

# The League of Florida Herpetological Societies

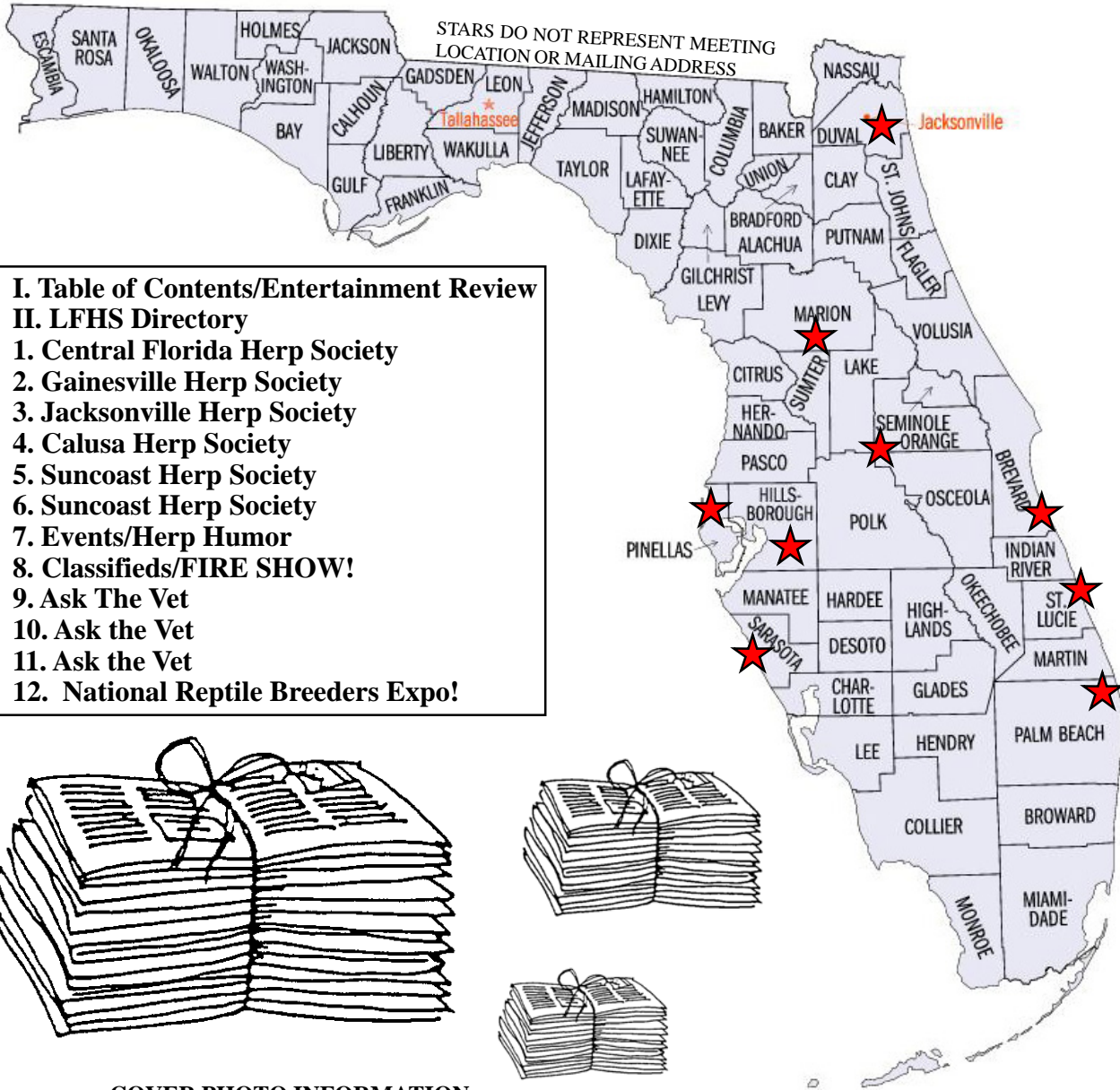
Published by Central Florida Herpetological Society



