

THE FORKED TONGUE

THE MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF THE GREATER CINCINNATI HERPETOLOGICAL SOCIETY

Vol. XXXIII, No. VI

www.cincyherps.com

June 2008

The Editor's Den

The June Forked Tongue includes an article written by Victoria Jones describing a study she completed on corn snake growth relative to different color morphs.

Calendar of Events

June 4, 2008 – Monthly Meeting Matt Fille speaking on captive maintenance of monitors

June 28, 2008 – GCHS Auction – See details below

July 2, 2008 – Monthly meeting featuring Jeff Davis speaking on Central American Herping

Color Mutations and Their Affect on Growth

Rate

By: Victoria Jones

“Blood red”, “ghost”, “motley”, and “snow”, a common pet snake, the North American corn snake (*Elaphe guttata*) has many distinct color mutations. A snake's color is controlled by its DNA. Mutations or certain DNA patterns can give snakes abnormal coloring or markings. A mutation in DNA often affects more than one trait in an organism and it has been asked if snakes with color mutations grow at a slower rate than snakes with normal coloring. Ludlow High School's AP Biology class conducted an experiment to determine if color mutations have any affect on growth rate. For almost seven months the class raised eight corn snakes, four of which had amelanistic coloring and four of which had normal coloring. Students were put into groups, each raising two snakes, they fed and massed the snakes on a weekly basis and the results were somewhat surprising.

The snakes hatched in mid October and the students got them shortly after. The beginning masses of the snakes (seen in the graph below) show that color mutation does not affect the size of the snake at birth. Half of the normal snakes were born smaller than the amelanistic snakes, and both the largest and smallest snakes were amelanistic. This shows that the mutation of the amelanistic snakes has no affect on their birth size.

Beginning Masses

Snake	Group 1	Group 2	Group 3	Group 4
Normal coloring	8.1 g	7.7 g	8.6 g	6.7 g
Amelanistic coloring	6.1 g	8.8 g	5.9 g	8.1 g

The students fed the snakes pinkies on a weekly basis. The pinks were an average of 2.3 grams. By massing the pinkies the students could check that the snakes were getting equal amounts of food, insuring the accuracy of the results. As the snakes grew many groups noticed that their normal snake was larger than the amelanistic one. In fact, three of the four groups had a larger normal snake.

End Masses

Snake	Group 1	Group 2	Group 3	Group 4
Normal Coloring	27 g	22.2 g	25.7 g	20.9 g
Amelanistic coloring	22.6 g	21.9 g	22 g	24.7 g

However, when the students calculated the percent increase in size of each snake half the amelanistic snakes had undergone a greater growth change.

The June meeting will be Wednesday, June 4th at 7:00 pm at the Cincinnati Nature Center

Percent Increase in Size

Snake	Group 1	Group 2	Group 3	Group 4
Normal Coloring	233%	188%	199%	211%
Amelanistic Coloring	270%	148%	273%	204%

Just as in the beginning masses, half of the amelanistic snakes showed a greater increase in growth than the normal snakes. These percentages show that the coloring trait has no affect of growth in corn snakes.

At the end of the experiment, all of the snakes were roughly the same size (with about a seven gram difference between the largest and smallest snake) and healthy. While it's possible that a continued experiment may show future differences in growth rate the student's results make it seem unlikely. What will happen to the baby corn snakes? Many of the biology students are keeping them and taking them to college to raise.

GCHS Auction

We will be having a fund raising auction on Saturday, June 28, 2008 at the Meadow Shelter at Cincinnati Nature Center. It seems like a long way off but it will be here before you know it. We are hoping to make this a picnic type event culminating in a late afternoon auction. We are already starting to get donations and hope to get a lot more. Look to the GCHS website, www.cincyherps.com, for details on what will be auctioned as well as a list of our generous donators.

We can always use more items for the auction. If you know anyone who would be willing to donate any items that would be of interest to members ask them if they would be willing to donate and we will gladly provide our tax exempt information for their deduction purposes. It would be great to get some gift certificates from local restaurants, sporting event tickets, etc. Please let me know if you receive any such donations so that we can make sure a formal acknowledgement is made in our newsletter as well as on our website.


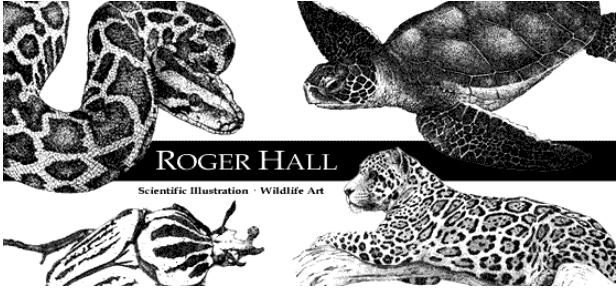



I have provided a list of all items received to date below. All items are new "in the box" unless otherwise noted. There are still several companies who have said they would send donations prior to the auction.

Please visit the websites of the organizations who have donated their items to help make our auction a success!


