

SERPENTINE NEWSLETTER



A.C.T. HERPETOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION

BOOK BARGAINS

Fifteen members took advantage of JOHN WEIGEL'S generous offer to supply "Care of Australian Reptiles in Captivity" for \$9. Copies have arrived and will be available at the September meeting (upon the production of your \$9 of course!)

STILL AVAILABLE FOR \$3 - amazing value!

"THERE'S A FROG IN MY ~~THROAT~~ STOMACH" by Mike Tyler

"HERPETOFAUNA", journal of the A.A.H.S. containing interesting articles from herpetologists all over Australia (including David Carter and Dean Ward).

PERMANENT DISCOUNT

CHENKA, the quality bookshop which used to be in Barrier Street, Fyshwick, and is now re-located in Shop 2, 83 Wollongong Street, has offered a permanent discount of 10% off all herpetological books purchased by members of our Association.

COVER & ILLUSTRATIONS :
MIKE THOMPSON.

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MEETING

MONDAY SEPTEMBER 18
7.30 P.M.
A.N.U. ZOOLOGY (downstairs)

SPEAKER: DR. ROBERT JENKINS

"HERPETOFAUNA OF AUSTRALIA'S TOP END"

7.30 Members Exchange of News
7.45 Reptile of the Month - EGERNIA CUNNINGHAMI

There will be brief talk on the basic biology of Cunningham rock skink. ALAN THORNE received sufficient indications of interest to proceed with the proposed local survey of the population status and distribution. There will be further discussion of this project, with distribution of maps and record sheets.

8.00 (approx.) Speaker

HERPETOFAUNA OF AUSTRALIA'S TOP END

This month's talk will be presented by Hank Jenkins who has recently returned to the A.C.T. from the Northern Territory where he worked for 2 years as a wild-life biologist with the Conservation Commission of the Northern Territory.

During his time in the Northern Territory, Hank travelled extensively throughout many remote regions of the Top End including Arnhem Land and its off-shore islands, and encountered a wide variety of the reptile and frog faunas.

Hank will take us through a pictorial safari of Australia's Top End environments and whet our appetites with a display of the many and varied reptiles and frogs that inhabit these far away places.

N.B: We shall still have the problem of the Evolutionary Biology Seminar occupying the tea-room in September, so we shall again be confined to the Seminar Room and the use of the urn and tables in the foyer. Members are requested therefore to minimise noise levels in the entrance area!

PROFILE

The A.C.T. Herpetological Association is extremely fortunate to have as its RESOURCE PERSON, and CONSULTANT, experienced and well-know herpetologist RICHARD LONGMORE.



Richard has had a profound interest in herpetology for over 30 years. He was collecting, keeping and breeding many species of A.C.T. herpetofauna long before current legislation restricted this practice. Richard argues, quite correctly, that those early days taught him a great deal about reptile husbandry, ecology and natural history and set the scene for the wealth of experience he has now gathered on local herpetofauna.

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He remembers with a great deal of fondness those early days of riding his bike out to places like Coppin's Crossing, Bungendore, Tarago and Lake George to search for reptiles. In those days Lake George was literally crawling with tiger snakes and it was not uncommon for him to return with half a dozen superb specimens in his haversack.

He, with mates Hank Jenkins and John Wombey, was one of the very few people to discover, catch and photograph in the early 1960's our little local Earless Dragon - a dragon Richard fears may now be locally extinct due to urbanization and the spread of suburbs.

His early school day practice of keeping specimens and copious notes on collection sites, species' behaviour, breeding, feeding habits and so on served him well when he went to the ANU to study zoology, and he breezed through his studies there to become a professional zoologist with the Commonwealth Government. He is currently a zoologist and scientific editor with the Bureau of Flora and Fauna. He was the editor of the Atlas of Elapid Snakes of Australia (soon to enter its 2nd edition) and is now the volume editor for the Fauna of Australia vol.2 Amphibia, Reptilia and Aves. This large volume (over 800 pages) has over 100 authors and Richard expects it to be released in late 1991.