**Eastern/Appalachian kingsnake intergrade  
Photo by: Jim Peters**

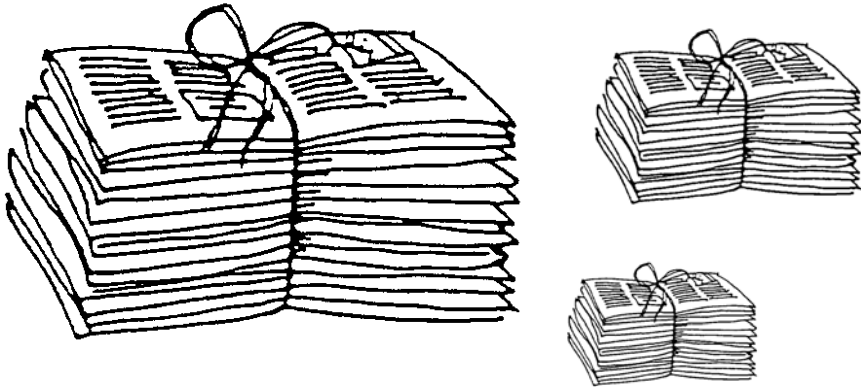
May 2005 Volume 5 Number 5

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**COVER PHOTO INFORMATION**

**NON-VENOMOUS Eastern King Snake *Lampropeltis getula getula***  
 The Eastern Kingsnake is South Carolina's version of the species *Lampropeltis getula*. The species is often called the Common Kingsnake, for it is the species usually referenced by the term "Kingsnake." These snakes are among our largest species. Adults usually range from 36 to 60 inches in length. They are powerful constrictors. The "kingsnake" name refers to the fact that other snakes, including venomous species, are a principal food source. They also eat rodents, lizards, birds and eggs, and turtle eggs. Kingsnakes have smooth dorsal scales and a shiny appearance. Their heads are small and no neck is discernable. The typical Eastern Kingsnake is black with thin yellow to pale bands on its back and sides, forming a chainlike pattern. "Chain" Kingsnake is another popular name for the Eastern Kingsnake. The belly has scales partially colored in the same color as its dorsal bands. In some localities, specimens can be found with atypical color and patterning. The background color may be more like dark chocolate in some specimens and the bands may be almost white. The width of the bands may be greater. Sometimes the bands may be so wide that the unusual specimen appears to have dark blotches on a pale background. The young look the same as the adults. The Eastern Kingsnake may be found in most any habitat within its range. However, it seems to have a special fondness for wetland areas. The Common Kingsnake species is found in the southern and southwestern United States, from the Atlantic to the Pacific. The species physique does not vary across the large range; however, the patterning and coloration does vary substantially. The Eastern Kingsnake (*Lampropeltis getula getula*) is found in the middle to south atlantic states. The Outer Banks Kingsnake (*Lampropeltis getula sticticeps*) is found only in the Outer Banks area of North Carolina. The Florida Kingsnake (*Lampropeltis getula floridana*), as its name implies, is found in Florida, intergrading with the Eastern Kingsnake. The Speckled Kingsnake (*Lampropeltis getula holbrooki*) is found in the middle gulf states north to Iowa and Illinois. The Black Kingsnake (*Lampropeltis getula nigra*) is found Tennessee and Kentucky and parts of neighboring states. The Desert Kingsnake (*Lampropeltis getula splendida*) is found from Kansas to Texas to New Mexico and Mexico. The Mexican Kingsnake (*Lampropeltis getula nigritus*) is found in southeast Arizona and Mexico. California Kingsnake (*Lampropeltis getula californiae*) is found from Arizona and Utah to California and Oregon.



**Cover: Eastern/Appalachian kingsnake intergrade**

# The League of Florida Herpetological Society Directory

The Calusa Herpetological Society  
P.O. Box 222  
Estero, FL 33928-0222

The Central Florida Herpetological Society  
P.O. Box 5350  
Winter Park, FL 32793

The Jacksonville Herpetological Society  
P.O. Box 57954  
Jacksonville, FL 32241-7954

The Manasota Herpetological Society  
P.O. Box 5115  
Sarasota, FL 34203-5115

The Palm Beach County Herpetological Society  
140 SW Mark Ct.  
Port St. Lucie, FL 34953

The Sawgrass Herpetological Society  
P.O. Box 4852  
Margate, FL 33063-4852

The Suncoast Herpetological Society  
P.O. Box 2725  
Dunedin, FL 34697-2725

The Treasure Coast Herpetological Society  
210 11th Court  
Vero Beach, FL 32962

## May Volume 5 Number 5

The League of Florida Herpetological Societies Newsletter is published once monthly by The Central Florida Herpetological Society. The League welcomes all comments, advertisements, articles and cartoons. All articles may be reproduced in other publications provided it is unchanged, and credit is given to the author and The League of Florida Herpetological Societies Newsletter.

Everyone is invited to submit articles, photographs, news clippings and items of interest. When submitting news items, please include the name of journal, date of publication and authors name.

The League of Florida  
Herpetological Societies  
Newsletter  
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### Editor Note:

The deadline for submitting text for the newsletter is the 15th of the month. That will allow us enough time to finish the layout and get it to the printer. When submitting text or images please use plain text (\*.txt) and Jpeg (\*.jpg) image file formats. Editor is also not responsible for technical accuracy of articles.

## Kids Corner: What am I?



April's Answers from top to bottom: Wagler's Pit Viper, Copperhead, Boa Constrictor, Pigmy Rattlesnake

# CENTRAL FLORIDA HERPETOLOGICAL SOCIETY



Verses leading into a long report this will be the shortest column I will probably ever write. April's speaker was Ernie Jilsen of Miami Dade Fire Rescue (AKA Venom1). Attending members were treated to a standup performance illustrating how important a venom bank can really be! May's (3rd) speaker will be the returning Scott Schupe (doing a book signing -venomous snakes and their mimics) and special guest Bill Sloan talking on laws and their relationship to Herpetology across the country. June's (7th) speaker will be Dick Bartlet talking on herping in the Amazon basin. The treasury report as promised is: Checking \$2,375.65, DBA \$9,804.73, Savings \$25,843.90, Petty Cash \$80.00. The president's laptop has been finished and we are still working on T-shirts for fundraising. Jim will also be meeting with our CPA and giving power of attorney so that we may reclaim our capabilities as a 3C510 (NON-PROFIT CORPORATION). The year is already a third over with so if you're a member, attend the meetings don't just read about them here. It's also my pleasure to thank every single person who has read this newsletter over the last year, as it is a one-year anniversary for VIPERFX. My goal is to continue to make improvements with every issue, so our members and readers are better informed in the world of herpetology. Always make sure to check the website for up to date info which might not make it to print. Cheers! Victor E. Beitelman CFHS Secretary



Mays membership turnout. Note: if you missed last month we look forward to seeing you in June!



