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ABOUT SWCHR
Originally founded by Gerald Keown in 2007, SWCHR is a 501(c)(3) non-profit association, governed by a board of directors and dedicated to promoting education of the Association’s members and the general public relating to the natural history, biology, taxonomy, conservation and preservation needs, field studies, and captive propagation of the herpetofauna indigenous to the American Southwest.

THE SWCHR LOGO
There are several versions of the SWCHR logo, all featuring the Gray-Banded Kingsnake (Lampropeltis alterna), a widely-recognized reptile native to the Trans-Pecos region of Texas as well as adjacent Mexico and New Mexico.

ON THE COVER: Banded Rock Rattlesnake, Crotalus lepidus klauberi, Hidalgo County, NM (Travis Dimler). This photograph is from a portfolio that won Travis the SWCHR’s 2013 H. F. Koenig Award for Excellence in Herpetological Photography.

BACKGROUND IMAGE: Elephant Tusk, Big Bend National Park, TX (Chris McMartin)

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A CALL FOR PAPERS

Are you a field herpetologist or a herpetoculturist working with species native to the American Southwest? Do you have a paper or an article you have written for which you would like to find a permanent repository? Want to be assured you will always be able to share it with the world? Submit it to the SWCHR Bulletin for possible publication. Submitted manuscripts from SWCHR members, as well as non-members, will be considered.

To be accepted for publication, submissions must deal with herpetological species native to the American Southwest. Such topics as field notes, county checklists, range extensions, taxonomy, reproduction and breeding, diseases, snake bite and venom research, captive breeding and maintenance, conservation issues, legal issues, etc. are all acceptable. For assistance with formatting manuscripts, search ‘scientific journal article format’ on the internet and tailor the resultant guidance to suit.

Previously published articles or papers are acceptable, provided you still hold the copyright to the work and have the right to re-publish it. If we accept your paper or article for publication, you will still continue to be the copyright holder. If your submission has been previously published, please provide the name of the publication in which it appeared along with the date of publication. All submissions should be manually proofed in addition to being spell checked and should be submitted by email as either Microsoft Word or text documents.

Send submissions to swchrbulletin@swchr.org.
A Message from the President

During the month of March 2014, SWCHR participated in two herpetological events in Texas, and welcomed two new members. The first event was the inaugural Texas Rattlesnake Festival at the Dell Diamond in Round Rock, Texas on March 8th and 9th, which was a great event with a very bright future, in which we were proud to participate. This event was a no-kill event to educate the public about rattlesnakes, the truth about rattlesnake roundups, and methods roundups use to take rattlesnakes from the wild. It was informative, with lots of fun activities for kids and families, as well as displays of live snakes of many kinds, and educational presentations. The second event we attended was the Texas Reptile Expo at the Norris Conference Center, in San Antonio, Texas on March 15th and 16th, which was a very nice, large venue.

SWCHR will also once again be attending the Snake Days event in Sanderson, Texas which is May 30th through June 1st, 2014. We will again host the photo contest for the event, both judging and awarding the prizes. Also, we will again have our “Rendezvous Texas,” a free barbecue and drinks meet-and-greet for all interested herpers to meet and learn about SWCHR, or just talk herping and have some ‘cue. It will run from 10:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. on Friday, May 30th at the Desert Air Motel on Highway 90 in Sanderson—just before official registration for Snake Days commences.

In this issue, the first of Volume 4, Pearl Brock gives us her take on the inaugural Texas Rattlesnake Festival. Zachary Cava details his process of putting together beautiful and practical naturalistic desert vivaria for herps of the Southwest. I make note of an aberrant Trans-Pecos Rat Snake which I hatched in 2013. Kris Haas makes note of a pair of male Banded Gila Monsters he found engaged in combat. Finally, Gerald Keown reviews the 2013 book Reptiles and Amphibians of the Mojave Desert: A Field Guide.

With the advent of spring and temperatures warming up, field herping will be getting good again, and some of us who keep and breed herps of the southwestern U.S. will soon be pairing up animals. People have already been finding some nice animals across the region, as well as here in south Texas. It was a fairly consistently cold winter for most of the U.S., and the terrible drought conditions which were plaguing the Southwest at this time last year have improved dramatically. Hopefully conditions continue to improve. I am hoping for a great year for our native herps and the other flora and fauna of the Southwest.

Happy herping!