Richard is kept busy in his role as Editor and Public Officer for the Australian Society of Herpetologists Incorporated (Australia's professional Society for herpetologists and one which we hope many young members of the Association will aspire to join one day). However he always has time to chat to members about any herpetological subject - from catching snakes (he's always getting local calls from the Police and conservation authorities to catch and remove problem snakes in Canberra suburbs) and identifying small lizards, to advice on how to coax a reluctant turtle to feed. If you have any questions about our local reptiles and amphibians please nail Richard down at our meetings - he does enjoy talking about snakes and lizards and he has kept most species successfully.

Richard is fortunate to be a delegate to the First World Congress of Herpetology to be held at the University of Kent in the U.K. in late September. He is giving a talk on snake biogeography at the Congress and has promised to tell us all about the Congress on his return.

Richard is one of the group of missionary people who met one day in the Zoology Department to create our Association, way back in June 1985, and he continues to be a constant source of both inspiration and practical advice. His generosity in contributing his hard pressed time, and his positive encouragement are very much appreciated.

N.B: O C T O B E R M E E T I N G
4th Monday NOT 3rd Monday

As Dr. Harold Cogger will speak to us on his return trip from Round Hill. the meeting night will Monday October 23.



A.C.T. HERPETOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION

GPO BOX 1335
CANBERRA A.C.T. 2601

A MARVELLOUS LETTERHEAD.....

and a permanent address

At last we have a proper letterhead with a magnificent black and white drawing of our emblem, *Physignathus lescurii howittii*, which has been specially drawn and generously donated to the Association by the outstanding Australian wild-life artist, FRANK KNIGHT. Frank is official wild-life artist to the CSIRO Division of Wild-life and Ecology. The Association is very grateful to him.

The Association has also acquired a G.P.O. Box so that continuity of address is assured despite changes of committee personnel.

One word is yet to be added to complete our letterhead - "INCORPORATED". As mentioned in the last newsletter, the process of incorporation is proceeding smoothly.

THE SCHOOLS' SCIENCE FAIR.

Our society contacted the Schools' Science Fair earlier this year and offered two prizes for entries related to Herpetology.

I went along on Thursday 3rd August to judge the entries on your behalf. There were only two entries in the Kindergarten- Year 6 section related to herpetology and no entries in Year 7-12.

The prize for K-6 was awarded to a very inspired and creative work from the Year I children at Isabella Plains Primary School. Their subject was entitled "The Story of Our Tadpole", describing in words and pictures the progression from frogspawn to tadpole to frog.

It was unfortunate that there were no entries from the older children but next year we will have our own category and I am sure this will generate more interest in our subject.

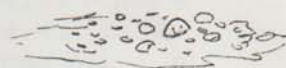
The presentation of prizes was held on the 11th August and Jo, admirably as always, represented us on this occasion. Jo presented three books to the school library:

- "There's a Frog in my stomach" by Mike Tyler
- "Australian Reptiles In Colour" by H. Cogger
- " Our Endangered Wildlife"

The books were presented to Aaron, Cassie, Hailey, Jeff, Marcus, Mark, Scott and their teacher.

We congratulate them on their efforts and hope many more children like these will continue to take an interest in the reptile life of our country.

Charles Atkinson.





Behind the scenes
with John Weigel -

Australian Reptile
Park, Gosford.

Down the Deua
with Dave.



Taking temperatures
in termite
mounds - Deua.

ORRORAL VALLEY EXCURSION.

On Sunday 27th August nine intrepid members braved the howling winds and driving snow to check out Orroral valley for reptiles. We arrived in the valley to find the sun shining but with a rather cold wind. We parked at the Nursery Swamp track car-park and after donning parkas, jerseys and hats according to taste, set off down into the valley. This consisted of open, rolling country with isolated stands of trees with very little understorey. Fallen branches were common and there were a few areas which had scattered surface rocks.

The rocks and logs gave shelter to all sorts of creatures. There were bush cockroaches, crickets, flat worms, worms, termites, sugar ants, jumping ants, wolf spiders, caterpillars, insect larvae and some very handsome beetles. Of greater interest to us were the resident lizards. The three-toed skink (*Hemiergis decresiensis*) was by far the most common. Other species found were *Leiopisma delicata*, *L. entrecasteauxii*, *L. platynota* (the red-throated skink), *L. trilineata*, *Sphenomorphus tympanum* and *Ctenotus robustus* - a pretty good haul. There was a small creek running down, which formed small soaks as it passed through flatter areas and one frog species was collected under a log near this moist ground, this turned out to be *Limnodynastes tasmaniensis*, the spotted grass frog.