Jim with our international guests from England!



Kenny and Ernie talking after the meeting.



April's speaker Ernie Jilsen from Miami Dade Fire Rescue. His presentation included some very informative dos and don'ts.



GHS STATUS REPORT By: Geoffrey Beitelman

Topic: GHS Reorganization meeting Time and Location: 6:00 at the UF Livestock Pavilion on SW 16th Avenue (Meetings typically start at 6 and end around 7:30 but can go as late as 8:30)

The GHS is undergoing some changes in the next few weeks. While meeting with Bill Cope (who has been a member for 20 years) several topics were discussed. The first of such topics was about moving the monthly meetings from the first Tuesday of every month to a quarterly meeting. This would allow us to associate meetings with special events. Several special events were discussed for the coming year. The first event would be the Herp Conference held here in town. In the past this was a two day event, it is now a one day event where +450 people come where there is music, refreshments and of course the auction. This happened about two weeks ago.

Our main source of revenue is this auction that is held once per year. Next year we must make sure that we at least have a presence at that event. With the GHS currently in limbo, no events will be held until a regular membership is organized. Currently nobody attends the meetings which are announced on the yahoo group website. If you are interested in becoming a member just search for GHS on yahoo groups and click to become a member. Currently it is free to become a member because of lack of participation.

Other events include a summer event, possible reptile surveys, summer social BBQ (just for fun), and Fall family fun night at the O'Connell center to look at animals. These quarterly events will not be the only events that we will have. If anyone has suggestions for possible events we would like to hear all of them.

The other topic discussed was about membership costs when we get things back up and running. In the past membership was \$10 a month for members. Currently we are playing around with the idea of having members pay \$25 and become members for life. This membership will entitle that member to one vote. There would also be a \$35 or \$45 family membership that would carry two votes. Sponsorships would cost \$100, which would carry 1 corp. vote. This sponsorship would allow that person free advertising on the website or newsletter. Currently the yahoo mailing list is main repository for information about GHS.

Currently our treasury is close to \$800 and we would like to organize an event in the near future. We need more peeps to show up to the meetings so we can make this work. Bring a friend or two to the next meeting because we want to start a dialogue on how we should go about bringing the GHS back full steam ahead. Until next time...

---

Note from Bill Cope,

The GHS held a reorganization meeting on 4/13/05 at the Livestock Pavilion on the UF Campus. Attending were myself (Bill Cope) and Geoffrey Beitelman; Gene Trescott and Ben Cole were unable to attend. I brought Geoff up to speed on current and proposed membership guidelines, quarterly events vs. monthly meetings, advertising, finances, integration of the newsletter into the website and improvements to the website itself. Overall it was a productive meeting; Geoff is a smart, motivated individual who wants to get involved and help get the GHS back on track, traits that we hope to find in others as things progress. The next meeting is scheduled for May 3rd at 6 PM. Directions to the LSP are at [www.copent.us/ghsbeta/events.html](http://www.copent.us/ghsbeta/events.html); hope to see you there. Regards, Bill



# JACKSONVILLE HERPETOLOGICAL SOCIETY

Jacksonville Herpetological Society

Serving the Jacksonville herp community since 1987

P.O. Box 57954 Jacksonville, Florida 32241  
webmaster@jaxherp.org



Hello Herpers,

April is the start of a New Year. Yep! A new year of snake hunting. Back in my snake obsessive years, April meant the beginning of snake collecting season in north Florida. Then in May and June it got better and better. By midsummer I was catchin' gravid females and then ... it got hot and the snakes went back into hiding. "Summertime, when the living is easy." (A. Green? B. Benton)

Snake hunting is a highly enlightening activity, that prepares you for life. That is, if you do it right, long, and hard for ten or more years without thinking of anything else. "Crazy on you." (Heart)

Snake hunting takes lot of time, and energy. Walking, peeling miles of bark, looking under junk in stumps, in the muck, the water, sand hills, gopher holes, trees, and road crusin' at night in the rain. "The long and winding road." (P. McCartney)

Some of the obstacles and annoyance of snake hunting are: large land owners, bulls, ants, mean dogs, scorpions, mosquitos, ants, gnats, skunks, venomous snakes, hornets, wasp, ticks, boars, red bugs, gators, poison ivy and did I mention ANTS?!! And for road crusin' "BEARS" "Breaker, Breaker 1-9. There is a Smoky at your front door." (T. J. McCall) And worst of all, spillin' that bottle of coke with the peanuts at the bottom and not a mini-mart in sight!