Photo by Pearl Brock
Notes from a Novice: Attending an Eye-Opening Event

By Pearl Brock

I am frequently amazed by what I learn at the herpetological events I attend with my husband, Toby Brock. We recently attended the inaugural Texas Rattlesnake Festival in Round Rock, Texas on March 8th and 9th, 2014. The first thing that came to mind when I heard “Rattlesnake Festival” was the annual “Rattlesnake Races” roundup in San Patricio, Texas, which I used to attend as a young girl. Growing up, it was an event I looked forward to as it meant a bit of freedom and excitement for me, because my brother and I were allowed to run free at the event. Although I never tried fried rattlesnake, the idea of doing so made the event feel sort of thrilling to me—due largely to the fearsome and negative light I had learned to see these animals in. The things I learned at the Texas Rattlesnake Festival have given me a new perspective on rattlesnake roundups.

A Timber Rattlesnake (Crotalus horridus) on display at the inaugural Texas Rattlesnake Festival. Photo by the author.

I learned that rattlesnake venom is very important in modern medicine, and the snakes themselves are beneficial to the ecosystem. I also learned that one of the common tactics used to capture the snakes, pouring gasoline into their dens, has negative effects on the snakes and all the other inhabitants of the dens. I learned that invertebrates, amphibians, nonvenomous species of snakes, box turtles, tortoises, owls, and various mammals are also negatively affected by this practice. Not only are these animals in danger, but rattlesnake meat served at the roundups most likely has been exposed to harmful fumes, which in turn may cause harmful side effects in the people who eat it. Pouring gas into dens also poisons the habitat itself.

Rattlesnakes are also subjected to torture during the public “festival” part of roundups, in the form of being skinned alive and decapitated, as well as other types of mistreatment such as mishandling and improper husbandry. In addition to learning how they have been—and continue to be—abused, I feel I am better informed about the positive impact these beautiful, fascinating, and maligned creatures have on our existence. I feel very fortunate to have attended and participated in the Texas Rattlesnake Festival as a member of SWCHR.

Notes on Building Naturalistic Desert Vivaria

by Zachary Cava

Building naturalistic vivaria is both an art and a science. It can be tedious, frustrating, time-consuming, and expensive—but also incredibly rewarding for those who are passionate and dedicated enough to overcome these deterrents. Designing naturalistic vivaria is an exercise in both ingenuity and futility. Vivarium hobbyists attempt to simulate a piece of nature inside a glass tank, knowing full well the best outcome will be a mere counterfeit. Despite these drawbacks, the thrill of the challenge is great. The struggle to imitate the natural world has pushed the bounds of human creativity for millennia. This process has also lead to a deeper understanding of—and respect for—that which we strive to emulate. The psychological benefits of having nature in our lives are well-documented—as are the negative consequences of being without it. Modern societies have become increasingly disconnected from the natural world, and naturalistic vivaria represent an engaging way to reintegrate nature into daily life.

Many types of reptiles and amphibians have attributes that make them ideal subjects for inclusion in naturalistic vivaria. For example, these animals often remain a relatively small size at maturity, require specific environmental conditions, exhibit interesting behaviors, and are pleasing to look at. The deserts of the southwestern United States are rich in herpetofaunal diversity. Unfortunately, these unique local environs and their inhabitants are often neglected by the herpetoculture industry, which tends to cater to more “exotic” species. In reality, naturalistic desert vivaria have the potential to be just as engaging, complex, and beautiful as the most elaborate naturalistic “tropical” displays dominating the hobby. The following discussion focuses on a Sonoran Desert-themed enclosure, which houses one adult male Sonoran Desert Toad (Bufo alvarius, formerly Otolemur alvarius). This design would likely work well for a variety of desert herpetofauna, and could be modified as needed.

Not surprisingly, research is essential for building an exceptional vivarium. Naturalistic vivaria are challenging (and, many would argue, fun) because they require balancing utility (captive care of an animal) with aesthetics (creating the illusion of nature). Preliminary research should be extensive and multifaceted, as it will involve 1) understanding the captive husbandry of a target species, as well as 2) appreciating this animal in the more complex context of its natural environment—an environment the vivarium hobbyist attempts to imitate.

While preparing for a new project, it is helpful to consult a great number and variety of sources (see “References” for suggestions). Although it is important to conduct research before starting a
project, a major part of the process will take the form of ongoing experiments, and learning through trial and error. The wonderful thing about naturalistic vivaria is that they can be as simple or elaborate as desired, and enclosures can evolve over time. With experience, the vivarium hobbyist will learn what works and what does not—there is always room for improvement.