Once we had exhausted the lower areas we crossed the road and began to explore the upper slopes. This was a different habitat with larger patches of shrubby bush, more trees and large areas of exposed rock. The run-off from the rocks resulted in small boggy patches. We found a new assemblage of creatures sheltering here. Scorpions were quite common, a few centipedes were found and more specimens of the spotted grass frog. The only skink from below the road which was represented above was *S. tympanum*. Two lizards were added to the list, one was the jacky lizard (*Amphibolorus muricatus*) represented by a very small, very sleepy specimen rudely exposed to the chilly wind when its stone was turned! The other was a healthy looking Cunningham's skink (*Egernia cunninghami*) A juvenile brown snake (*Pseudonaja textilis*) was found, admired and photographed.

The climax of the day was the discovery of three Eastern small-eyed snakes (*Cryptophis nigrescens*) under a rock amongst thick leaf litter. The largest was 29cm and the others two measured 16.5 and 15 cm. They were charcoal grey with darker heads and were extremely attractive little snakes and a big hit with the younger members of the party.

Having put all the assorted frogs, lizards and snakes back under their rocks and logs we forsook the exposed valley for the shelter of the picnic area for a late lunch. Altogether a very good day and an enjoyable learning experience for those of us new to herpetology.



Norman Morrison.

Some pet: This 6 m python was caught recently under a house in Fort Lauderdale, Florida. Wildlife trapper Todd Hardwick (second from right) believes the 113 kg creature was once a pet that was released in the park opposite the house where it was caught.

COMMITTEE NOTES

When the 1989-90 committee met for the first time on July 31 it was unanimously decided

- 1) that the newly constituted A.C.T. Herpetological Association should immediately apply for membership of the Australasian Association of Herpetological Societies.

THE AUSTRALASIAN ASSOCIATION OF HERPETOLOGICAL SOCIETIES links together herp groups from around Australia and New Zealand. It publishes the magazine "Herpetofauna" twice a year, and arranges conferences and field trips from time to time. A field trip is planned for spring 1990, venue yet to be announced.

- and 2) that the A.C.T. Herpetological Association should apply for membership of the South East Conservation Council.

WHY THE CON. COUNCIL ?

"The object of the Association is to promote the conservation of reptiles and amphibians...."

It is no longer possible to care about reptiles but not care about conservation. The number one threat to all Australian fauna is the accelerating loss of habitat. Our beloved diamond python is just one example of a reptile which was once abundant but has been drastically restricted in numbers and range through the destruction of its habitat. With the current record number of coastal development proposals being approved by the NSW government, the diamond python is under threat. There are many other reptiles with a lower public profile which are also threatened by "development" of various kinds.

The CONSERVATION COUNCIL OF THE SOUTH-EAST REGION AND CANBERRA (Inc.), as its name suggest, is the peak conservation body of the region, representing environmental and natural history organisations throughout the south-east region of New South Wales and the A.C.T. It works by directly lobbying government and government agencies, and by research publication and education on regional environmental issues.

Structures, issues and programmes are decided at quarterly general meetings of members' delegates, with an executive elected from member groups meeting (currently once a fortnight) to direct the work of Council.

The A.C.T. Herpetological Association's application for membership will be presented to the General Meeting on September 12. If approved, membership of the Council will entitle us to send two delegates to the quarterly General Meetings.

Are there any members who are sufficiently concerned about the conservation of reptiles and amphibia to be prepared to act as delegates to the CON COUNCIL ? Please let us know at the September meeting, or phone 47 7963.

Graeme Gow's *Complete Guide to Australian Snakes* is unique. For the first time almost all species and subspecies now known have been illustrated in colour and, in its aim to make identification an easier process, this useful reference offers even more — the photographs show colour variation between juveniles and adults of the same species as well as illustrating the diversity between specimens of the same species found in different habitats.

