A new era has dawned in the evolutionary history of the Herpetological Association of Africa. I am of course referring to the new-style journal, changes of which were spelled out in the "New editorial policy for the HAA Journal" notice published in the previous issue of African Herp News. Of greatest concern to those members who felt uncertain about the changes are the following: What will happen to Life History, Geographical Distribution and Venoms and Snakebite short notes; and will the journal be lost as a local "outlet" for annotated checklists and short communications not suitable for publication in major journals?

I am pleased to say that all short notes, annotated checklists and other short communications are welcome in African Herp News and I would like to encourage members to continue submitting them for publication. There are few who would not agree that much invaluable information has appeared in the above-mentioned sections over the years. The transfer of these sections to African Herp News is necessary so that the journal can become of similar standard and format as other journals already accredited, and has no bearing on the importance of short notes. The term "short note" does not include "short communications", i.e. short research articles, as these are still published in the journal.

For those who have supported the journal, newsletter or both, keep up the good work, and for those who have not, get going and let's improve the quality of our Association's publications.

Good news! Following the suggestion at the last HAA Symposium that the next symposium be held in KwaZulu Natal, Dr Orty Bourquin has put together an organizing committee and made provisional arrangements (see notice in this issue of African Herp News). The venue is St Lucia and provisional dates are 30 October to 2 November 1995. This promises to be yet another great HAA symposium.

Lastly, I thank all contributors of articles and news items for this issue of African Herp News and look forward to receiving your next contributions.

Mike Bates
Chairman/Newsletter Editor
GENERAL MEETING 1993

In the previous *African Herp News* (December 1993) a notice was published (page 18) regarding the lack of a quorum at the General Meeting during the Third H.A.A. Symposium on African Herpetology held at the Transvaal Museum on 15 October 1993.

Only 27 H.A.A. members were present at the meeting, three less than the quorum of 30 required by the H.A.A. Constitution in order to constitute an official gathering. Members who did not attend the meeting were requested to respond to two questions. Four H.A.A. members responded.

Regarding the first question, on whether or not the following statement be accepted as the H.A.A.'s stance towards nature conservation organizations: "The H.A.A. strongly supports and encourages local involvement in nature conservation issues and collaboration with conservation bodies", 3 of the 4 members agreed to accept this stance.

With regard to the second question, asking whether or not members felt it worthwhile and in the interest of the H.A.A. Journal to apply for accreditation status as an approved journal (see pages 21-23 of *African Herp News* 20), 3 of the 4 members agreed that it was worthwhile to apply.

The four responses mean that 31 members were "involved" in the General Meeting, satisfying the quorum of 30. Both questions asked received a positive response - question 1: total for = 29 (26 at meeting plus 3 by postal vote), total against = 2 (1 at meeting plus 1 by postal vote); question 2: total for = 30 (27 at meeting plus 3 by postal vote), total against = 1 (by postal vote) and the motions are therefore officially accepted.

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**WANTED**

Information on Rinkhals. I am at present involved in a breeding programme on banded Rinkhals (*Hemachatus haemachatus*). Anybody with any information on this species, particularly persons from the areas in which they occur, please contact: Mr T. Dillon, 38012 Hubert Jenkins Road, Bogalusa, L.A. 70427, U.S.A.

**************************************************

**SUBSCRIPTION PAYMENTS**

I have received a number of requests from members asking for an account number into which they may directly transfer fees. This would be convenient to some members, but regrettably I am not prepared to accept fees in this manner as it is almost impossible to determine the payee, and in addition, a minor error in the code would send the money to goodness knows where!

I have recently received $(dollar) Postal Orders from various parts of the world - in America these seem to be referred to as "Money Orders". Unfortunately the Post Office in South Africa will not honour such documents and I have had to return these to the members involved.

Our bankers suggest that to avoid any confusion the term "money order" as used in our Fees notice on the inside cover of *African Herp News* should be taken to mean: an international money order drawn on a bank.

Frank Farquharson
Hon. Secretary/Treasurer

**************************************************

**ERRATA**


Amend couplet 3 (3a and 3b) to read:

3a. Tibia length less than half the length from snout-to-vent and lower jaw without conspicuous bony cusps ................................................................. 4

b. Tibia length greater than half the length from snout-to-vent or lower jaw with conspicuous bony cusps ................................................................. 8

Amend couplet 21 as follows:

21b. refers to couplet 22 (and not 24).
AN ANNOTATED CHECKLIST OF THE AMPHIBIANS OF LEGALAMEETSE NATURE RESERVE, EASTERN TRANSVAAL

1Gerald V. Haagner & 2Johan de Kock

1Department of Herpetology, Port Elizabeth Museum, P.O. Box 13147, Humewood 6013, South Africa
2Transvaal Nature Conservation, P.O. Box 146, Hoedspruit 1380, South Africa

INTRODUCTION

During April 1992 several Department of Development Aid nature reserves were taken over by the Transvaal Division of Nature Conservation. During a visit to the Legalameetse Nature Reserve (LNR) in December 1993, the first author was requested by the reserve management to assist with the compilation of an amphibian checklist.

STUDY AREA

The LNR covers an area of 18 750 ha, and together with the Wolkberg and Bewaarkloof nature reserves, makes up the Greater Wolkberg Conservation Area of approximately 70 000 hectares (Fig. 1). The reserve is situated approximately 60 km SE of Tzaneen on the northern Transvaal Drakensberg escarpment. It is situated between 720 - 1838 m a.s.l. and falls within the summer rainfall zone, with the majority of rain from November to March. The ten year means for the following three rain stations on the reserve are: The Downs - 938,5 mm, Heights - 1065,7 mm and Schelem - 1005,8 mm. Staalmans (1990) surveyed the vegetation of the reserve and found that Acocks’ (1988) veld types no. 8 (North-eastern Mountain Sourveld) and no. 9 (Lowveld Sour Bushveld) are dominant.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

The reserve had experienced good rains and amphibians were abundant. This paper reports on material collected as well as literature records. All material collected was deposited in the herpetological collection of the Port Elizabeth Museum (PEM). Representative samples of all tadpole material was forwarded to Dr A.J.L. Lambiris (Cambridge, U.K) for identification and deposition in the A.J.L. Lambiris Private Collection. A specimen of Breviceps s. sylvestris is deposited in the herpetological collection of the Natural History Museum of Zimbabwe, Bulawayo (NMZH).