Every effort should be made to observe the species of interest directly, in its native habitat, as it is much more difficult to construct an environment based solely on research and photographs. This is because nature is notoriously hard to copy in a convincing way. By immersing oneself in the minutiae of a place, the resulting reproduction will be more authentic. Carefully observe the topography, geology, and vegetation; notice the spacing and arrangement of different features like rocks and plants, and take plenty of photos and notes. Thinking about what identifies a particular place and how these features could be incorporated in a vivarium setting is helpful. By focusing on a real place, one will be better equipped to build a recognizable and believable habitat. (Accordingly, it is easier to build a vivarium for species that occur closer to where the vivarium hobbyist lives, as the necessary materials are more readily available and additional observations can be made as needed.)

To help illustrate the importance of “experiential research” in vivarium design, compare photos of the aforementioned Sonoran Desert vivarium before field observations were made (Fig. 1) and after field observations of *O. alvaria* habitat (Fig. 2). While the earlier incarnation is not terrible, it is rather generic. The initial setup was inspired by reference material on *O. alvaria* biology and ecology. The actual habitat turned out to be quite different than what could be inferred from research, and led to significant improvements in design.

![An early, somewhat generic-looking version of the author’s desert vivarium, created before he had visited *Ollotis alvaria* habitat. Photo by the author.](image1)

![The same vivarium, modified to replicate a more naturalistic Sonoran Desert habitat. Photo by the author.](image2)

An animal’s well-being should always take priority over the appearance of an enclosure. When getting started on designing a naturalistic vivarium, it is best to begin by addressing the basic care requirements of the animal(s) of interest, then to consider visual appeal. A natural place to start is the enclosure itself. The level of realism attainable in a vivarium is very much tied to the size of space one has available to work with. The size and dimensions of an enclosure may depend on many factors, including species-specific requirements, space availability, budget, and personal goals for the project. With these issues in mind, “the bigger, the better” generally holds true. The vivarium described herein is comprised of a 40-gallon “breeder” tank (36” L x 18” W x 17” H). Smaller tanks may be used, but space limitations can be a challenge. By attempting to recreate part of an ecosystem in a small space, it is important to include enough unique features that the environment feels real, but not overcrowded—negative space can be a powerful tool.

If keeping live plants in a vivarium (recommended) it will be necessary to start with a layer of drainage media. This layer serves to prevent the above substrate from becoming overly saturated with water and organic waste. Using a porous media increases the surface area available to beneficial microorganisms that will help recycle waste. Crushed lava rock, available at many garden supply stores, is a good option. Before adding the substrate, cover the drainage layer with a plastic mesh shade cloth. This cloth helps to prevent the substrate from sinking into the drainage media and wicking up moisture. For a primary substrate, coconut fiber and play sand are mixed in a roughly 1:1 ratio.

Incorporating a water feature may be one of the most challenging parts of building a naturalistic vivarium. Commercially available water dishes are unimpressive and obtrusive to the natural setting, and building a custom water dish has proven to be difficult and time-consuming. After much trial and error, the “Boulder Dish (XL)” from Conceptual Creations Pet Products was found to fill the needs of utility and aesthetics for the Sonoran Desert vivarium. Although this dish blends in nicely with natural rocks placed around it, the dish is quite shallow, and is a tight squeeze for the resident toad (Fig. 3). Another possibility is to create a water feature using “Apoxie Sculpt,” a 2-part epoxy clay product available from Aves Studio. According to the company, this product is safe to use in vivaria and initial results seem promising.

Another feature generally important to include is a cover object, such as a piece of bark, or a safely secured rock shelter. In the
example vivarium, a piece of bark was positioned in such a way that it provides a sense of security to the animal, without entirely obscuring it from view. While Sonoran Desert Toads are quite capable of burrowing (and the author’s toad sometimes does this), more often than not the toad is found utilizing the hide.

Having discussed the “essential” features of the vivarium, there are also “supplemental” features to consider. Supplemental features are not expected to affect an animal directly, but improve the visual appeal (and potentially the overall “health”) of an enclosure. Live plants are one of the most valuable supplemental features. Not only do real plants look better than plastic replicas, but by recycling waste, plants may provide vivaria with some ecological benefits. Presumably, this results in cleaner, better-smelling enclosures and healthier animals. Along with acquiring plants from nurseries, vivaria can also be cultivated with seeds obtained from native seed banks.