The illustrations are matched by a clear and comprehensive text. Opening chapters cover all aspects of snakes and man's involvement with them. These include notes on biology and lifestyle, collection and preservation, care in captivity and common diseases, venoms, antivenoms, snake bites and first aid. The systematic study of species that follows is accompanied by keys and distribution maps which further aid identification.

Graeme Gow's Complete Guide to Australian Snakes is an indispensable reference for layman and scientist alike and deserves a place in the library of anyone who sees in Australia's natural heritage a source of rich wonder and delight. It will be particularly treasured by those who, like the author, regard snakes as beautiful and fascinating creatures.

**ALL TALKS
FOR ONLY 50c**

Yes, this copy of Graeme Gow's beautiful new book on Australian Snakes, which is retailing for \$45, could be yours for a mere 50 cents.

The A.C.T. Herpetological Association is raffling this review copy*, supplied by publishers Angus & Robertson, to raise funds for the group. Tickets are 50 cents each or 3 for one dollar.

Can you afford not have a go?



* Richard Longmore will review the book on his return from the World Herpetology Congress.

ANGUS
& ROBERTSON
PUBLISHERS



GRAEME GOW'S COMPLETE GUIDE TO
**AUSTRALIAN
SNAKES**

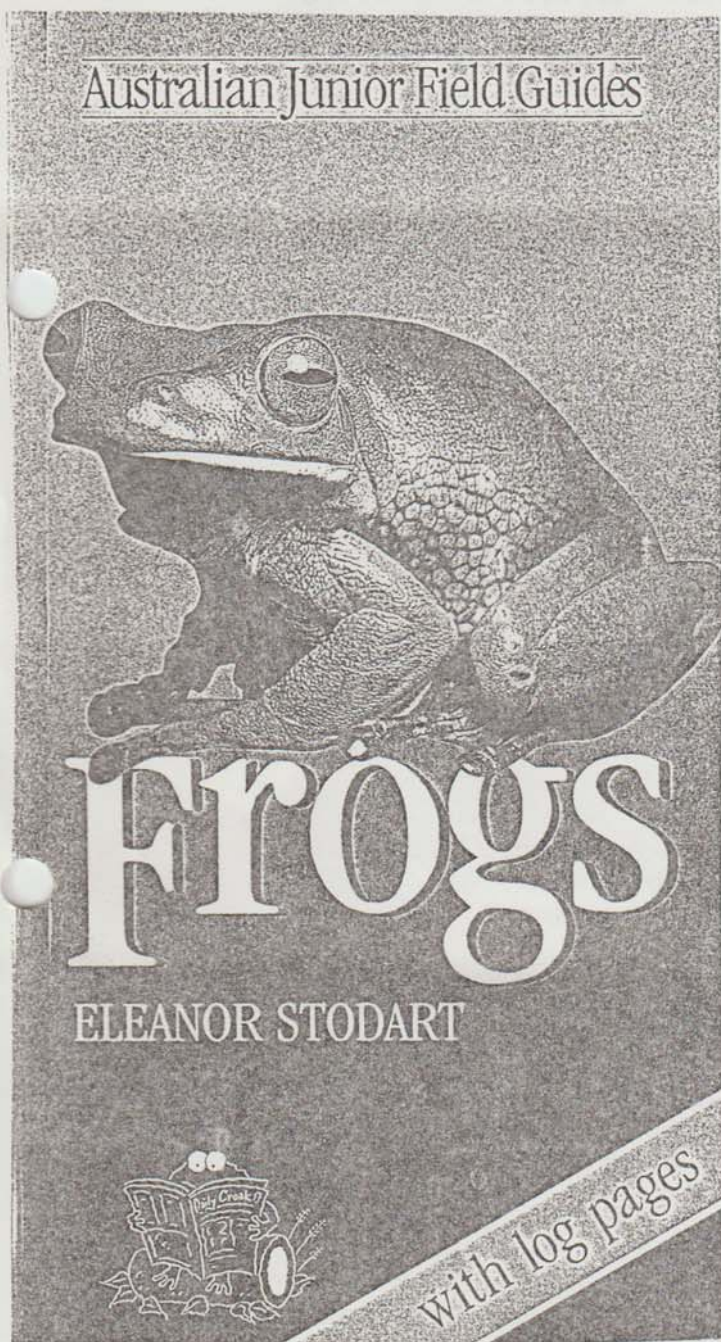
BOOK REVIEW

FROGS

by Eleanor Stodart - Weldon Publishing

Photographs * John Wombey C.S.I.R.O
* National Photographic Index of Australian
Wildlife
* Kathie Atkinson
* Weldon Trannies

Cost: \$6.50



This slim publication belongs to the Australian Junior Field Guides, Series and is written for young readers in a notebook form with "log" pages at the back of the book so that personal records can be kept of frog sightings.