Many other lessons of life are learned like economic value - the price per foot for E. Diamondback vs. the cost of intensive care. wildlife permit, wildlife law, wildlife enforcement! And the consequences of trespassing. Documentation of your catches and D.O.R. (Dead on Road) can be a very valuable resource later in life. I had a good list going but that rust hole in my old Chevy leaked water in the glove box and Oh Well!! It was only a six year list! "We were high on life and low on gas." (S. Brown)

It's a blast, as you can tell by my account. I love that first musk and slime with the hand full of teeth from the first catch of the "Snake Year". A full life lived by all who take part. Just don't get greedy and over collect. You can wipe out a viable population, I've seen it happen. "Even the losers get lucky sometimes." (T. Petty)

Most importantly you will learn that snakes are not born in a deli-cup. So, take a few, make many!! Defy Destiny, "Captive Breed".

Vic the prez with Debi at the keyboard.



<http://jaxherp.org>



# CALUSA HERPETOLOGICAL SOCIETY

The CALUSA Herpetological Society of Southwest Florida Dedicated to Education, Conservation, and Enjoyment of Reptiles & Amphibians

Thursday evening – May 5, 2005, 7:00 pm

**TONIGHT'S SPEAKER :** Tonight's speaker is Chris Lechowicz. His program will focus on the natural history and status of the American map turtles of the genus *Graptemys* - his personal favorites in a life-long passion for turtles. Chris has been monitoring populations and collecting data on the 15 varieties of map turtle species for over 14 years. He'll take us canoeing and swimming in the big rivers of the southern U.S. on a quest to see where each species lives and how he actually studies these shy and hard-to-approach creatures in their natural habitat. While he thoroughly delves into the natural history and legal status of the group, you'll also find yourselves falling in love with the turtles' ornate markings and often subtly beautiful colors

Yellow-blotched Map Turtle *Graptemys flavimaculata*



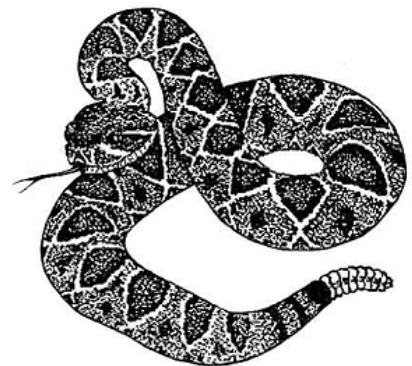
Chris has been interested in all reptiles and amphibians since an early childhood of herping in his original home state of Illinois. His main interests in herpetology are now focused on North American herps and the freshwater turtles in particular. He is employed as the herpetologist at the Sanibel-Captiva Conservation Foundation, and is current vice-president of the Calusa Herpetological Society.

**MEETING SITE :** The Calusa Nature Center, near Colonial Blvd. (S. R. 884) and Interstate 75. Get off I-75 at exit #22 (old exit #22) and go west (towards the coast) on 884 (Colonial Blvd.) for one-half mile, then turn right at the first traffic light onto Ortiz Ave., and then left into the Nature Center after only one-quarter mile. The Iona House meeting site is an older dark green house located to the left (as you enter the grounds) at the rear of the complex, back near where the school buses are parked.

**WHO'S INVITED ?** YOU are! Anyone with an interest in any aspect of herpetology or herpetoculture is welcome to attend, learn, and exchange their experiences with our friendly membership. Come out to meet others who keep, breed or study reptiles and amphibians, and let them share their fascination with you. We average 35 – 70 people attending every meeting.

Cookies and cold soda, a nightly raffle of live herps, herp products, and books follow each speaker's talk, and lots of herp camaraderie, gossip, and fun can be counted upon at all meetings ! For more info, call (239) 728-2390 or (239) 437-4148. Don't forget that you can always tune into pictures of past events, or learn about upcoming club events on the Calusa Herp Society's website at : [www.calusaherp.org](http://www.calusaherp.org)

Bill Love



# SUNCOAST HERPETOLOGICAL SOCIETY

Carrie does it again. She does an excellent job recapping our meetings and guest speaker talks. Now if we just get her to move closer. God Bless you Carrie (and God Bless Alice, her able bodied, limp leg assistant). Hope your ankle is healing well. Rich Wakeland is going to school and working full time so keeping up with the website was getting to be quite a chore. Our Super Secretary is at it again; she agreed to be the new "webmaster". So please go to it cause I know it will be chock full of information. Thanks Rich for doing a superb job in getting the site into this century with cool pictures, graphics, links and being sponsored by Kingsnake.com

On Saturday, April 16, 2005 the Florida botanical Gardens is having their 6th Annual Pinellas County Family Earth Fest At Pinewood Cultural Park, Largo from 9:30 AM to 4:00 PM. This festival is a celebration of Earth and Arbor Days that inspires participants to discover resources and to practice environmentally sound habits. We have secured a table space. This is a good way to advertise for the club and show off our animals. I plan on being at this event come and join me, it sounds like fun.

If you would like more information about the Alliance for a Livable Pinellas, we meet the third Monday of the month at the Sierra Club on Central Avenue and 5th Street, St. Petersburg, FL at 7:00 PM. Next meeting is March 21, 2005. One thing we will be discussing is fundraising for Moccasin Lake Nature Center. Four user group reps attend the Alliance meeting (Clearwater Audubon; Native Plant Society; Sierra Club and Suncoast Herp) and Mike McDonald from Clearwater Audubon suggested we all band together to show the City of Clearwater that we not only use the facility, but we will work to support the Park in their time of need. It would be a shame to lose such a beautiful area. I will keep you posted when I find out more info.