Cacti are some of the most recognizable plants of the southwest. They are hardy and easy to care for (so long as some basic requirements are met), making them ideal candidates for desert vivaria. The vivarium includes a small Beavertail Cactus (*Opuntia basilaris*) (Fig. 4). Though spineless, this species does produce lots of tiny glochids. Some have expressed concern that these glochids might be harmful to amphibians; however, the resident toad has not exhibited any adverse reactions to date. In lieu of using spineless cacti, spines could also be clipped to prevent injury. Cacti need infrequent watering and can succumb to root-rot if substrate is too moist. Watering every few weeks and allowing substrate to dry completely between each watering should suffice. Cacti require a powerful light source if grown indoors. The *Opuntia* pictured below appears to be doing well under high-output T5 fluorescent bulbs, which are kept on a timed cycle that approximates natural daylight hours.

One issue vivarium hobbyists are likely to encounter is that plants may be uprooted and knocked over. To remedy this, several large rocks can be placed around the base of a plant to secure it. In addition to protecting the plant, this miniature rocky outcrop can also add to the visual appeal of an enclosure.

Cholla (*Cylindropuntia sp.*) “skeletons” are a popular feature in desert vivaria (Fig. 3). These skeletons are visually interesting, and as a common sight throughout the desert southwest, they contribute to “setting the scene.” Rocks are also beneficial additions, and may be used to secure plants as well as to vary the topography of the enclosure. Take note of the geology within an animal’s native habitat, and try to include similar types of stone in the vivarium. For added interest, consider using rocks with lichen growing on them, as well as rocks containing fossils. If using natural rocks, make sure to secure them in place so they cannot fall and injure an animal (aquarium-safe silicone can be used to anchor features to the tank). Depending on the vivarium design, it may make sense to build rock features first and allow them to set before adding drainage media and substrate.

For some, the idea of adding a backdrop to an enclosure may seem garish, but if done correctly a background can really make a vivarium come to life. A backdrop helps the viewer to imagine the miniature environment within the larger context of a surrounding landscape, and adds to the “sense of place” by illustrating features that were not possible to include in the vivarium itself, such as giant saguaro cacti (*Carnegiea gigantea*), ocotillos (*Fouquieria splendens*), etc. (Figs. 2-4). One can simply look up landscape photographs from the appropriate habitat and make a laminated print to fit the dimensions of the enclosure. After affixing the picture, the trick is to obscure the “seam” where substrate and background meet.
Experiment with the placement of different habitat features until the background appears to blend with the rest of the enclosure.

Hopefully this article inspires others to build (or upgrade) their own vivaria. Readers are welcome to contact the author with questions or comments at: cava.zachary@gmail.com. Below are some resources that may be useful to those interested in naturalistic vivarium design. Please remember to be responsible in your endeavors and adhere to regulations on collection of wildlife and plants in your area.

References


Dendroboard, www.dendroboard.com

The Planted Tank, www.plantedtank.net

Herpetoculture Forum on Field Herp Forum, www.fieldherpforum.com

Google Scholar, scholar.google.com (for technical literature)

Conceptual Creations Pet Products, www.ccpetproducts.com (water dishes)

Aves Studio, www.avesstudio.com (aquarium-safe epoxy clay products)

The CactusStore.com, www.cactusstore.com (native desert seed mixes)

A Pattern Anomaly in *Bogertophis subocularis subocularis* (Serpentes: Colubridae)

by Toby Brock

On September 3, 2013, an aberrantly-patterned female Trans-Pecos Rat Snake (*Bogertophis subocularis subocularis*) hatched from one of two good eggs which an adult female in my collection laid in June 2013. A normally-patterned male hatched from the other good egg. There were a few other eggs in the clutch, which were either infertile or went bad during incubation. The parents are both of unknown origin, and this was the first breeding for the pair.

Upon first inspection, I thought the aberrant snake was exhibiting both the normal pattern and the blonde phase pattern, or possibly striped and blonde at the same time. I consulted the chapter on morphs in *The Complete Suboc* by Dusty Rhoads, and found no mention of this combination of mutations, so I contacted and sent photos of the aberrant snake to Dusty Rhoads, Craig Trumbower, Dave and Tracy Barker, Mike Murphy, and Craig McIntyre, all of whom I consider to be important in the past or present innovation of the captive production of *B. subocularis*, to get their opinions on the animal.