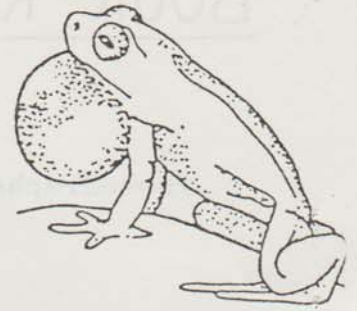
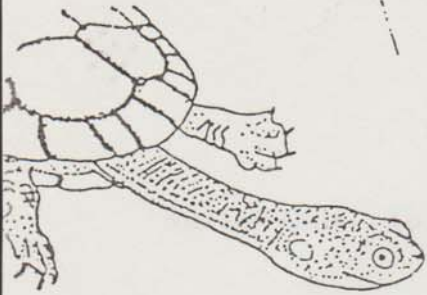
As well as pages identifying frogs, there are pages of instruction as to where to find frogs, how to identify frogs (excellent drawings) when to look for frogs and the naming method used in the book.

The actual information about each frog is grouped under the headings Tree Frogs; Ground Dwelling tree frogs; Bull frogs; Marsh Frogs; Water holding frogs; Burrowing Frogs, Toadlets; other frogs.

The book ends with a chapter about tadpoles and how to rear them to the frog stage in a glass tank - boiled lettuce as the tadpoles food is the secret to success.

This publication has a very imaginative presentation of information and should have much appeal to young people who are becoming interested in the natural environment. It is also a must for every school library. Incidentally the photographs by A.C.T. Herpetological Society member John Womby are, as with all John's photos, superb.

FIONA BRAND



HERPETOLOGICAL TECHNIQUES SHORT COURSE

Information Leaflet 08/88

Herpetology is the study of reptiles and amphibians.

This course consists of two subjects: Applied Herpetology and Advanced Herpetology. It is a practically oriented course for technicians, park rangers, teachers, graduates and amateur herpetologists with a sound knowledge of reptiles and amphibians.

The subject Applied Herpetology allows students to become familiar with and also master some important current Australian herpetological research techniques. Skills that are demonstrated and practised include identification, diet analysis, remote sensing (telemetry), preservation methods, frog call analysis and illustration techniques. Ten weekly three hour evening sessions and one day weekend excursion are involved.

The subject Advanced Herpetology allows students to master important field techniques including telemetry, the study of a single species' ecology. This subject involves 2 full weekend excursions and 3 evening sessions. Students produce a report of their work which will be of publishable standard. The previous subject is a pre-requisite.

The course is available only at Sydney Technical College.

IT'S ON! IT'S ON! IT'S REALLY ON THIS YEAR!

That is assuming we have fifteen participants ...

THE HERPETOLOGICAL TECHNIQUES COURSE

the only one of its kind in Australia. run by outstanding herpetologist and photographer HARRY EHMANN, is to be made available at our request.

The Introductory Course will be offered in Term 4, 1989 with the Advanced Course following in Term 1, 1990.

After prolonged negotiations with the N.S.W. Technical and Further Education authorities, the attempt to offer the course from Queanbeyan had to be abandoned (finance being the main stumbling block) but arrangements have now been approved to offer the normal semester long course as a block intensive, the theory and laboratory work being held in Sydney, and the Field Day at the venue between Sydney and Canberra, yet to be determined.

The theory and laboratory work would be condensed into two weekends of 30 hours each, the last weekend in October (28-29) and the last weekend in November (25-26). The field trip would be held on Sunday November 12.

Sessions would begin at 9 a.m. Saturday, (taking the form of 3 hours on 1 hour off) and conclude at 5 p.m. on the Sunday.