Four localities on the reserve were visited:
Farm: Paris 24°09'32"S, 30°20'02"E (2430Ac)
Farm: Malta, Ga-Selati River 24°10'08"S, 30°14'57"E (2430Aa)
Farm: Crags, Ngwabitsi River 24°06'27"S, 30°13'13"E (2430Aa)
Farm: The Downs, near Kgokgorupe 24°09'10"S, 30°11'54"E (2430Aa)

Nomenclature follows that of Poynton (1964), Passmore & Carruthers (1979), Branch et al. (1988) and Jacobsen (1989). Common names are according to Passmore & Carruthers (1979).
**SYSTEMATIC CHECKLIST**

**Class:** AMPHIBIA  
**Order:** ANURA  

**Family: BREVICEPS** Gray, 1825  
**Family:** BUFO L. 1758  
**Family:** TOMOPTERNA FitzSimons, 1930  
**Family:** XENOPUS Daudin, 1802  
**Family:** RANIDAE Gray, 1825  
**Family:** MICHOYLLIDAE Günther, 1859

**BREVICEPS SYLVESTRIS SYLVESTRIS** study has been undertaken, all specimens arc here treated as **BUFO RANGERI**  

Voucher specimens: PEM A2520-21, adults, PEM T009, tadpoles; AJL 3848, tadpoles - Farm Paris.  

**Remarks:** Although no adult specimens were collected, frogs were observed on two occasions on the farm Paris. Jacobsen (1989) recorded the species from a quarter-degree unit (2430Ab) adjacent to the reserve. The tropical species Xenopus muelleri has not been recorded this far inland in the Transvaal (Jacobsen, 1989).

Family: BUFONIDAE Gray, 1825  
**BUFO FENOUHETI FENOUHETI** Hewitt & Methuen, 1913 Pigmy Toad  
**BUFO GUITURALIS** Hewitt & Methuen, 1913 Guttural Toad  
**BUFO MACULATUS** Hallowell, 1854 Flat-backed Toad  
**BUFO GARmani** Meck, 1897 Olive Toad  
**BUFO RANGERI** Hewitt, 1935 Raucous Toad  
**SCHISMADEMA** CARENS Smith, 1848 Red Toad  


Family: MICHOYLLIDAE Günther, 1859 *1858* (1843)

**BREVICEPS SYLVESTRIS SYLVESTRIS** FitzSimons, 1930 Transvaal Forest Rain Frog  

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| Voucher specimen: | NMZB 11090 - Kerkbos, Farm The Downs; Farm Malta (Jacobsen, 1989).  
**Remarks:** This is a rare burrowing frog endemic to the Drakensberg escarpment and Wolkberg areas in the Transvaal. It is restricted to moist montane forest where specimens take shelter in constructed hollows under rocks or logs (Jacobsen, 1989).  

**BREVICEPS ADSPERSUS ADSPERSUS** Peters, 1882 Bushveld Rain Frog  
**Remarks:** Numerous specimens were observed consuming termites (flying ants) on a road on the farm Paris during early December 1993; none were collected. Jacobsen (1989) noted differences in paravertebral markings and recommended intensive investigation into the B. adspersus complex. Poynton & Broady (1985a) discussed taxonomic problems associated with B. adspersus hybridizing with B. mossambicus. Lambiris (1989) found that these two species hybridize freely in Zululand and it is difficult to find "pure" mossambicus. The species complex is under investigation and several cryptic species may be involved (Minter, pers. comm.).  

**PHRYNOMANTIS** BIPASIATUS BIPASIATUS (Smith, 1847) Rubber Banded Frog  
**Remarks:** During late November 1993 an adult P. adspersus was observed on the road near the reserve offices. This sighting is referred to P. a. edulis, which occurs east of the escarpment. Confusion exists on the status of this and the typical race, the latter occurring west of the Drakensberg escarpment. It is possible that edulis will be elevated to specific status (Channing, pers. comm.).  

**TOMOPTERNA CRYPTOTIS** (Boulenger, 1907) Tremolo Sand Frog  


**Remarks:** Distribution in the Transvaal is limited to the lower eastern Lowveld. The Farm Paris specimen represents only the second record for the species on the northern escarpment and is the most inland record for the Transvaal.
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PYCHADENA POROSSISSIMA (Steindachner, 1867) Striped Grass Frog
Remarks: This is only the second locality for P. porossiissima on the northern escarpment. Jacobsen (1989) recorded the species at Woodbush (2329Dd).

RANA ANGOLENSIS Bocage, 1866 Common River Frog
Voucher specimens: PEM A2556 - Farm Paris; farms Malta, Heffenden Heights and The Downs (Jacobsen, 1989).

STRONGYLOPUS GRAYII GRAVII (Smith, 1849) Clicking Stream Frog
Voucher specimens: Farm Malta (Jacobsen, 1989).
Remarks: Poynton & Broadley (1985b) commented on the possibility of two taxa being included under Rana g. grayii and Jacobsen (1989) noted that there appears to be ecological separation between forest and grassland forms.

PHRYNOBATRACHUS MABABIENSIS FitzSimons, 1932 Dwarf Puddle Frog
Voucher specimens: PEM A2548 - Farm Malta; PEM A2565 - Farm Paris.

PHRYNOBATRACHUS NATALENSIS (Smith, 1849) Snoring Puddle Frog
Voucher specimens: PEM A2546 - Farm Malta; PEM A2550 - Farm Paris.
Remarks: Jacobsen (1989) recorded the species from an adjacent farm in the same quarter-degree unit as the reserve (2430Ac), as well as at Woodbush (2329Dd).