Please show your support for the club and purchase a t-shirt. When we do presentations, it is nice to have everyone in a club shirt. If you want one, please call ahead (727-942-6700) to place an order. I am taking the hard part out. You no longer have to call to place an order; I will have them at the next meeting. There are two colors, teal blue and ash with maroon letters. It looks great & only \$15. I know everyone will want one of each color. Adult sizes S, M, L, X-L & XX-L.

Congratulations to our very own President Logan Randolph, was honored with employee of the Month for March at The Department of Environmental Protection. See his write up in the newsletter. Notice the "Pepper Patrol". Logan is setting up excursions to Andros for about \$265 and to stay at the field station for free. He will keep us posted on any new developments.

Curt and Laura did a great job summarizing the BCC meeting we attended. Curt also made the papers in the North Pinellas Times on Monday March 7. Curt had a great idea to invite the commissioners to our meeting in May so we can explain responsible pet ownership, and education. We will discuss this at the meeting cause we want a few people to speak and maybe bring some animals in. This is a good way to get our name out there and to educate the lawmakers. Your input is important.

Our super secretary, Carrie Gardner, has set up a Yahoo group sight and I just joined. So that makes us 2 of our members and one guy from New Jersey. So get our there and sign up, you can list what you are selling, and keep in touch with others. I just read an email from Carrie indicating that guy from New Jersey dropped out of the group, so be warned, the nagging will begin for our members to join, and it won't be from me this time J

After the longest Tarpon Springs commission meeting in history ending around 6:00 AM, it was decided that Wal-Mart can build a super center on the Anclote River by the bridge on US 19. When will it ever end?

A lot of events were scheduled this past month. John Soto represented the club at the Hillsborough River State Park Community Fair on March 19, 2005. He will tell you about it at the meeting. I took the Easter Lizard to an Easter egg hunt at Community United Methodist Church on March 26, 2005. Nothing to report except now the kids think that Iguanas are the sole reason for Easter J

The big Reptile weekend was April 9 & 10. After being absent the past few times, I made it the full two days representing the club and also hanging out at John Soto's table, which was across the aisle. It was fun seeing people I hadn't seen in a while. I sold a few t-shirts and got a lot of new memberships. I even got some renewals. They can't expect to go to the show and escape me from asking for dues money.



Curt Stanford did an excellent job of writing to the county commissioners and inviting them to our May meeting which is titled Community Awareness & Education night. This is to let the community know that we ARE responsible pet owners and that we are going out there educating the public about reptiles. A few of the members will be speaking. The City commissioners have also been invited to show our support for Moccasin Lake Nature Park. See Curt's "Just to Let You Know Column". Thanks Curt for all your hard work. Our next meeting is Wednesday, April 20, 2004 and Todd Gearhart. I saw him at the show and he is looking forward to speaking at our club. Please contact him ahead of time to confirm stock to bring. He also has lots of plastic shoeboxes and other tank/containers. His website is [www.tarantulaspiders.com](http://www.tarantulaspiders.com)

If you would like more information about the Alliance for a Livable Pinellas, we meet the third Monday of the month at the Sierra Club on Central Avenue and 5th Street, St. Petersburg, FL at 7:00 PM. Next meeting is April 18, 2005. One thing we will be discussing is fundraising for Moccasin Lake Nature Center. Four user group reps attend the Alliance meeting (Clearwater Audubon; Native Plant Society; Sierra Club and Suncoast Herp) and Mike McDonald from Clearwater Audubon suggested we all band together to show the City of Clearwater that we not only use the facility, but we will work to support the Park in their time of need. It would be a shame to lose such a beautiful area. I will keep you posted when I find out more info.

The St. Pete Times has been running nature photos on the front page of the Classifieds. These pictures are beautiful. They are advertising if you have a color photograph of Florida nature or wildlife and want it published, just e-mail it to the St. Petersburg Times at: [classifieds@sptimesphotos.com](mailto:classifieds@sptimesphotos.com). There are certain rules and conditions listed. I have a copy of the advertisement, if you need it.

Our web address is <http://www.kingsnake.com/suncoastherpsociety> If you have any photos you would like on there, please send them to Carrie Gardner, our NEW and FABULOUS Webmaster.

Feel free to submit articles or classifieds for the newsletter before the 10th of the month. You can fax 408-889-0409 or e-mail [iguana@tampabay.rr.com](mailto:iguana@tampabay.rr.com).

#### BIRTHDAYS

April 8 Arik Lindsay, April 15 Mark Gorton, April 17 Marlene Kingsbury, April 23 Mathew Poling, April 25 Tom Reed, May 8 Ed Osbourne, May 14 Curt Stanford, May 30 Garth LaFave

Happy Birthday to you! If you want to be included in the birthday list, let me know when your birthday is.

Thanks to all who do their part for this club. Every member is what makes our society the GREATEST in the league!!!