A bonus for those able to travel to Sydney for the Friday evenings is that they would be able to attend the Australasian Association of Herpetological Associations meetings at the Australian Museum at 8 p.m. both Fridays.

Yes the two weekends would be concentrated, would be intensive, would be hard work. BUT this is an extraordinary opportunity, achieved through persistent prolonged negotiations, and the wonderfully supportive efforts of Harry, to make this unique course available to A.C.T. enthusiasts.

Participation in this course would not only educate members and develop their individual competence and expertise but it would also enable the A.C.T. Association to conduct herpetofauna surveys in a more scientifically valid manner.

There is great scope for the Association to assist in mapping herpetofauna in the A.C.T. Alan Thorne's *Egernia cunninghami* survey is an excellent pilot project for the group.

Harry Ehmann's Herpetological Techniques Course will greatly enhance our expertise. Areas targeted for development, such as Gungahlin, are obvious priorities, as Conservation is dependant upon sound knowledge, and in most areas our knowledge is, to say the least, partial. It is an exciting challenge to A.C.T. herpetologists.

CRYPTOPHUS NIGRESCENS RECORDS ACCUMULATING

When Jenkins and Bartell published "Reptiles of the Australian High Country" in 1980, there were no records of *Cryptophus nigrescens* (the small-eyed snake) in the A.C.T.

There are now 9 records of this snake, 6 of them coming from the A.C.T. Herpetological Association.

Although it is common along coastal eastern Australia, extending down into Victoria, occurrences in the Southern Highlands are rare. However the recent discoveries of our members suggest it may be more common than its recorded sightings suggest. The paucity of records may be as much a consequence of its cryptic nocturnal habits as its distribution, and a further indication of our ignorance of herpetofauna distribution patterns in the A.C.T. (Our discoveries suggest that *Apraisia parapulchella* is also more widely distributed than first thought).

All our six records of *Cryptophis nigrescens* are from the Orroral Valley, but interestingly the colour has varied considerably from very dark anthracite to a quite light grey, much the same colour as the Rosedale specimens, although the colour variations were less than 100 metres apart.

Incidentally the six *Crypophus nigrescens* were, in order of discovery, found by JO VANDERMARK (1) ANDREW HILL (2) and ANDREW MORRISON (3).