Family: RHACOPHORIDAE Hoffman, 1932 Grey Tree Frog
Remarks: Fairly large numbers were observed constructing nests in late December 1993; up to five males were involved in the process of constructing a single nest.

Family: HYPEROLIIDAE Laurent, 1943 Snoring Puddle Frog
Voucher specimens: PEM A2546 - Farm Malta; PEM A2550 - Farm Paris.
Remarks: This is the only recorded specimen from the escarpment and the most inland record to date.

Family: LEPTOPELIDAE Cope, 1867 Brown-backed Tree Frog
Voucher specimens: PEM A2546 - Farm Malta.
Remarks: This is the only specimen recorded from the escarpment and the most inland record to date.

KASSINA SENEGALENSIS (Dumeril & Bibron, 1841) Bubbling Kassina
Voucher specimen: PEM A2525, adult, PEM T013, tadpoles; AJL 3852, tadpoles - Farm Paris.
Remarks: Several specimens were observed in amplexus in a garden pond on 28 December 1993.

HYPEROLIUS MARMORATUS TAENIATUS Peters, 1854 Painted Reed Frog
Remarks: Several specimens were observed calling in reeds in a garden pond during the period 26-28 December 1993.

HYPEROLIUS PUSILLUS (Cope, 1862) Water Lily Frog
Voucher specimen: PEM A2547 - Farm Paris.
Remarks: This is the most inland record and the first for the escarpment.

POSSIBLE ADDITIONS

The following species have been recorded from localities in adjacent quarter-degree units (see Jacobsen, 1989) and are likely to occur in the reserve.

Family: HELEOPHYRINIDAE Noble, 1931
HELEOPHRYNE NATALENSIS Selater, 1899 Natal Ghost Frog
Jacobsen (1989) recorded this species from Woodbush (2329Dd).

Family: MICROHYLIDAE Günther, 1859 •1858 (1843)
BREVICEPS ADSPERSUS PENTHERI Werner, 1899 Bushveld Rain Frog
Jacobsen (1989) recorded this subspecies from Woodbush (2329Dd).

Family: RANIDAE Gray, 1825
CACOSTERNUM NANUM NANUM Boulenger, 1887
Jacobsen (1989) recorded this species from Woodbush (2329Dd).

Family: HEMISOTIDAE Cope, 1867
HEMISUS MARMORATUS MARMORATUS (Peters, 1854) Mottled Shovel-nosed Frog
Jacobsen (1989) recorded this species from Gravelotte (2330Dc).

Family: HYPEROLIIDAE Laurent, 1943
LEPTOPELIS BOGATTI (Günther, 1864) Bushveld Tree Frog
Jacobsen (1989) recorded this species from Letsitele (2330C). This isolated record needs confirmation. L. bogatti is superficially easy to confuse with L. marmoratus, although it is apparently a strictly terrestrial form.

DISCUSSION

A total of 24 amphibian species have been recorded within the boundaries of the reserve, with an additional five possibilities.

In the Transvaal there are some 50 conservation areas under management of the Nature Conservation Directorate. Together with the forestry areas under the control of the Department of the Environment and the Kruger National Park, they cover approximately 8,4% of the Transvaal (Greyling & Huntley, 1984). These areas protect approximately 83% of the Transvaal, although this figure is likely to be higher as many species are rare and difficult to find.

The presence of a species in a reserve does not mean its survival is assured. Jacobsen (1988) scored the herpetofauna of the Transvaal as rare, endemic or having limited habitat distribution. According to his scoring system, the LNR offers possible protection to six species important to conservation: Breviceps adspersus pentheri, B. sylvestris, Cacosternum n. nanum, Heleophryne natalensis, Leptolips marmoratus and L. bogatti (Jacobsen, 1988).

The amphibians of the Transvaal are unprotected, except from exportation without a permit under Transvaal Nature Conservation Ordinance 12 of 1983. The only species enjoying some form of protection is the bullfrog, Pyxicephalus adspersus, which is
covered by the ordinance. The typical race is widespread, but densities are low and populations are vulnerable to habitat destruction, especially at highveld pans. The eastern subspecies *P. a. edulis* is widespread in the Lowveld and its status appears to be secure in the Kruger National Park.

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

Dr W.R. Branch (Port Elizabeth Museum, Humewood) confirmed the identifications of adult frogs and commented on the text; Dr A.J.L. Lambiris (Cambridge, U.K.) identified tadpoles and Mr J. van Loggerenberg provided information about the reserve. I also thank my wife Anna for braving the mosquitoes and mud to collect several of these wonderful 'creepy crawlies'.

**REFERENCES**


African Herp News 21: July 1994


*****************************************
REPRODUCTION OF THE EASTERN PALLID SPITTING COBRA NAJA PALLIDA BOULENGER, 1896 IN CAPTIVITY

Alan D. Louw

1 Renown Street, Kensington 2094, South Africa

In May 1985 I obtained a pair of 30-day-old Naja pallida. The young snakes measured about 50 cm in length and were light pink in colour with a black band around the neck. They now measure 300 cm in length and are dark red above, pale pink below, with a pinkish-white throat and a faint black band encircling the neck. The female is blind in the left eye, possibly from birth.

The first time I bred these cobras was in August 1989. In January 1990 the female laid 15 eggs under some green moss, but these were unfortunately discovered too late, and were unsuccessfully incubated.

The female was in a box (320 x 300 x 270 mm) fixed to the left corner of the roof in the main cage. The box had a hole 80 mm in diameter and a door which the snake could push open with ease. The female had been in this cage for 12 months, the small box providing shelter and a winter hibernating place.

On 1 August 1992 the male was introduced to the female in a cage measuring 1580 x 620 x 720 (height) mm containing a large branch and some plants. The floor of the cage had a heating pad and was thickly matted with green moss. The male appeared to show immediate interest, jerking his body about and whipping his tail vigorously while searching for the female.