Have a herpy day!  
Doreen



# Conventions, Events, Shows, Expos



# kingsnake.com

The Online Community for the Reptile & Amphibian Hobbyist

- [http://www.wparepexpo.com/htm/show\\_info.html](http://www.wparepexpo.com/htm/show_info.html) Western Pennsylvania Reptile Expo, Butler, PA-May 1, 2005
- <http://www.pythons.com/mdshow.html> All-Maryland Reptile Shows, Harve De Grace, MD-May 07, 2005
- <http://www.leewatsonsswap.com> Lee Watson's Reptile Show & Sale, Streamwood, IL-May 07, 2005
- <http://www.michherp.org/expo.html> Michigan Society of Herpetologists Sprin, Grand Rapids, MI-May 7, 2005
- <http://www.Repticon.com> Repticon, Orlando, FL-May 7, 2005
- <http://www.texasreptiles.com> Texas Reptile Expo, Arlington, TX-May 7-8, 2005
- <http://www.irba.com> IRBA reptile Expo, Pomona, CA-May 14 & 15, 2005
- <http://www.michiganreptileshow.com> Michigan Reptile Show, Taylor, MI-May 14, 2005
- <http://www.nvre.org> Northern Virginia Reptile Expo, Manassas, VA-May 14, 2005
- <http://www.apshows.com> Reptile & Alternative Pet Show, Fort Lauderdale, FL-May 14, 2005
- <http://www.kcreptileshow.com/index.html> Kansas City Reptile Show, Overland Park, KS-May 15, 2005
- <http://www.leewatsonsswap.com> Lee Watson's Reptile Show & Sale, Streamwood, IL-May 15, 2005
- <http://www.freewebs.com/pghreptileshow> Pittsburgh Reptile Show and Sale, Cheswick, PA-May 15, 2005
- <http://www.tricountyreptileexpo.com> Tri-County Reptile Expo, St. Robert, MO-May 15, 2005
- <http://www.allohioshows.com> All-Ohio Reptile Shows, Columbus, OH-May 21, 2005
- <http://www.dixiereptileshow.com> Dixie Reptile Shows, Birmingham, AL-May 21, 2005
- <http://www.texasreptiles.com> Tulsa Reptile Expo, Tulsa, OK-May 21, 2005
- <http://www.freewebs.com/shrz/index.htm> All Cleveland Reptile Show & Sale, Fairview Park, OH-May 22, 2005
- <http://www.midwestreptile.com> Midwest Reptile Show, Indianapolis, IN-May 22, 2005
- [http://www.geocities.com/lizardlady\\_dragonslair/website1004.html](http://www.geocities.com/lizardlady_dragonslair/website1004.html) Exotic Swap/Sale, Valparaiso, IN-May 28, 2005
- <http://www.FortWayneReptileExpo.com> Fort Wayne Reptile Expo, Fort Wayne, IN-May 28, 2005
- <http://www.gilaproductions.com> Louisiana Reptile & Exotic Expo, New Orleans, LA-May 28-29, 2005
- <http://www.reptilemarketplace.com> Reptile MarketPlace, Jacksonville, FL-May 28, 2005
- <http://free.hostdepartment.com/R/ReptileExpo> St. Jacobs Reptile Expo, St. Jacobs, ON-May 29, 2005

How many men does it take to carry an anaconda?