Dusty Rhoads’s response was, “It does look like a normal-blonde paradox of some sort. Perhaps ‘Blonde’ is analogous to a stripeless Motley Corn Snake [*Pantherophis guttatus*], and you hit on the ‘Striped Motley’ variety? It would be interesting to see what happens when you breed this critter and its offspring to each other.

“That would indeed be bizarre if its parents happened to both be double hets for Striped and Blonde, but that would be cool if this was in fact a double-recessive homozygote, i.e. a 1/16 shot in two hatchlings. But it is possible. And who knows what a Blonde Striped even looks like?”

He later added, “Basically, I have three hypotheses. (1) It’s a paradox/chimera of both Blonde and wild-type patterns. (2) It’s a double-homo Striped Blonde (unlikely...?), and (3) it’s a new mutation. Breeding it to Blonde and, if possible, Striped would be desirable ‘test-crosses.’”

Craig Trumbower told me, “I do have a take on this. I produced several exactly like your specimen a number of years ago from some ‘Kent’ snakes (Apache Mountains, north of the Davis Mountains). I simply labeled them ‘stippled.’ It was NOT a simple recessive trait although I did produce several aberrant offspring from the stippled animals (varying degrees of stippling).

“[It is] not associated with fungus or bacteria. Temperatures can affect sex ratios and deformities that sometimes produce incomplete
A more recent photo of the same hatchling on a paper towel. Photo by the author.

(immature) patterns but those animals are usually born dead or die in the egg and don’t go full term.

“Nice suboc and as Bern Bechtel always would say, ‘Nice Snake! . . . Breed it and find out!’”

Dave and Tracy Barker, former *B. subocularis* breeders, said they had not seen anything like it during their years of breeding *B. subocularis*, but echoed Mr. Bechtel’s words. They were in general agreement with Craig Trumbower on his take on the snake.

Mike Murphy sided with Trumbower, and he also showed me a photo of an aberrantly-colored normal phase baby *B. subocularis* he had hatched out, whose aberrancies he blamed on incubation temperatures.

Craig McIntyre said he had not seen anything like it in his subocularis breedings, but that he had once found a similarly patterned Texas (Chihuahuan) Night Snake (*Hypsiglena jani*) on the Kent Road. A photo of this snake appeared in the Spring 2013 issue of the SWCHR Bulletin.

In a Facebook group devoted to keeping *B. subocularis*, Brad Chambers said that he had once found a similar looking *B. subocularis* near Kent, in response to seeing photos of the aberrant snake.

I hope to breed the aberrant snake’s parents to each other again, to find out if any other similar offspring are produced. I am also looking forward to future breeding trials for the aberrant snake.

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank all of the *Bagertophis subocularis* breeders I talked to about this snake, for their patience in reading my many emails and thoughtfully responding with their experience and opinions.

Literature Cited


An Observation of Male Combat in Banded Gila Monsters, *Heloderma suspectum cinctum* (Lacertilia: Helodermatidae)

by Kris Haas

On June 10, 2007 I was hiking a local mountain range with my friend Jeff Miller. We were taking part in an Arizona State University study tracking *Heloderma* movement, and we would make trips out to this range two to three times a week. June in Phoenix is a blisteringly hot time—it is the hottest, driest month of the year. Consequently, almost all of the animal activity one will see will take place at night or in the early morning hours. Weather Underground’s almanac data for the nearest station on that date indicates conditions at the time were an air temperature of 91 degrees Fahrenheit, 13 percent humidity, barometric pressure of 29.67 inches, and west winds at 10 miles per hour.

I was hiking down a wash at approximately 9:00 p.m. when I heard a loud commotion up ahead. There was so much noise that I was genuinely unsure what I would encounter. I cautiously approached and found two adult male Banded Gila Monsters (*Heloderma suspectum cinctum*) in the process of combat (see photo sequence, next page). I called out to Jeff and he joined me as we witnessed this spectacle. The animals did not seem to care that we were there watching them (although I am convinced they were aware of our presence). They were solely focused on besting each other, and we witnessed many “rolls” and much hissing, mounting, etc. At no time did we witness biting or any behavior that would overtly damage either lizard.

Initially, I believed we were witnessing mating due to the way the lizards were attempting to mount each other. Only later was it confirmed that this was combat. According to Dr. Daniel Beck in his book *Biology of Gila Monsters and Beaded Lizards*, *H. suspectum* will only engage in this type of behavior if there is a receptive female nearby. We did not locate any females, but then again our focus was on the two lizards in front of us.