From 1-12 August the female showed no apparent interest in the male. At 17h30 on 13 August she exited the box for the first time, but still showed no sign of mating, despite the male’s constant rubbing and jerking movements. At 17h30 on 15 August the male and female were found together in the small box with the door wide open, and careful observation showed that they were in coitus. Copulation was in “progress” for 15 days, during which time the snakes spent a considerable amount of time moving about.

A few weeks later the female was removed to a polystyrene cage containing several caves and ledges and painted with Micatex. A few plants were added to give the cage a natural look. The floor had a waterproof carpet and measured 1000 x 580 m x 525 (width) mm. By the beginning of November the female was quite swollen. She consumed two medium sized rats after being removed from the male in the big cage. On 15 November 1992 a lump was noted under the carpet in the left corner of the cage, which proved to be a clutch of 14 smooth, white eggs.

The eggs were transferred to a plastic container measuring 270 x 200 x 100 (height) mm, half-filled with compost. The top of the container was sealed with thin, loose plastic, and it was then placed in a cage with a floor heater peaking at 30°C. Eight of the 14 eggs made contact with the loose plastic and appeared to foul. They were therefore removed and put in another cage. A section of glass was placed over the remaining unaffected eggs which remained in good condition until hatching:

Egg 1: 6 February 1993 at 10h50
Egg 2: 6 February 1993 at 12h12 (hatchling died after 20 min)
Egg 3: 8 February 1993 at 17h28
Egg 4: 9 February 1993 at 17h05 (hatchling died soon afterwards)
Egg 5: 9 February 1993 at 22h05
Egg 6: 10 February 1993 at 17h50

The four live hatchlings were placed in separate cubicles and kept under observation. All hatchlings grew rapidly, readily consuming pink mice.

Note: Broadley & Howell (1991) treat Naja nigricollis pallida Boulegener (of northern and eastern Africa) and N. katiensisAngel as full species.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to pay tribute to the late Gady Kunzi, and my long-term partner the late John Lougher, without whom my herpetological career would not have been possible.

REFERENCES

SEGS - A SIMPLIFIED EARTH GRID SYSTEM FOR DISTRIBUTION MAPPING

Robert B. Yeadon
5 Armadale Road, Sea View 4094, South Africa

This paper was prompted by Bates' (1992) article entitled "The grid and locus code method for plotting locality records", published in the December 1992 issue of African Herp News. I disagree with Bates' (1992) statement that the upper boundary of a grid unit is part of that unit. This only adds to the already present confusion. What would the locus code of point latitude 0°0'0"S and longitude 0°0'0"E be? -01-01Aa4? In the example Bates (1992) gives, grid unit 2926Ad4 begins at latitude 29°22'30" and must end at 29°29'9"--9°. A latitude of 29°30'0" is the beginning of, and is part of, a new grid unit.

It will not be often that a field collector with a good map will have the dilemma of not knowing from which grid unit he has made a collection, but it has happened to this author. A small cross drawn on the map marking the position where a sand lizard was found under a rock fell exactly on the 22°30' line. I was tempted to record that a tail and hind legs had been collected in one grid unit and a head and forelimbs in the adjoining unit. The complete specimen was recorded as having been collected in the upper grid unit.

When I first began recording collecting and sighting localities I decided that quarter-degree units covered too large an area and chose to use eighth-degree units. Rather than use the mind-blowing unit labelling system which De Waal (1978) used, a simpler method was adopted. After all, which of us with normal brains is able to comprehend at a glance that grid units 2926Aa4, 2927Cc3, 3026Bb2 and 3027Aa1 have a common point? In my labelling system, the eighth-degree divisions are numbered 0-7 and the relevant division numbers combined with the unit's degree definition. The above four examples become grid units 297/267, 297/270, 301/267 and 201/270. One only has to remember that if the third digit of a number triad is a 7, it will be followed by a 0 in the same position of the next grid unit triad. How much easier it then is to see that a grid unit shares a corner point or boundary with another! The filling in of grid units on a distribution map is greatly simplified.

One wonders why the present confusing grid labelling system, with its quarter- and eighth-degree units, labelled Aa1 to Dd4, was adopted in the first place. It would have been much more logical to have divided a degree into six or ten divisions of 10 or 6 minutes each, numbered 0-9. The above-mentioned four grid units would have been labelled 295/265, 295/270, 300/265 and 300/270, or 299/269, 299/270, 300/269 and 300/270--easy to understand and easy to follow!

I am experimenting with an even more logical and easier to use system, namely the Simplified Earth Grid System (SEGS), which uses a lol as a unit of grid latitude or longitude definition:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grid Unit</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>lol</td>
<td>1/1000 circumference of earth = 360/1000 degrees = 21'/36&quot; = 40.07588 km along equator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>decilol (dlol)</td>
<td>29'/4 = 4 km along equator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>centilol (clol)</td>
<td>12'/29&quot; = 400 m along equator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>millilol (mlol)</td>
<td>1'/12&quot; = 40 m along equator</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The present longitude line of 168°30'W is selected as base line in this system as it is the line which passes over the least distance of land. It is close to part of the International Date Line. This longitude line is numbered O lol. Longitude line lol numbers increment from west to east to a value of 999, after which base line O lol is returned to. The North Pole is taken as base 'line' for latitude and is numbered latitude O lol. The South Pole is taken as the upper limit for latitude and is numbered latitude 500 lol.

Most African countries would be covered by 400 to 900 lol grid units, not an unreasonably high number considering the fact that South Africa is at present covered by about 1800 quarter-degree grid units. The Orange Free State, which is at present covered by about 800 eighth-degree grid units, would be covered by about 80 lol grid units, or 8000 decilol grid units. Although 8000 would be a huge number of grid units to plot manually, a computer plotter, or even a standard PC printer, which has a possible page print position matrix of about 10000, could easily perform the task.

For distribution in smaller areas, for example Cape Town's Table Mountain, centilols could be used to create a grid of units of about 400 x 400 m.