MEMBERS

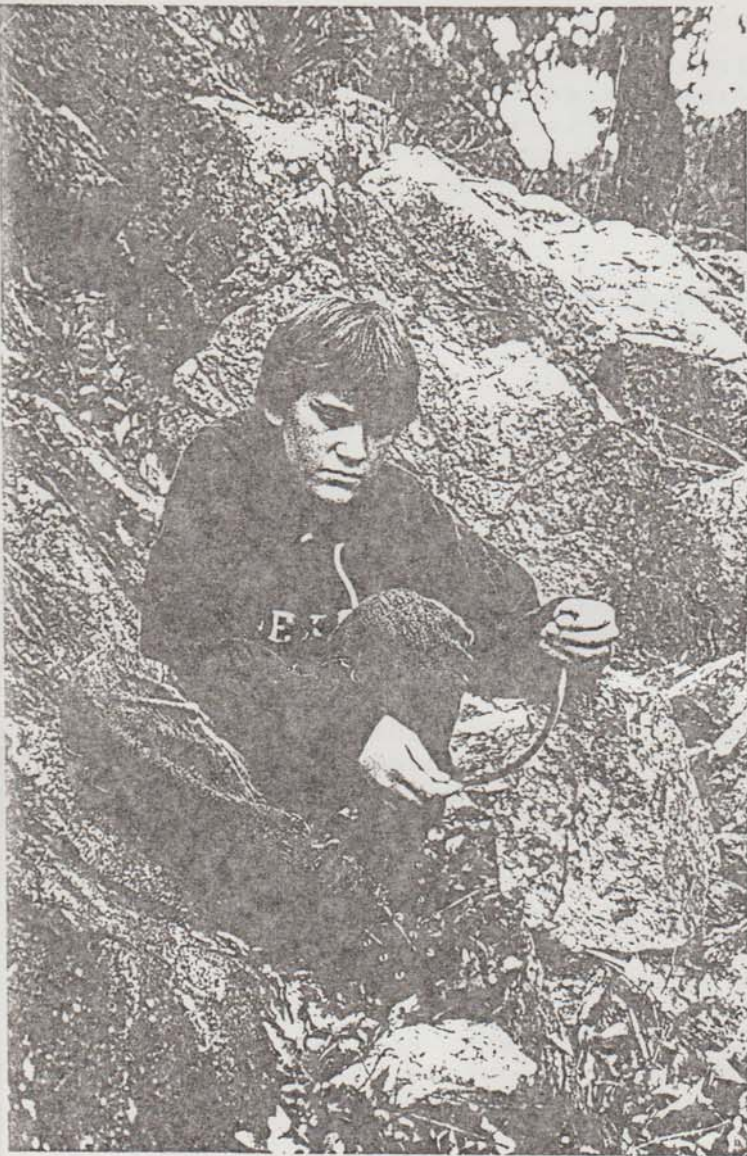
NEWS

This semester I am doing a scientific research project at Weston Creek High School. I am conducting my project around the salinity problem in the Yass River area, near Gundaroo. The aim of my project is to discover whether;

- a) water salinity in the Yass River area has an effect on the distribution of *Chelodina longicollis*, the Eastern Long Necked turtle.
- b) dryland salinity has an effect on the distribution of other reptiles in the Yass River area; such as nesting sites for skinks.

I have been to the area, in which there are four creeks that flow into the Yass River. These creeks are Williams Creek, Dicks Creek, Back Creek, and Scabing Creek. I plan to test water and soil samples for levels of salinity, and then determine the salt tolerance of the reptiles. By mapping salt levels and distribution of reptiles, I should be able to discover whether reptiles don't like, or don't mind, a salty environment.

Miles Yeates



Student members MIKE THOMPSON and ANDREW MORRISON

By the time you read this newsletter, A.C.T. herpetologists DAVID CARTER, ARTHUR GEORGES and RICHARD LONGMORE will be in residence at the First World Congress of Herpetology being held in the U.K. at the University of Kent.

Fifteen hundred herpetologists from all over will be there. All the A.C.T. delegates are giving presentations. We wish them well (and envy them!) and look forward to hearing their reports at the October meeting.

Vice-president DAVID CARTER will be proceeding from the U.K. to Germany where he will attend the VARANID SYMPOSIUM in Bonn from Sept. 19-22. Dave will be presenting papers on "Courtship and Mating in Wild Varanus Varius" and "The Reproductive Cycle in Female Varanids". At the World Congress, Dave will speak to his poster "Evidence of Parental Involvement in the release of hatchling Varanid varius from termitaria."



STEVE SARRE departed for Western Australia this week to further pursue his studies of the shingleback lizard (which over there is not Trachydosaurus rugosus but Tiliqua rugosa - I wonder if it suffers from schizophrenoid tendencies?). Steve will not return to Canberra till November. I could think of worse places to be in the spring...

CHANGE OF ADDRESS:

The Secretary, DI BAKER-FINCH has moved house and is now to be found at 3 Fulton St. Macquarie 2604. Telephone: 511969.

The Treasurer, DOMINIC POOK has also moved to 3 Bower Place, Kambah. 2902, Telephone: 318858.

One of the most pleasing features of the August newsletter was the fact that no fewer than fifteen members contributed to it. This time a dozen members have contributed, with several pieces already promised for next month. It is not simply that it makes the Editor's job considerably easier but that such a level of participation is an indicator of a very healthy Association!

OPEN HOUSE FOR HERPETOLOGISTS?

ROSEDALE

Second week of the school holidays -

OCTOBER 1 - 7

or any time in between.

The idea has been mooted. Expressions of interest at the September meeting or phone Jo on 47 7963.

IN THE WILD WITH HAL COGGER

OCTOBER 20-22

This is a rare opportunity to observe/work in the field with Australia's foremost herpetologist, author of the major reference "REPTILES & AMPHIBIANS IN AUSTRALIA", Deputy Director of the Australian Museum. DR. HAROLD COGGER.

When he returns from the World Herpetological Congress Hal will be heading out to Round Hill Nature Reserve in Western NSW where he has been conducting herpetofauna arid area research each spring for over 20 years.

