

THE FORKED TONGUE

THE MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF THE GREATER CINCINNATI HERPETOLOGICAL SOCIETY

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July 2004

The Editor-s Den By Grady Calhoun

The July Forked Tongue features articles on breeding Northern Blue Tongue Skinks and not giving up on "Bad Eggs" by Grady Calhoun.

Calendar of Events

9/1/04 Monthly Meeting at the Cincinnati Nature Center; Matt Fille will be speaking on a reptile collecting trip he took in the southwestern USA.

July Highlights

The July meeting featured Dr. Marty Rosenberg. His talk included a diverse illustration of the many remarkable adaptations and traits of reptiles and amphibians. This was a wonderful program that appealed to people of all ages and herpetological expertise. We thank Marty for making the trip down to Cincinnati and Dean for arranging for such a quality speaker.

Election Update!

Don Lunsford provided a slate of individuals willing to run for office. The list is as follows:

President	Grady Calhoun
Vice President	Dean Alessandrini
Treasurer	Peggy Fille
Sergeant at Arms	Bruce Fille

No one has come forward to run for secretary. This individual would be responsible for preparing correspondence between the GCHS and other organizations as well as capturing meeting minutes to forward to the editor.

Elections will take place in October and the new officers will take over in November. Please contact any of the existing officers if you would like to run.

GCHS forum on our Website

We are trying to get with the times, so at the request of

a member Tom Nagel has established a forum on the GCHS website (www.cincyherps.com in case you forgot!). You will have to sign up for a password as you do for most forums but it is not difficult. Hopefully this will provide another good means of communications among the members.

Breeding Northern Blue Tongue Skinks

by Grady Calhoun.

We did it again but this time it was on purpose. I say that because you may remember that last year we had babies due to an escaped male entering the female's cage.

The skinks are maintained individually in rather large quarters. Each animal has a floor space of approximately 4 feet by 2 feet. The cages are relatively short ~6" but that doesn't effect these terrestrial creatures. The skinks are maintained in a reptile room that is maintained at approximately 85 degrees F during the day. The heater is completely shut down for 12 hours at night allowing the room to cool a few degrees. Each cage is equipped with a basking light that provides a hotspot of more than 95 degrees F. I have found it important to provide hide boxes. The skinks occupy them most of the time that they are not eating or basking. I have mentioned in previous articles that my skinks are very picky eaters rarely accepting anything other than dog food. I have to mix leafy greens with dog food to get them to eat them. They will occasionally take cantaloupe. Large water bowls are also provided. I have watched my skinks drink deeply so a fresh supply of water appears to be quite important.

There was not much preparation for breeding done. I did not cool the animals down because the room itself cooled down to about 65 degrees at night during the winter months. The animals were fed normally throughout the winter. On February 18, the female was placed in the male's cage. The reaction was immediate and started with biting of the female's neck. Within 5 minutes of the introduction breeding took place and lasted approximately 30 seconds. The

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female was left with the male for two days after that. During the following weeks and months there was no apparent weight gain and I thought I may have erred in not cooling them down more. On July 14, I noticed a slug in the cage and quickly searched for neonates. Much to my surprise and pleasure I found three perfectly formed babies. There was also 1 dead baby that appeared to be completely formed but was still curled in a ball, probably still born. There was also one additional slug found. That's it. This seems to be a relatively easy process. I was a bit surprised that the gestation was so long. Much of the documentation states that gestation is 3-4 months. In this case it was just shy of 5 months.

Don't Give Up on "Bad" Eggs

by Grady Calhoun

I thought I would share an experience I recently had involving the hatching of grey-banded kingsnake eggs. This year my female laid 4 eggs, three of which looked pretty good from the very beginning. As many of us have experienced, two of the eggs were apparently not fertile and succumbed to mold after just a couple of weeks. These eggs were tightly adhered to the other two good eggs. I cut most of the two bad eggs away from the good ones and continued the incubation. Eventually the other two eggs became a bit moldy but nothing that I was too worried about. They still seemed to be good and continued to be very firm. One of the eggs developed a hardened yellow spot on the bottom of one end. This area seemed to attract mold. In an effort to keep the egg viable I attempted to remove the mold. While doing this I ruptured the egg. Clear egg fluid began oozing out of the egg and I was sure that the egg wouldn't hatch. This occurred approximately 5 weeks into the incubation period. I decided to let the egg go and see what happened. Of course, the rupture did not heal. The liquid continued to ooze out especially when the egg was inspected. As you could probably tell just because this article is being written, the egg successfully hatched at the same time as the undamaged egg. The baby was perfectly formed and is doing well. Of course it hadn't eaten as the writing of this article.