The advantage of SEGS is that any point or area on earth can be defined in simple numeric terms without having to specify degrees, minutes, seconds, and the relevant world hemisphere. For example, Bloemfontein's Railway Station would have the millilol position definition of 330/489/540/904. Compare this with the present system's position definition of 529°07'13"E26°13'34"S.

Most collectors will probably insist that they are quite happy to continue using the present system, but it is archaic and illogical, and should have been replaced, as have been for the most part, other recording systems using units such as inches, feet, yards, chains and other irrationally related measures, relationships which have been the bane of most people, and school children in particular. Perhaps we herpetologists should lead the way in the use of an improved grid labelling system, with the hope that we do not go into the next millennium having to use a system developed during the Dark Ages - a system which has served us well, but which should now be allowed to fade away gracefully.

As the relationship between the present and the proposed alternative system is simple and mathematical, conversions can easily and quickly be done by computer. Existing maps will continue to be usable, but one would hope that in time, maps showing revised lines of latitude and longitude will become available.

REFERENCES

SHORT NOTES SECTIONS

As noted in the December 1993 issue of *African Herp News* ("New editorial policy for the H.A.A. Journal", pp. 21-23) the following short notes sections of the Journal will now appear in *African Herp News*: Life History, Geographical Distribution, and Venoms and Snakebites. Short notes of this nature should therefore be addressed to: Mike Bates, Editor: African Herp News, P.O. Box 266, Bloemfontein 9300, South Africa.

Contributors to the short notes sections are urged to follow the standard format and style explained at the beginning of each section. Pay careful attention to the order in which information is presented and the use of semicolons. Take note that the instructions for presentation of short notes have been slightly modified. Manuscripts which are not presented in the correct style will be returned to authors for corrections.

Note: New South African provinces (i.e. Northern Transvaal, Eastern Transvaal, Northwest, PWV, Free State, KwaZulu Natal, Northern Cape, Eastern Cape and Western Cape) should be used.

LIFE HISTORY NOTES

*African Herp News* publishes brief notes concerning the biology of the herpetofauna of the African continent and adjacent regions, including the Arabian peninsula, Madagascar, and other islands in the Indian Ocean.

A standard format is to be used, as follows: SCIENTIFIC NAME; Common name (using Bill Branch's *Field Guide to the Snakes and other Reptiles of Southern Africa* for reptiles and Passmore & Carruthers' *South African Frogs* for amphibians, as far as possible); Keyword (this should be a single word best describing the topic of the note, i.e. Reproduction, Longevity etc.); the text (in brief English with only essential references quoted and in abbreviated form); Locality (country, province or state, location, quarter-degree grid unit, and latitude and longitude if available; use metric distances); Date (day, month, year); Collector(s); Place of deposition and accession number (required if specimens are preserved); Submitted by: NAME, address in parentheses.

AMPHIBIA

ANURA

BUFONIDAE

BUFO KAVANGENSIS

Okavango Toad

REPRODUCTION

During a herpetofaunal survey of Hwange National Park in Zimbabwe in December 1993, *Bufo kavangensis* (Poynton & Broadley, 1988) was observed calling at two sites in Kalahari sand. Both breeding sites were in flooded grass plains composed of either short or long grasses, or both. Grasses included *Panicum subalbidum*, *Brachiaria jubata* and *Echinochloa colonum*, all of which have very stout basal stems. Calling occurred from the margin of the water to a depth of 1.3 m. Deeper water was not investigated, but may be inhabited as the above-mentioned grasses were present. Calling frogs clutch grass stems but remain very close to the waterline - not more than 3 cm above the water. The upright to semi-upright calling posture is believed to be unique among African bufonids; and the previously undescribed call is a fairly continuous piercing "BZZZZ BZZZZ", with little emphasis on the "B". The vocal sac is oval. *B. kavangensis* and *Hyperolius marmoratus marginatus* occur in sympatry at Bembesi Vlei, although the two species were spatially divided by the height of their calling sites, except when *H. m. marginatus* are in amplexus. Although many ephemeral pans were investigated, no toads were heard calling in this habitat.


Submitted by: D.G. BROADLEY and G.S.A. RASMUSSEN (Department of Herpetology, Natural History Museum, P.O. Box 240, Bulawayo, Zimbabwe).
African Herp News 21: July 1994

REPTILIA

CHELONII
PELOMEDIUSIDAE
PELUSIOS NANUS

African Dwarf Hinged Terrapin

REPRODUCTION

An adult female Pelusios nanus was collected on 12 July 1991 at Sakeji School, Northwestern Province, Zambia (11°45'S, 24°19'E; 1124Ah). The specimen was kept in captivity at the Port Elizabeth Snake Park, where it settled down and accepted fish, lean meat and pink mice. On 7 April 1992, 10 months after capture, she laid 5 viable eggs. These were deposited on a ledge with fine gravel and no effort was made to bury them. Egg biometrics were: length, mean 27,3 mm, S.D. 0,72 mm, range 25,3-30,2 mm; width, mean 16,6 mm, S.D. 0,39 mm, range 14,9-16,9 mm; mass, mean 4,24 g, S.D. 0,43 g, range 3,6-4,8 g. Eggs were incubated in moist vermiculite but failed to hatch. On inspection, 67 days after oviposition, one egg contained a perfectly formed but dead embryo with a carapace length of 15,7 mm, carapace width of 11,9 mm and plastron length of 14,2 mm. The yolk was not fully absorbed and weighed 1,4 g, while the terrapin weighed only 1,1 g. All eggs were fertile but contained dead embryos in various stages of decomposition. No other details on reproduction in this species are known. Sperm retention for at least 10 months by the female is indicated in this instance, being the first documented case of sperm retention in an African terrapin. The female died the following month and was deposited in the herpetological collection of the Port Elizabeth Museum (PEM R7248). Her carapace length was 119 mm, plastron length 104,5 mm and mass 259,2 g at the time of death. The excised embryo and one egg were also deposited in the museum collection (PEM R7223). Broadley (1991, Arnoldia Zimbabwe 9(37): 519-538) gave a record size of 120 mm for a P. nanus specimen from the same locality; the PEM R7248 female is the second largest specimen known.

