It’s time to keep an eye and an ear out for your favorite spring amphibians! These little-known treasures need our support as they somehow survive against all odds in our man-made ecosystems. This spring take a few moments to reflect on what you can do to help amphibians in your neighborhood, schoolyard, church, and workplace.

1. Don’t use pesticides and herbicides unless absolutely necessary, and in those cases follow package directions.
2. Take out a portion of your lawn and grow plants native to your area instead. Native plants are food and homes for insects, which in turn feed amphibians and birds.
3. Don’t ship your leaves away! Use your leaf litter as free mulch! Keep a pile in the back garden for wildlife habitat.
4. Don’t let your rain water wash down the gutter! Help water be cleaned and absorbed back into the water table slowly and naturally by planting a rain garden.
5. Learn what amphibians live in your area. Figure out when and where they breed and help protect those areas.
6. Tell your neighbors how fun it is to find salamanders in your brush pile and toads in your rain garden! Share those magical moments with others.

REPTILE SHOWS:
- April 26- Northwestern Berks Reptile Show– Hamburg Field House
- May 10- All Maryland Reptile Show– Havre de Grace Community Center
- May 17– York Reptile and Pet Expo– York Expo Center
- May 24-25- Repticon Baltimore– Timonium Fairgrounds

HELP ME CROSS THE ROAD SAFELY

American toad being helped across the road during the LHS Camping Trip this April to Gifford Pinchot State Park.

Kelsey Frey
Letter from the President

February gave us a first time speaker in Dr. Emi Knafo. She discussed her work in the Galapagos Islands performing surgery on those famous tortoises. It was an interesting and detailed tour of the difficulties and successes of surgery on a remote island.

An LHS favorite, Dr. Walter Methaka made a return visit in March to discuss herps in the everglades. As usual, he delivered a presentation full of great information and humor. It's always great to have this herpetology master as a speaker.

On a personal note, I will be stepping down as president of LHS in April. I am relocating to Florida. It has been a great honor to have served LHS as president in 2013 and 2014. I have immensely enjoyed being a member of this great group of herpers and hobbyists. The amount of knowledge and experience within LHS is nothing short of incredible. I will miss the people, meetings and events that have made LHS a fun place to be.

Vice President, Caleb Hulse, will take over as president for the remainder of 2014. I encourage all of you to get involved, as a volunteer or in a leadership position, and continue to improve LHS. It takes all of us to make this group the best it can be. We have come a long way in the past few years thanks to input from members and a willingness to try new things. Our Critter Encounters and Kid's Night were great successes with the public. Our roster of speakers is top-notch by any measure. LHS has become well known in the Lancaster area for its friendly, knowledgeable members willing to educate the public about reptiles and amphibians. But, LHS is only successful because of the hard work of the board and the members. Please be involved and contribute to the future success of LHS.

Thank you and happy herping!

Jeff

Who is Forgotten Friend Reptile Sanctuary?
Forgotten Friend Reptile Sanctuary is a reptile rescue in the middle of Amish country, Pennsylvania. Registered as Forgotten Friend, Inc., we are a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization focused on educational outreach and rescuing reptiles. Lancaster Herpetological Society board member, Jesse Rothacker, is the founder and president of Forgotten Friend Reptile Sanctuary.

Learn more at
Forgottenfriend.org

Forgotten Friend Reptile Sanctuary Updates

February gave us a chance to visit our friends from Southeast Reptile Rescue in Georgia while they were doing an educational exhibit here in Harrisburg. It was nice of them to take some alligators off our hands and back down to their warm, southern climate. It’s always a privilege to work with other rescues and herp societies from coast to coast!

Currently we have plenty of adoptable herps here at Forgotten Friend:
3 Red-eared Sliders
1 Florida Soft Shell Turtle
1 Russian Tortoise
1 Marbled Gecko
1 Ball Python
3 Red-tailed Boas

In March Forgotten Friend Reptile Sanctuary turned 10! Along with the countless herps we have rescued, one of my favorite milestones is having provided over 1,000 outreach programs! In the summer of 2014 we’ll be invading every library in Lancaster County with snakes, lizards, turtles and crocs, as well as many other libraries around the state. Part of our 10 year anniversary celebration included a 10 year logo contest. The winning entry came from Bill Dussinger in Lititz. Among other prizes, a copy of the Dr. Seuss book, “Miles and Miles of Reptiles,” was donated to a school library of his choice, Clay Elementary in Ephrata.

As the never-ending winter finally breaks, the herps have started to move. Members report that many herps have made appearances since late March. No doubt, the reptiles are as eager to feel the warmth as we are.

Our first 2014 meeting brought us Capt. Tom Burrell from PFBC to discuss herp laws and how those are applied and interpreted. Though we closed the meeting with even more questions about the laws, we also got clarification on many previously misunderstood areas.

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Member’s Spotlight: Caleb Hulse

When and how did you first get interested in herps?
I have always been interested in herps, since I was a kid. This is most likely due to my dad being a herpetologist.