Classified Advertising Policy

GCHS Members may run a free classified ad of 7 lines or less at no charge for an unlimited time; however, the ad will be canceled after one month

unless the editor is informed to continue it. Please include scientific names for the animals with your ad as well as your phone number and area code. Ads of up to 7 lines for non-member

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are \$2 per issue; ad charges for items more than 7 lines long are as follows:

Business card size	\$3 per issue
1/4 page	\$6 per issue
2 page	\$10 per issue
Full page	\$20 per issue

The GCHS is not liable for the quality of the merchandise advertized. The Society also reserves the right to refuse any ad considered inappropriate.

Requirements for Submitting Articles to the Forked Tongue

Articles can be submitted via 3.5" floppy disk or hard copy to Editor, GCHS 11470 Gatch Hill Road, Aurora, IN 47001.

Articles may be e-mailed to Grady Calhoun at gradycalhoun@earthlink.net.

Black and white photographs can be included with articles. Photo submissions should include your name, phone number, and description of photo on the back. Photos can be returned. All time dependent submissions must be in the editors possession no later than the meeting previous to the desired publication.

Classifieds

For Sale: Captive Bred albino boa constrictors, (Peter Kahl strain). These are 2004 babies, all feeding and looking great! \$1000.00 each. Partial stripes available for \$1600.00. Call Scott Kass at 513-779-8124

For Sale: Albino (glod) axlotls. 3"-4" long. \$10 each. Call Harrison Pet Center 513-367-1115.

For Sale: Captive bred Northern Blue-tongue skinks. Born last month. \$100.00 each. Call Justin Calhoun at 513-564-6041

For Sale: Captive bred Grey banded kinsnake. Hatched this month and eating live pinkies. \$60.00 each. Call Grady Calhoun at 513-564-6041

For Sale: Juvenile Amazon tree boas (*Corallus hortulanus*), brown phases, will be feeding when sold \$15 each. Call Al Winstel at 513-729-2563

For Sale: 7.0 '03 Tiger Rat Snakes (*Spilote pullatus*) Very well started, nice black and yellow coloration. Approximately 30 inches or more. Feeding voraciously on live hoppers. \$60 each or two or more for \$50 each. Call Marc (859) 344-9626

Discount: A 10% discount is offered to all card-carrying members of the GCHS at *All Creatures Animal Hospital*. Dr. Dan Meakin, All Creatures, 1894 Ohio Pike, Amelia, OH 45102, 513-797-7387.

Discount: A 10% discount is offered to all card carrying members of the GCHS at Dr. Dahlhausen's Veterinary Clinic, 5989 Meijer Dr., Suite 2, Milford, Ohio 513-576-0131

(Number to left of decimal indicates males; number to right of decimal indicates females; number to right of second decimal indicates number of unknown sex. For example, 3.2.1=3 males, 2 females, and 1 unsexed specimen)

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Currently Held Positions

President	Grady Calhoun (812) 926-1206	Vice President	Dean Alessandrini	(513) 347-0099
(513) 564-6041	Editor	Grady Calhoun	(812) 926-1206	
Treasurer	Peggy Fille	(513) 528-4452		(513) 564-6041
Sargent-at-Arms	Bruce Fille	(513) 528-4452	Education Committee Co-Chairman	
Advisor	Ray Whitson	(859) 342-8842	Peggy Fille	(513) 528-4452
Secretary	Vacant		Chris Bauer	(513) 424-5818

About the GCHS

The Greater Cincinnati Herpetological Society holds monthly meetings which typically consist of a short business section, a refreshment intermission, and a program related to herpetology. Both members and nonmembers are invited to attend. Membership is open to anyone with an interest in reptiles and amphibians. New members may sign up by mail or at the monthly meetings. Members receive monthly issues of *The Forked Tongue* and free classified advertising. Annual dues should be directed to the secretary at the society's mailing address, according to the rates below:

Student	\$10.00	Corresponding	\$10.00
Individual	\$12.00	Sustaining	\$25.00
Family	\$18.00	Institutional	\$30.00
Contributing	\$50.00		

Why Be a Member?

Receive monthly issues of *The Forked Tongue*

\$Meet individuals knowledgeable about herpetoculture

\$Have access to captive-bred herps and feeder animals

\$Participate in society-sponsored field trips, and outings.

\$Receive a 10 percent discount on herp-related items and services when you show a valid membership card at the following establishments:

Delhi Pet Center (513) 451-4015

Kentucky Reptile Zoo (606) 663-9160

Harrison Pet Center (513) 367-1115

All Creatures Animal Hospital (513) 797-7387

Dr. Dahlhausen's Veterinary Clinic (513) 576-0131.

P.O. Box 14783
Cincinnati, OH 45250

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