Acknowledgements: The Brubacher family for their hospitality during our stay in Zambia; Anna Haagner, Matthew and Anne Cowell for assisting with collecting; and W.R. Branch for commenting on the text.

Submitted by: G.V. HAAGNER (Port Elizabeth Museum, P.O. Box 13147, Humewood 6013, South Africa).

SAURIA

SCINCIIDAE & LACERTIDAE

MABUYA VARIEGATA PUNCTULATA

Northern Variegated Skink

MABUYA STRIATA SPARSA

Kalhari Striped Skink

MEROLES SUBORBITALIS

Spotted Desert Lizard

AVIAN PREDATION

On 10 December 1991, an adult female Pigmy Falcon (Polihierax semitorquatus) was collected at Nossob Restcamp in the Kalahari Gemsbok National Park (25°29'S, 20°31'E; 25208c), Northern Cape, South Africa by J.J. Herholdt. Examination of the stomach contents of the bird revealed fragmentary evidence of at least four lizards. Using identification keys and figures in FitzSimons (1943, Transvaal Mus. Mem. 1: 1-528), a checklist of the herpetofauna of the Kalahari Gemsbok National Park (Haacke, 1984, Supplement to Koedoe: 171-186) and comparative material in the herpetological collection of the National Museum, it was determined that three species were involved. The head of one lizard was identified as that of a Meroles suborbitalis (fronotal in broad contact with rostral); two forelimbs, part of a tail and a few patches of skin similar to that of M. suborbitalis were also present. The head of another lizard ( tympanic region damaged) together with two sets of hindquarters, both with quincunciate dorsal scales and mainly tricarinate subdigital lamellae, indicated the presence of Mabuya variegata punctulata. The hindquarters of another lizard were dark brown with small, pale spots, there were tricarinate dorsal scales and mainly unicarinate subdigital lamellae (22 under 4th toe of each foot) and the specimen is referable to Mabuya striata sparsa (see Broadley, 1977, Oc. Pap. nam. Mus. Rho. B4(2): 45-79); a third rather damaged head could not be identified with confidence but was similar to that of M. s. sparsa. Several unattached Mabuya forelimbs were also present. The bird and its stomach contents are preserved in the ornithological collection of the National Museum, Bloemfontein (NMBV 04160). The Pigmy Falcon is known to prey on large insects, small lizards and occasionally small rodents and birds (Maclean, 1993, Roberts’ Birds of Southern Africa. John Voelcker Bird Book Fund, Cape Town). Pellet analysis has shown that in terms of mass, more than 50% of this bird’s diet consists of lizards (Brown et al., 1982, The Birds of Africa. Vol. 1. Academic Press, London).

Submitted by: M.F. BATES and D.J. DE SWARDT (National Museum, P.O. Box 266, Bloemfontein 9300, South Africa).

CORDYLIDAE

PLATYSAUROS INTERMEDIUS

Common Flat Lizard

REPRODUCTION

Six male, six female and four juvenile Platysaurus intermedius were collected in March 1993 at Pullen Farm in the eastern Transvaal (24°35'S, 31°11'E; 2431Ca). Specimens were housed in groups of three or four in standard 90 cm long aquarium tanks in the Milner Park Animal Unit at the University of the Witwatersrand on a reversed day/night cycle (12L/12D). Room temperature was maintained at 25-28°C. Each tank was fitted with a SUN-GLO lamp to simulate sunlight, while a 40 W light bulb provided a hot-spot at one end of the tank. Oviposition occurred from 6 October to 1 December 1993. All females laid elongate eggs in damp soil under the water dish. Two tanks contained two males and one female. One of these females laid three clutches of two eggs, 24 and 14 days apart respectively, while the other female laid two clutches of two eggs, 43 days apart. A female in a third tank with a single male laid one clutch of two eggs and another single egg, 46 days apart. A fourth tank contained three females and one male. Three clutches of two eggs and two single eggs were laid in total, but it was not possible to determine how many eggs were laid by any particular female. Egg morphometrics: length, mean 16,1 mm, S.D. 0,87 mm, range 14,7-17,2 mm; width, mean 9,1 mm, S.D. 0,47 mm, range 8,4-9,9 mm; mass, mean 0,66 g, S.D. 0,12 g, range 0,54-0,8 g.

Submitted by: L. EGAN (University of the Witwatersrand, P.O. WITS, 2050, South Africa).
The eggs reported here are much larger than those reported by Creighton & Haagner previously (Hall, pers. obs.). Broadley (1983, *J. Herpetol. Assoc. Afr.* 20(3): 111-117) observed that eggs had a total mass of 46.0 g, i.e. 105.7% of the female's post-partum mass. The female measured 638 mm (504 mm SVL) and weighed 37 days. The artificially incubated eggs hatched on 13 January 1994 after an incubation period of 43.5 days. The gestation period, calculated from the period when courtship was observed, was 20.3 days.

On 29 November 1993 the female laid 10 eggs in the artificial nest box. The female and eggs were removed, weighed and measured: eggs: length, mean 29.5 mm, S.D. 1.50 mm, range 27.9-31.7 mm; width, mean 16.5 mm, S.D. 0.56 mm, range 15.3-17.0 mm; mass, mean 4.6 g, S.D. 0.23 g, range 4.2-4.9 g; egg volume, mean 4.36 cm³, S.D. 0.25 cm³, range 4.03-4.74 cm³ (egg volume formula from Douglas, 1992, *S. Afr. J. Wildl. Res.* 20(3): 111-117). Eggs had a total mass of 46.0 g, i.e. 105.7% of the female's post-partum mass. The female measured 638 mm (504 mm SVL) + 134 mm tail length) and weighed 43.5 g. Gestation period, calculated from the period when courtship was observed, was 37 days.