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Donator	Item(s) Donated
<p>Why Shop At SaveOnScales ?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ HUGE SELECTION ❖ VERY LOW PRICES ❖ SUPER FAST SHIPPING ❖ EXCELLENT CUSTOMER SERVICE ❖ REGISTERED WITH THE BBB  <p>www.saveonscales.com</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 7001DX Small animal scale
 <p>www.petsolutions.com</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$25 Gist Certificate
 <p>Badali Jewelry Specialties, Inc. Designer • Manufacturer • Wholesaler www.badalijewelry.com 320 W. 1550 N. Suite E Layton, UT 84041 800-788-1888 / 801-773-1801 badalijewelry@badalijewelry.com</p> <p>Frog Jewelry • Snake Jewelry • Lizard Jewelry</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sterling Silver Snake Necklace
 <p>www.catalinaaquarium.com</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 Sun Seeker UV Bulbs (100 W) • 2 Adjustable Heat Pads
 <p>www.jackspets.com</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • (2) \$25 Gift Cards
 <p>www.Acornnaturalists.com</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Snake Hook • Amphibian Book, Nature's Fading Chorus • \$25 Gift Certificate
<p>omega.com[®] Your One-Stop Source for Process Measurement and Control! www.omega.com</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OS-562 Infrared Thermometer with Case • 88001K Probe • Case
<p>Krieger Publishing Company www.krieger-publishing.com</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Practical Guide to Feeding Reptiles • Reptile Clinician's Handbook • Lizards (2 Volume Set)

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Donator	Item(s) Donated
 <p>www.repcal.com</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • (6) Ultrafine Calcium with Vitamin D3 (4.1 oz) • (6) Herpivite Multivitamin (3.2 oz)
<p>Reptile Art by John Agnew www.angelfire.com/id/wildscenes</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited edition signed print of Eastern Diamondback Rattlesnake
 <p>ROGER HALL Scientific Illustration Wildlife Art</p> <p>www.inkart.net</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • (5) Sets of 36 Herp Postcards • Set of 3 Poison Dart Frog Magnets • Set of 3 Box Turtle Magnets • Set of 3 Snake Magnets • Set of 3 Tortoise Magnets • (3) Fine Art Reptile Prints
<p>Makin Family</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gently Used Large Custom Cage (6 ft tall x 4 ft wide x 2.5 ft deep)
<p>GCHS Rescue Committee</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Used 55 gallon aquarium with screen top, incandescent light fixture and wrought iron stand
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • (3) \$10 Gift Certificates
 <p>www.mazuri.com</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • (2) Gift certificates for 1 large bag of exotic animal feed
 <p>www.basspro.com</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$75 gift card

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Corner Bowl Small • Corner Bowl Large • Corner Bowl X-Large • Repti Heat Cable 23 feet • ReptiTemp Rheostat 500W • ReptiSun 5.0 Power Compact Bulb • Repti Sun 5.0 UVB 18" • Repti Sun 10.0 High Output UVB 18" • Splashproof Halogen Lamp 50 Watts • Splashproof Halogen Lamp 75 Watts • Professional Series Basking Spot Lamp 75 Watts • Leopard Gecko Starter Kit • Deluxe Hermit Crab Kit • (3) Natural Forest Tortoise Food 8.5 oz • (3) Natural Grassland Tortoise Food 8.5 oz • (2) Natural Box Turtle Food 10 oz • (2) Natural Aquatic Turtle Food Growth Formula 7.5 oz • (3) Natural Aquatic Turtle Maintenance Formula 6.5 oz 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • (3) Natural Juvenile Bearded Dragon Food 10 oz • (3) Natural Adult Bearded Dragon Food 10 oz • (3) Natural Juvenile Iguana Food 10 oz • (3) Natural Adult Iguana Food 10 oz • (3) Can O' Grasshoppers 1.2 oz • (3) Can O' Mini Mealies 1.2 oz • (3) Can O' Pillars 1.2 oz • (2) Reptivite w/D3 8 oz • (3) Mite Off 8.75 oz • (6) ReptiSafe Water Conditioner 4.25 oz • (2) Wipe Out 1 Disinfectant, Cleaner and Deodorizer 8.75 oz • (2) Wipe Out 4 Foaming Hand Sanitizer 2.5 oz • Turtle Dock Mini • (2) Bug Buddy Personal Insect Catcher • Habba Mist Automatic Misting Machine • (12) Beginner's Guide to Reptile Care • (12) Proper Care and Maintenance of Water Turtles • (12) Proper Care and Maintenance of Bearded Dragons • (12) Proper Care and Maintenance of Hermit Crabs • (12) Proper Care and Maintenance of Leopard Geckos • (12) Proper Care and Maintenance of American Box Turtles • (6) Repti Calcium w/o D3 3 oz • (6) Repti Calcium w D3 3 oz

Classifieds

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)

Currently Held Positions

President	Grady Calhoun (812) 926-1206 (513) 564-6041	Vice President	Dean Alessandrini (513) 347-0099
Treasurer	Peggy Fille (513) 528-4452	Editor	Grady Calhoun (812) 926-1206 (513) 564-6041
Sergeant-at-Arms	Bruce Fille (513) 528-4452	Education Committee Chairman	
Advisor	Vacant	Peggy Fille	(513) 528-4452
Secretary	Kyle Becker (513) 831-4898		

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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 \$15.00	Sustaining \$25.00		
Family \$20.00	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	(513) 576-1990

P.O. Box 14783
Cincinnati, OH 45250

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