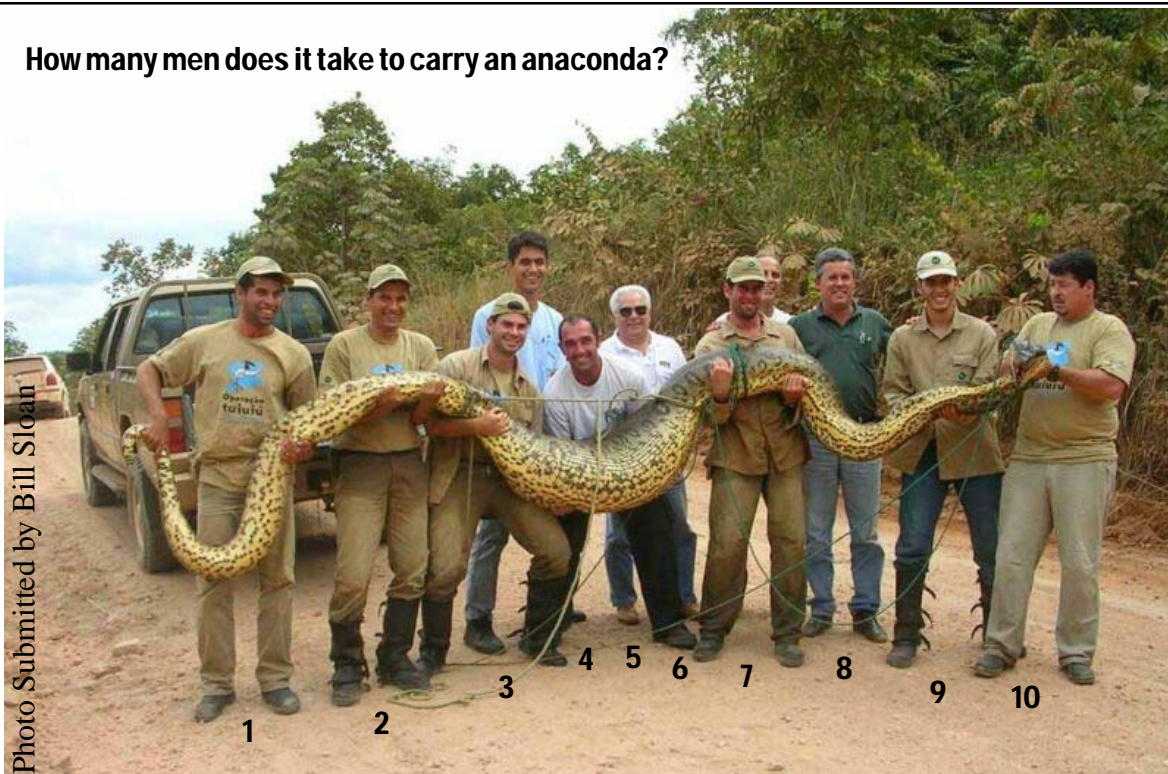


Photo Submitted by Bill Sloan

Herp Humor :)<

# **FOR SALE!** Classifieds **FOR SALE!**

WANTED: Rainbow Snakes (*Farancia erythrogramma erythrogramma*) would prefer captive born and raised but will consider any as I realize this is not your typical pet trade snake. Curt (727)-734-5230 please leave message.

For sale, 1.0 Green Tree Python, lots of yellow, 4' plus, good temperment, Vision poly enclosure with sliding glass doors and water fall, lighting, heat, digital temp/hygro monitor, \$500.00 or offer. Will deliver either animals statewide free. Experienced Herpers ONLY!863-559-0981

Odds and ends for sale-1.0 brygooi spider tortoise \$300, 1.1 orange and red Amazon tree boas (adult breeders) \$200 for the pair, 1.0 2002 Chinese King Rat Snake \$80, 1.0 2004 Mexican Tiger Rat snake \$300 Interested call Tom 407-351-5379

HERP WITH US IN COSTA RICA Join a small group of fellow herpers for seven herp filled days exploring the Rain Forest of Costa Rica. Next available trip starts Nov.12, 2005. For information call Jim Kavney 305 664-2881 until 8 PM, Eastern time. Or visit our website for full information and day to day accounts of prior trips. <http://hiss-n-things.com>

One 4' by 2' Boaphile plastics cage with built in heat pad just plug it in and its ready to go! and one 10 box shoebox Boaphile rack. It has 10 shoebox sized containers perfect for babys. It has build in heat and lighting (among one of the first lighted racks by The Boaphile. asking \$100 each or \$175 for both. (they are worth \$420 new total) John [johnmp1120@gmail.com](mailto:johnmp1120@gmail.com)



Peters stock columbian boas. Brand and new A & B type babies!!!! 80+ babies to pick from!! Call 321-303-8495 for prices and for more images-Email [jimpetersboas@earthlink.net](mailto:jimpetersboas@earthlink.net) Also a few Peruvians are left so get them while they last. HOT HOT HOT!!! <http://www.onesnake.com>

**F.I.R.E. 2005 xpo**  
Orange County Convention Center  
**Florida International Reptile Expo**  
July 9 & 10, 10AM-5PM

Sponsored by Armstrong Crickets, Midwest Tongs, Reptiles Magazine  
together with the Central Florida Herp Society

**1000s of Vet Checked Reptiles and Amphibians  
for Sale by Professional Vendors**

**Venomous Show  
LIVE Venom Extractions  
Sales - Exhibits - Shows  
Educational Seminars  
Giveaways - Raffles - Prizes  
Contests - Family Fun!**

Contact Shawn Heflick at 321-726-8866  
[www.WorldHerpExpo.com](http://www.WorldHerpExpo.com)



## FRILLED DRAGONS

By: Bruce A. Bogoslavsky D.V.M.  
Animal Veterinary Hospital of Orlando

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The frilled dragon, *Chlamydosaurus kingii*, is one of the most fascinating animals in the world. At first site the enlarged umbrella-like structure around their neck, along with the gaping mouth full of teeth, would seem like an aggressive stance. In reality the opposite is actually true. When frightened, the lizards use this as a defense mechanism. In the past these impressive reptiles could only be observed either in the Australian outback or at a zoo. Today they are readily imported into the country and some hobbyists have even successfully bred the lizards in captivity.

At rest, frilled dragons are rather dull creatures. Their plain color and average size makes them an average looking reptile at best. The folded frill will extend from the base of the head past the shoulders. Some experts feel the folded frill resembles leaves and is therefore used as camouflage. Once stimulated, their appearance as well as their demeanor changes. The frilling response is usually accompanied by a series of open-mouthed lunges. Often the lizards will rear up on their hind legs and charge at their opponent.

Frilled dragons are a large arboreal lizard found in northern Australia and southern New Guinea. Although only one species is recognized, variances in color, size and overall scale pattern will differ based on geographical location. In nature, frilled dragons prefer a eucalyptus tree forest. Males can reach a total length of near 3 feet with over 2/3 of that length being the tail alone. Adults will reach full size in 2-3 years and they may live up to 10 years in captivity. Frilled dragons have muscular limbs with long toes and claws for climbing. The frill apparatus is supported by hyoid cartilage and is covered with large keeled scales. In some species, the female's frill will actually be larger than the male's.