Five of the eggs were returned to the nest site in the cage to observe whether the female would return to "guard" the eggs. The remaining eggs were incubated in moist vermiculite at 27°C. The female ignored the eggs, accepting young mice eight days after laying. The artificially incubated eggs hatched on 13 January 1994 after an incubation period of 43.5 days. The eggs incubated in the display tank hatched three days later. The hatchlings measured: SVL, mean 126.1 mm, S.D. 5.85 mm, range 117-132 mm; total length, mean 176.8 mm, S.D. 6.19 mm, range 169-181 mm; mass, mean 3.3 g, S.D. 0.39 g, range 2.8-4.3 g. The female was returned to the display cage and the hatchlings released in Baakens Valley, Port Elizabeth.

The eggs reported here are much larger than those reported by Creighton & Haagner (1986, *J. Herpetol. Assoc. Afr.* 32: 35), but fall within the range given by Bates (1985, *J. Herpetol. Assoc. Afr.* 31: 21-22), who found the female coiled around her eggs under a flat shale rock in grassland near Pretoria. An adult female was found coiled around a clutch of eggs under a rock in the King Williams Town district, Eastern Cape (32º27'Cd). Several dried-out egg shells, presumably from a previous season, were also found under this rock, suggesting that the same or other female skaapstekers had used the nest site previously (Hall, pers. obs.).

Broadley (1983, *FitzSimons' Snakes of Southern Africa*, Delta Books, Johannesburg) noted that 35-42 days is the usual incubation period. Creighton & Haagner (op. cit.) recorded an incubation period of 37 days, with no evidence of parental care. Although Broadley (op. cit.) refers to the female incubating her eggs, the term "guarding" (Campbell & Quinn, 1975, *J. Herpetol.* 9: 229-233) is a better term describing egg attendance behaviour.

Whether or not the guarding behaviour observed in the gravid female is directly related to her advanced gravidity is unknown. Steehouder (1984, *Literature Serpentenum* 4(3/4): 90-103) reported similar behaviour in captive *Psammophis subaenitaitus sudanehis* and *P. sibianus* which he refers to as "polishing behaviour". The *Morocco* psammophine *Malpolon monspessulanus* also grooms itself, especially shortly after swallowing, and often shortly after swallowing prey; these snakes possess a special nasal gland, the secretion of which appears to retard water loss through the skin (Dunson, Dunson & Keith, 1978, *J. Exp. Zool.* 203: 461-473).

Submitted by: R.J. HALL, G.V. HAAGNER and W.R. BRANCH (Port Elizabeth Museum, P.O. Box 13147, Humewood 6013, South Africa).

J. A. FROMME, Dickie HARRIS (Pietersburg) and W.D. MULLER (Port Elizabeth) provided valuable assistance in a number of ways. I am grateful for the help and advice of Dr F.A. Grant (Natn. Mus. Rldw.), Dr I. Stuart (Cape Herpet. Inst.) and Dr O. Bourquin (Natal Parks Board, Pietermaritzburg) kindly identified the reptiles involved.

Submitted by: P.E. JENNINGS (P.O. Box 13062, Cascades 2702, South Africa).
ELAPIDAE
HEMACHATUS HAEMACHATUS

Rinkhals

DICEPHALISM

On 5 January 1950 an adult female Hemachatus haemachatus was killed near Bethlehem in the Orange Free State (29°34'S, 28°18'E; 2928Ac). The carcass was collected and dissected by Dr J.N.W. Louwser who found the female to be gravid. The oviducts and embryos were deposited in the herpetological collection of the Transvaal Museum, Pretoria (TM 22161). There were 19 embryos in the left oviduct and 18 in the right. One embryo was diencephalic. The head was divided at the 4th ventrals with the fusion at the 5th upper labial on the right head and the 6th upper labial on the left head; a communal lower jaw was present. The head measured: length - left 10,2 mm, right 8,8 mm; width - left 7,1 mm, right 7,2 mm; embryo mass 2,8 g. It also had a communal anterior body which formed a double U-shape to both sides to split into two separate tails, the left measuring 67 mm and the right 72 mm. The "snakes" could be described as "Siamese twins". Both tails had evverted hemipenes. Colour an overall grey-brown with distinct white bands. Dicephalism has been reported for various oviparous South African snake species. Haagner & Van Ryn (1991, The Naturalis 35(3): 3-5) reported dicephalism in Lampropis fuliginosus and Crotaphopeltis hotamboeia, while Haagner & Boycott (1993, J. Herpetol. Assoc. Afr. 42: 39) reported a diencephalic hatching Lycophidion c. capense from Swaziland. This appears to be the first report on dicephalism in a viviparous African snake.

Acknowledgements:

Mr W.D. Haacke for permission to work on the herpetological collection of the Transvaal Museum, Pretoria; and Ms S. Ritter for assistance.

Submitted by: G.V. HAAGNER (Port Elizabeth Museum, P.O. Box 13147, Humewood 6013, South Africa)

NAJA HAJE ANNULIFERA

Egyptian Cobra

DIET

A non-banded Naja haje annulaterr was killed at a small river near a dam in wooded miombo grassland in the intensively farmed Karoyi area of Zimbabwe (28°34'S, 16°35'S; 2916Da) on 3 April 1994. Cobras and mambas, together with birds, rodents and other mammals, are common in the area. The cobra was 2,1 m long and in good physical condition. Its stomach contained two Leopard Tortoises (Geochelone pardalis), one in an advanced state of decomposition and the other still intact (95 mm long, 70 mm wide). There were no other food items in the stomach. Only one other case of predation by a snake on a chelonian is known to the author - that of a Puff Adder (Bitis a. arietans) eating a Leopard Tortoise (Geochelone pardalis) (Wilson, 1965, Puku 3: 149-170).

Submitted by: G. MACKIE (P.O. Box CY 1409, Causeway, Harare, Zimbabwe).

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GEOGRAPHICAL DISTRIBUTION

African Herp News published brief notices of new geographical distributions (preferably at least 100 km from the nearest published record) of reptiles and amphibians on the African continent and adjacent regions, including the Arabian peninsula, Madagascar, and other Indian Ocean islands.