Do you keep any herps?
Presently I have two red-tailed boa rescues, Grace and Mercy, a ball python, Tamara, a bearded dragon, Bazil, and a crested gecko, Helios.

Tell us about a pet herp you’ve had the longest or are particularly fond of.
Tamara is the longest pet herp that I have had and it has been nice watching her grow from only a few months old to now, almost four.

Tell us a little about your professional career.
I work for Postal Connections, managing the store in Red Lion, PA.

Do you have any children?
My only children are the two cats who run our house.

What clubs and organizations are you active with besides LHS?
When needed I will assist with Forgotten Friend Reptile Sanctuary, and I am an avid board gamer.

Tell us about a memorable herping trip.
The best herping trip I ever went on was as a kid in Western PA. We had great weather and found over 15 species in one day, including worm snakes.

Where’s your favorite place to herp?
Right now my favorite place is in the southern part of the county around various parks and preserves.

LHS Maryland Zoo in Baltimore Field Trip!

February 1st was an early Saturday morning for a dozen LHS members who piled into a rented van and headed south before most of us were half awake. We needed to arrive at Baltimore Zoo before it opened to receive a special behind-the-scenes tour! Months earlier, Forgotten Friend Reptile Sanctuary had facilitated a monitor lizard adoption for the zoo through Kevin Barrett, the zoo’s reptile specialist. A great connection was built and collaborative ideas flowed. Kevin offered to host a small LHS field trip at the zoo as a special way of saying thanks for the adoption.

LHS members felt like royalty as we were personally escorted by zookeepers behind the scenes to see zebras, rhinos, and giraffes off exhibit! We also got to watch monkeys misbehaving while the zoo was still closed, which is always fun. Herp highlights included a live Hellbender feeding and an extensive look at the zoo’s award-winning golden frog breeding program. It was truly an exhilarating trip full of laughs in the van and jaw-dropping experiences at the zoo. BIG THANKS to Kevin and the gang from MD Zoo for making it all possible!
LHS Camping Trip to Gifford Pinchot State Park

Thirteen LHS members and friends went herping on the camping season opening night at the York County State Park, Gifford Pinchot.

Adam, Kelsey, Dave, Caleb, Pam, Kent, Jesse, Kenny, Chris, Monica, Cassie, Ella, and their uncle, Steve, enjoyed the sounds of peepers all night long! Helpers; environmental education specialist at the park, Beth Kepley-McNutt, and volunteers Betsy Leppo, Sally Ray, and Cecil; guided our exploration of the wetland pools in search of diving beetles, dragonfly nymphs, amphibian egg masses, wood frogs, and spotted salamanders.

Peepers posed left and right with vocal sacs inflated. Volunteers explained which tiny copepods were carrying egg sacs and how to best scoop up macroinvertebrates.

Conversations filled with nature-nerdness and roasted peeps were highlights of the after-herping under-the-stars party.

In the morning a few dedicated birding herpers revisited the wetlands by day to see egg masses and attempt to spot the birds we were hearing. We found pine warblers, chipping sparrows, yellow-rumped warblers, Eastern towhees, American Coos, Osprey, Bald Eagle, hermit thrush, and many, many, many painted turtles!

Another nature highlight was watching an osprey devour a fish while we ate hot-dogs for breakfast.

Don’t miss the next trip!
Thank you LHS Volunteers!

LHS volunteers logged over 80 hours at That Fish Place on Feb 8 and March 29-30. We engaged visitors with snakes in our arms and big smiles! We raised money for the club by offering instant snake photos. LHS is so grateful for our fantastic volunteers eager to get out into the community and meet people! Our enthusiasm overflows into the crowd and our smiles are contagious. Thank you LHS volunteers!

Coming Up!

Lancaster Native Plant and Wildlife Festival
April 26, 9am-3pm

Reptile Week
June 28 - July 6

AUGUST 15
LHS Kids Night
BECOME A MEMBER OF LANCASTER HERPETOLOGICAL SOCIETY!

We are a group of reptile and amphibian enthusiasts. We meet the third Friday of every month at 7pm at the Manheim Township Public Library. We host guest speakers on a variety of topics, facilitate critter encounters, lead field herping adventures, and attend community events. Our club is open to all folks curious about cold-blooded creatures! We hope you can join us!

LHS Board Members
Jeff Chiyka, President
Caleb Hulse, Vice President
Roy Mellott Jr., Treasurer
Kelsey Frey, Secretary, Media Director
Jesse Rothacker
Adam Mattel
Zach Barton
Contact Us: info@lancasterherp.org

LHS Membership Form

*Get invitations to member’s-only limited-space trips and outings, and support a group that brings excellent speakers, educational opportunities, and camaraderie to the herpetological community and beyond.*

Please return this form with payment (cash or check) to an LHS board member, or join online at www.LancasterHerp.org.

Name: __________________________________________________________________________
Address: __________________________________________________________________________
Email: __________________________________________________________________________
Phone: __________________________________________________________________________

Circle Membership Type:
Individual 2014 (Includes LHS t-shirt) $25.00  Family 2014 (includes 2 t-shirts) $45.00

Membership dues are paid annually each January