

THE FORKED TONGUE

THE MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF THE GREATER CINCINNATI HERPETOLOGICAL SOCIETY

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July 2005

The Editor's Den

We need articles! Please forward me anything that you would like to write about – Well not anything...it should be herp related somehow. It's breeding season. Put together a summary of what you have had success with or attempted to.

August Meeting Highlights

We had possibly our best attendance at the CNC meeting place for the August meeting featuring Joe Collins. This was a great Herpetology talk. Joe spoke about some of the recent attempts to reclassify our beloved reptiles solely on DNA. This means that all of the subspecies go away and a Black Rat Snake from east of the Appalachian Mountains is a different species than one found in Ohio even though they will look identical. Imagine the problems in communications this could create. What we now know of as an Everglades Rat Snake will simply be an orange color morph of the rat snake originating on the east side of the Appalachians. What a headache! As Joe mentioned several times in his talk. We can't shoot the messenger. It wasn't his doing. He was merely informing us as to what is happening.

Calendar of Events

10/5/05 Monthly meeting featuring Gary Gerald speaking on Ecology of the Rare Northern Pine Snake.

Its Election Time

Believe it or not a year has come and gone again. Matt Fille agreed to head up the nominating committee. The following individual's have agreed to run for office:

| | |
|-------------------|------------------|
| Grady Calhoun | President |
| Dean Alessandrini | Vice President |
| Peggy Fille | Treasurer |
| Bruce Fille | Sergeant at Arms |
| Kyle Becker | Secretary |

Believe it or not, none of these offices will be contested. Therefore there will be no election. The new officers will take over in November.

Dues are going up

At the September meeting the proposition of raising membership dues was raised. The dues for GCHS membership have remained the same for at least 10 years and barely pay for the cost of the newsletter and mailing. The motion was passed with enthusiasm! The new dues will be as follows:

| | |
|------------|---------------------|
| Student | \$10 (unchanged) |
| Individual | \$15 (up from \$12) |
| Family | \$20 (up from \$18) |

Basic Genetics

There is so much breeding going on that involves different color morphs that I decided to include a primer on Basic Genetics. I pulled most of this from the internet and made some changes to make it more herp related. This covers only pure dominant and recessive traits such as amelanism. There are other traits, particularly seen in Ball pythons of late that involve co-dominance. That is **not** covered in the following text.

When the sperm cell and an egg cell get together, a new cell is created which has two of each chromosome in the nucleus. This implies two alleles at each locus in the offspring. How does this combination of alleles affect the offspring? The following example will be used to describe a normally black animal. Let's say it's a black kingsnake.

There are several ways alleles can interact. In the example above, we had two alleles, B for black and b for amelanistic. If the animal has two copies of B, it will be black. If it has one copy of B and one of b, it will be just as black. Finally, if it has two copies of b, it will be amelanistic. In this case we refer to B as dominant to b and b as recessive to B. True dominance implies that the animal with one B and one b cannot be distinguished from the animal with two B alleles. Now, what happens when two black snakes are bred together?

We will use a diagram called a Punnett square. We will stick with the B locus, in which case there are two possibilities for sperm (which we write across the top)

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and two for eggs (which we write along the left side). Each cell then gets the sum of the alleles in the egg and the sperm. To start out with a very simple case, assume both parents are black not carrying amelanism, that is, they each have two genes for black. We then have:

| | | |
|---|------------|------------|
| | B | B |
| B | BB (black) | BB (black) |
| B | BB (black) | BB (black) |

All of the babies are black if both parents are BB (pure for black)

Now suppose the male is pure for black but the female carries a recessive gene for amelanism. In this case she can produce either black or amelanistic gametes, so

| | | |
|---|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| | B | B |
| B | BB (pure for black) | BB (pure for black) |
| b | Bb (black carrying amelanistic) | Bb (black carrying amelanistic) |

This gives approximately a 50% probability that any given baby is pure for black, and a 50% probability that it is black carrying amelanistic. All babies appear black. We can get essentially the same diagram if the male is black carrying amelanistic and the female is pure for black. Now suppose both parents are blacks carrying amelanistic:

| | | |
|---|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| | B | b |
| B | BB (pure for black) | Bb (black carrying amelanistic) |
| b | Bb (black carrying amelanistic) | bb (amelanistic) |

This time we get 25% probability of pure for black, 50% probability of black carrying amelanistic, and - a possible surprise if you don't realize the amelanistic gene is present in both parents - a 25% probability that a baby will be amelanistic. Note that only way to distinguish the pure for blacks from the blacks carrying amelanistic is test breeding or possibly DNA testing - they all look black.

Another possible mating would be pure for black with amelanistic:

| | | |
|---|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| | B | B |
| b | Bb (black carrying amelanistic) | Bb (black carrying amelanistic) |
| b | Bb (black carrying amelanistic) | Bb (black carrying amelanistic) |

In this case, all the babies will be black carrying amelanistic.

Suppose one parent is black carrying amelanistic and the other is amelanistic:

| | | |
|---|---------------------------------|------------------|
| | B | b |
| b | Bb (black carrying amelanistic) | bb (amelanistic) |
| b | Bb (black carrying amelanistic) | bb (amelanistic) |

In this case, there is a 50% probability that a baby will be black carrying amelanistic and a 50% probability that it will be amelanistic.

Finally, look at what happens when amelanistic is bred to amelanistic:

| | | |
|---|------------------|------------------|
| | b | b |
| b | bb (amelanistic) | bb (amelanistic) |
| b | bb (amelanistic) | bb (amelanistic) |

Recessive to recessive breeds true - all of the babies will be amelanistic.

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 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 |
| 1/2 page | \$10 per issue |
| Full page | \$20 per issue |

The GCHS is not liable for the quality of the merchandise advertised. 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 demaled publication.

Classifieds

Lost a Beloved Reptile? Any Species: We can find it! Guaranteed results. Call Wolf 513-659-9616.

For Sale: 0.0.6 captive bred and born **Northern** Blue Tongue skinks. Born 7/2/05. All eating great! Come from dynamite parents. \$100 each, \$175/2. Call Grady at (812) 926 1206.

For Sale: 0.2 Captive bred and hatched grey-banded king snakes, Blair's phase. \$75 each. Hatched 7/19/05. Eating live pinkies. Call Grady at (812) 926-1206.

Rats and Mice for sale. Reasonable price. Call Jesse or Tom (513) 876-0579.

For Sale: 3.3 Normal Adult Okeetee Corn Snakes \$50 each. 2.1 Banana California Kingsnakes, adult proven breeders, \$100 each. 0.0.10 Cornsnake hatchlings of last year, \$30 for amelanistic, \$25 for normals. Call Mike Matthews at (513) 734-1336.

For Sale: 3.3 South Carolina Corn Snakes (*elaphe guttata guttata*). These were bred by me, and are approx. 1.5 years old. All are nice looking, but a few have exceptional orange and red coloring, and all are feeding very aggressively on f/t mice. I am asking between \$40-\$50 each. Very healthy snakes. Feel free to call me at 228-0293 or e-mail at kdobrien76@aol.com with any questions. Ask for Kevin.

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)

The October meeting will be held on Wednesday October 5^h at 7:00 pm at the Cincinnati Nature Center

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 |
| Sergeant-at-Arms | Bruce Fille | (513) 528-4452 | Education Committee Chairman | | |
| Advisor | Vacant | | Peggy Fille | | (513) 528-4452 |
| Secretary | Vacant | | | | |

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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