Healthy frilled dragons will be alert and active. They should hold their head up above the ground and their abdomen should be plump. Newborn and newly acquired dragons should be thoroughly examined for mites. Often they can be found on the corners of the mouth and on the underside of the frill. Snout abrasions occur frequently in new dragons as they try to adjust to their new environment.

Frilled dragons naturally inhabit dry forest regions where their vision allows them to hunt as well as avoid predators. Newly acquired dragons should be housed in quiet areas away from other animals they might regard as predators. Even birds housed in the same room could cause stress. Stressed lizards will cling tightly to branches and attempt to hide behind them. Stress will affect the reptiles feeding, digestion, immune system, and overall health.

Frilled dragons are highly active lizards that love to climb. Although juveniles may be raised in 50 to 100 gallon aquariums, adults should be kept in custom cages. An average cage should be at least 6 feet high and 3-4 feet wide as well as long. Because frilled dragons exhibit high levels of activity, cage furniture should be sturdy and easily cleaned. Many owners will use simple newspaper as a substrate item, while others will use items such as sand, coconut mulch, or crushed walnut. Multiple levels of

branches, both vertical and horizontal, should be provided. The branches should be at least as wide as the lizard for comfort during basking. Although live plants make an attractive addition to the enclosure, most frilled dragons will readily shred them on a daily basis. Artificial plants will provide a functional and aesthetically pleasing addition to the enclosure.

A large container such as a cat litter pan or storage container will make a good water bowl. A large rock or some type of anchoring device should be placed inside the container to prevent the lizard from tipping the bowl. Frilled dragons will often defecate in their water bowls; therefore daily cleaning is mandatory. Some lizards will not drink from standing water and will take in their water from moisture as it accumulates on leaves or rock surfaces. These lizards should have their cage as well as themselves misted on a daily basis. Misting will also help keep the enclosure humidity around 70%.

Daytime cage temperature should be between 85-90 degrees Fahrenheit. Nighttime temperature should be between 75-80 degrees Fahrenheit. A basking site should have a temperature between 95-100 degrees Fahrenheit. A full-spectrum ultraviolet light should be used; however, whenever possible the lizard should be offered direct, unfiltered sunlight.

Frilled dragons are hearty eaters. All ages should be fed small daily meals instead of large meals less frequently. Frilled dragons will eat a variety of items such as insects, arthropods, other reptiles, small rodents, fish, shrimp and even canned reptile food. Some reports also state frilled dragons will eat a variety of dark-green, leafy vegetables and other vegetables as well as various fruits. Neonates and juveniles should be given a high-quality vitamin/mineral supplement daily. Adults should receive supplementation twice per week.

Frilled dragons are difficult to sex as juveniles. Some herpetologists have tried theories such as head width and tail thickness to try to differentiate males from females. Once the lizard clears one foot in body length, the hemipene bulges at the base of the tail can identify the males. As adults, male frilled dragons are larger in general than females. Adult males should not be housed together.

Frilled dragons should go through a cool down or hibernation period of 2 to 3 months prior to breeding; this is usually started around August or September. Following the post-hibernation warming period, courtship will occur. Male frilled dragons will display and fight during the mating season. The displays are a combination of partial to fully erect frills, head bobbing, tail whipping and occasionally arm waving. Males should be separated but may be placed in close proximity to each other to help stimulate interest in breeding. Females will head bow and slowly approach the male for breeding. A large open ground area should be provided within the enclosure for courtship and breeding. Following breeding, the female's abdomen will become noticeably distended as the eggs develop. Prior to egg deposition the females feeding will decrease and sometimes diminish totally. A container filled with a moist peat moss and potting soil mixture, or moist sand, should be provided for her. Gravid females will lay their eggs six to eight weeks after breeding. The clutch will be deposited in the mixture over a one-hour time frame. Females will nest in the morning, laying 1 to 3 clutches per season, approximately 3 to 8 weeks apart, with the clutch size will ranging from 8 to 20 eggs.

The eggs should be incubated in a 50:50 mixture by weight of water and vermiculite and maintained between 83-86 degrees Fahrenheit. Hatching usually occurs 80-90 days later. New hatchlings will start to feed within 48 hours. By four months of age, the juveniles should be separated, as fighting, especially during feeding, will occur.



Friiled dragons are one of the most unique reptiles maintained in captivity today. Although many hobbyists will purchase these lizards as an impulse buy, they are not intended for the novice herper. It should be kept in mind; the frill is a defense response to any threatening stimulus. Maintaining any animal in a state of constant stress is not healthy; therefore, anyone owning a frilled dragon should allow them to express themselves naturally and not try to make the reptile a sideshow for their friends.

For more information on frilled dragons try:

- 1) Reptiles Magazine, September 1995.
- 2) Reptiles Magazine, April 2003.
- 3) Reptilia Magazine, Index of Species #7.
- 4) Reptile Care, July/August 2004.

Dr. Bogoslavsky welcomes all suggestions and comments. If there is a particular topic you would like to see discussed, please write to 1320 West Oakridge Road, Orlando, FL 32809.





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