References


Weather Underground: www.wunderground.com
Two male Banded Gila Monsters (*Heloderma suspectum cinctum*) sizing each other up. Photo by the author.

Kris Haas and Jeff Miller witnessed much gaping and hissing from the two Gila monsters. Photo by the author.

The two males were focused on each other and seemed oblivious to being watched and photographed. Photo by the author.

The object of the bout seems to be for the “winner” to pin the “loser” down. Photo by the author.

A victor appears to have emerged with a successful pinning. Photo by the author.

Perhaps victory has eluded the upper Gila monster after all. Wrestling and rolling were common maneuvers observed to avoid remaining pinned. Photo by the author.
Book Review: *Reptiles and Amphibians of the Mojave Desert: A Field Guide*
by Joshua M. Parker, PhD and Simone Brito, M.S.

Las Vegas: Snell Press, 2013

Review by Gerald Keown

This paperback field guide covers the 64 species of reptiles and amphibians that live within the boundaries of the Mojave Desert, covering much of southern California, southern Nevada, northwestern Arizona, and the extreme southwestern corner of Utah.

As I began working my way through the book, it soon became apparent there were to be some sections of it I really liked and other parts that were to be aggravating or of little value.

Up front the authors devote four pages to a very general introduction to reptiles and amphibians. This is followed by a three-page discussion of the evolution and paleontology of reptiles and amphibians. Both of these sections seem to be unnecessary and appeared to be nothing more than filler material.

Next there is a short discussion on the “currently acceptable way” by which we classify reptiles and amphibians along with a short description and definition of the Mojave Desert. Additional sections cover Mojave Desert habitats, places to see reptiles and amphibians in the Mojave and a discussion of conservation concerns in the region. I found the definition and discussions of the Mojave Desert, its habitats, and places where you can see reptiles and amphibians to be interesting and helpful material that I would expect to see in any quality field guide. However, the sections dealing with the “currently acceptable way” we currently classify reptiles and amphibians and discussion of the conservation concerns in the Mojave Desert seemed a bit out of place for a field guide and again I chalked them up to being just more filler material.

Up next is a section titled “Notes on this Field Guide,” in which the authors attempt to explain how to use this field guide. Eight of the nine pages making up this section are devoted to a color-coded chart by which the reader should be able to correctly identify herps they observe in the Mojave Desert. While this section is certainly helpful to the reader using this field guide, its placement in the middle of the book seems a little awkward. Placing this section at or near the beginning of the book would seem to have been a much better arrangement.

Finally the reader comes to the meat of the book beginning on page 36 in a section titled “The Animals.” Here the authors provide a brief description of each of the 64 species of reptiles and amphibians occurring within the Mojave Desert, along with range maps and photos. Each species has two pages of the book devoted to it. The book concludes with a glossary of terms, a list of references, and a checklist where the user can make notes of when and where he or she has observed each of the 64 species.

While *Reptiles and Amphibians of the Mojave Desert* certainly has a place on the shelf of any respectable herp library, I have to admit that if you should ever come across me out herping in the Mojave Desert, you will be much more likely to find a *Peterson Field Guide to the Reptiles and Amphibians of Western North America* by Robert Stebbins on the dashboard of my vehicle as opposed to *Reptiles and Amphibians of the Mojave Desert*.
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For more information, visit us at www.internationalherpetologicalsymposium.com
As a member of the Southwestern Center for Herpetological Research, I subscribe to the Association’s Code of Ethics.

Field activities should limit the impact on natural habitats, replacing all cover objects, not tearing apart rocks or logs and refraining from the use of gasoline or other toxic materials.

Catch and release coupled with photography and the limited take of non-protected species for personal study or breeding use is permitted. The commercial take and sale of wild-caught animals is not acceptable.

Collecting practices should respect landowner rights, including but not limited to securing permission for land entry and the packing out of all personal trash.

Captive-breeding efforts are recognized as a valid means of potentially reducing collection pressures on wild populations and are encouraged.

The release of captive animals including captive-bred animals into the wild is discouraged except under the supervision of trained professionals and in accordance with an accepted species preservation or restocking plan.

The disclosure of exact locality information on public internet forums is discouraged in most circumstances. Locality information posted on public internet forums usually should be restricted to providing the name of the county where the animal was found. When specific locality data is provided to one in confidence, it should be kept in confidence and should not be abused or shared with others without explicit permission.

Other members of the Association are always to be treated cordially and in a respectful manner.