Round Hill is an exciting reserve for birds as well as reptiles (Major Mitchell cockatoos, splendid wrens and other stunning arid area birds).

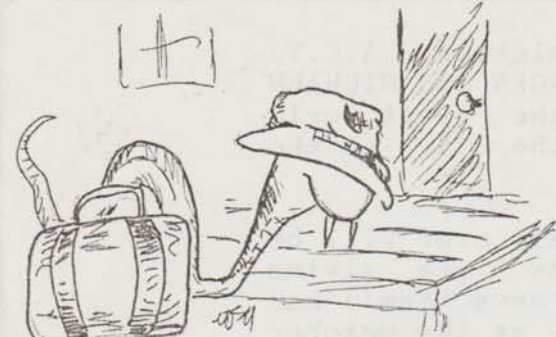
Details will be available at the September meeting. As it is 5-6 hour drive some members plan to go out Thursday or Friday, others just for the weekend.

I thought I had a diamond python ahead. A pair of variegated wrens and a pair of white-browed scrub wrens were obviously agitated, jointly scolding an intruder of some kind. As I moved closer, I discovered it was not a python but a goanna excavating a termite mound. Unfortunately it was aware of my approach and quickly moved away to the shelter of some bushes before I could photograph its activity.

Birds can be a great help in locating reptiles. I have, on a couple of occasions, become aware of a diamond python through avian distress, which was responsible for my wishful thinking this time.

Reluctantly I dragged myself back to the house to mark assignments before I found a python. The only snake I located was the *Drysdalia rhodogaster* which avoided the excursion last month. It was back in its regular spot.

EXCURSIONS



SUNDAY 3-9-89 AT "MOODONG" (amongst Moo-dung)

A wonderful time was had by all, and first and foremost thanks to our leader, John Wombey, for all the knowledgeable information he so happily parted with, and our host David Gregory.

Some 13 people turned up at Moodong (or Ballaba) property on the road from Captains Flat to Braidwood, some clouds, but otherwise the weather was perfect.

Once through the front gate we soon found the first frog of the day, *Uperoteia laevigata*, a rough-bodied little frog with orange markings on the back of the legs and in the groin. A well executed crossing of the Shoalhaven river of all 3 4WD vehicles soon took us up to higher ground.

David took us straight to a hole in the ground where he regularly sees a red-bellied black snake. A bit of tail was showing and before he knew what had hit him *Pseudechis pophyriacus* was unceremoniously pulled from his hole by John. He measured 54 inches, was pink below and was spreading mulberry coloured faecal matter.

We wandered through the paddocks lifting stones, rocks and logs, and came up with a variety of creatures. Later in the day we went into the woods but only discovered the 7th Eastern Blue tongue *Tiliqua scincoides*.

But back in the paddocks we turned up 3 other skinks. 1) *Lampropholis guichenoti*, spotty in appearance with a broad brown-black strip along its side. came from under a log. 2) *Hemierigis decresiensis*, a super glossy skink with yellow/orange belly, also known as the three toed skink. 3) *Leiopisma duber. ieyi* (previously known as *Trilineata*) a broad brown stripe on the back lined with white. Two beautiful spotted grass frogs, blotchy grey-green with a golden stripe over their backs were much admired. A frog never seen but clearly heard was *Crinia signifera*.

Three beautiful snakes were found, white-lipped snakes, *Drysdalia coronoides*, one a lovely salmony-grey below measured 34 cm (we are slowly turning metric!) It showed what must have been a nasty peck mark from a bird behind its head, but this was now healed. These diurnal snakes were also found under rocks. Last but not least, a Copperhead snake (*Austrelaps superbus*) was discovered. Its olive-brown back and opal-pink tinges on its belly and yellow lines between, made it a beautiful snake. The scales around the mouth were partly black and white giving a teeth-like appearance. It measured 56 centimeters.

We searched in vain for a Tiger snake but were very satisfied with this score anyway. Thanks once again to John and David for a most enjoyable day. Apart from reptiles there were other pleasant things to observe like the wildflowers, the birds and wombat. Our gourmet president fortified us with a variety of her cakes—three cheers for the chef!

MIEKE VAN DEN BERGH