A standard format is to be used, as follows: SCIENTIFIC NAME; Common name (sec Life History Notes); Locality (country, province or state, location, quarter-degree grid unit and latitude and longitude if available; use metric distances); Date (day, month, year); Collector(s); Place of deposition and accession number (required); Comments (including data on size, colour and scalation, especially for taxonomically problematic taxa; and newest published record/s in km; references to be quoted in text); Submitted by: NAME, address (in brackets). Observation records are acceptable only in exceptional circumstances (as in the case of large or easily identifiable reptiles, e.g. pythons, tortoises). Records submitted should be based on specimens deposited in a recognised institutional collection (private collection records are discouraged).

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AMPHIBIA

ANURA

BUFONIDAE

BUFO LEMARI Boulenger, 1901: Lemar's Toad; Namibia, Caprivi Strip, Shankara (17°58'S, 20°30'52''E; 1720Da); 20 January 1994; W.R. Branch & A. Channing. Port Elizabeth Museum, PEM A2585. Collected on road at night in mopane savanna. Snout-urostyle length 54,3 mm, tibia length 24,7 mm, mass 16,6 g; light brown overall colour with distinct, elongated (13,1 mm) parotid glands; snout pointed with Rana-like appearance; dark inter-orbital bars present, not meeting mid-dorsally; pale median stripe from snout to vent. This species remains a rarity in museum collections. It has been recorded from the Zambezi River and Okavango Swamps (Haacke, 1982, J. Herpetol. Assoc. Afr. 27: 11-12), and Poynton & Broadley (1988, Ann. Natal Mus. 29(2): 447-490) listed three localities in Botswana; the species is more widespread in Zambia, Angola and Zaire. Channing & Griffin (1993, Madoqua 18(2): 101-116) listed B. lemarri as being of likely occurrence in Namibia. The Shankara record confirms its presence within the political boundaries of the country.

Acknowledgements: The Namibian Ministry of Wildlife, Conservation and Tourism for permission to collect in Namibia; Dr M. Griffin for his assistance.

Submitted by: W.R. BRANCH, G.V. HAAGNER (Port Elizabeth Museum, P.O. Box 13147, Humewood 6013, South Africa) and A. Channing (Department of Biochemistry, University of the Western Cape, Private Bag X17, Bellville 7535, South Africa).

HYPEROLIIDAE

HYPEROLIUS MARMORATUS MARGINATUS Peters, 1854: Margined Reed Frog; Zimbabwe, Hwange National Park, three localities: (1) Manzimbovu Pan (1826Ec); 17-18 December 1993; D.G. Broadley and G.S. Rasmussen; Natural History Museum
of Zimbabwe, Bulawayo, NMZB 12931-34, 12948-51; (2) Bembesi Pan (1826Db); 23 December 1993; D.G. Broadley, G.S.A. Rasmussen and R. de Bourbon; NMZB 13100-9; (3) 2.5 km E of Dom Pan (1826Db); 30 December 1993; G.S.A. Rasmussen; NMZB 12774. First records for the Hwange National Park, representing a 250 km WSW range extension from Lusulu, just south of Chizirira National Park (Poynton & Broadley, 1987, *Ann. Natal Mus.* 28(1): 161-229). Frogs from Manzimbomvu Pan called from waterlily pads and other emergent vegetation, while those at Bembesi Pan and near Dom Pan called from grass (*Panicum subalbidum, Brachiaria fubata* and *Echinochloa colonum*) in a flooded vlei. The subspecies to the north, *H. m. rhodesianus* Laurent, inhabits *Paragmites* reed-beds along the Matetsi River. No *H. m. rhodesianus* were found in the Delta and Lukosi river systems in the north of Hwange National Park, where reedbeds were scarce.

Submitted by: D.G. BROADLEY and G.S.A. RASMUSSEN (Department of Herpetology, Natural History Museum, P.O. Box 240, Bulawayo, Zimbabwe).

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**SAURIA**

**CHAMAEOLEONIDAE**

**BRADYPODION SETAROI** Raw, 1978: Setaro's Dwarf Chameleon; South Africa, KwaZulu Natal, Madlangul, Kosi Bay Nature Reserve (26°56'S, 32°50' E; 2623Dd; 28 m a.s.l.); 29 October 1992; R. Kyle; Port Elizabeth Museum, PEM R8498. Large gravid female measuring 119.7 mm (63.5 mm SVL + 56.2 mm tail length); mass 5.6 g; head length 18.5 mm; eye diameter 4.74 mm; 9 prominent conical tubercles along dorsal ridge. Four fertile ova present, two in each oviduct, measuring on average 7.3 x 6.26 mm; much larger litters were reported by Haagner (1989, *Lammergeyer* 40: 42-46) and Haagner & Els (1986, *Lammergeyer* 37: 14-21). Range extension of approx. 35 km and the most northerly record to date. *B. setaroi* has also been collected 4.3 km S of Lake Silwayi (TM 48 144) and may be expected to occur in southern Mozambique.

Acknowledgements: The Kwazulu Bureau of Natural Resources for accommodation and permission to collect; and the Kyle family for pleasant hospitality.

Submitted by: G.V. HAAGNER, W.R. BRANCH (Port Elizabeth Museum, P.O. Box 13147, Humewood 6013, South Africa).

**SCINCIDAE**

**MABUYA HOMALOCEPHALA SMITII** (Gray, 1845): Smith's Red-sided Skink; South Africa, Eastern Transvaal, Farm Malta, Lega lamb's Nature Reserve, District Letaba 2 (24°10'08"S, 30°14'57" E; 2430Aa); 30 December 1993; G.V. Haagner: Collected under an old drum used as a dustbin at the public picnic site in Accocks' veld type no. 8 - North-eastern Mountain Sourveld (Accocks, 1908, *Mem. Bot. Surv. S. Afr.* 57: 1-114). Adult female with anrvent-vent length of 58 mm, tail length 12 mm (truncated), mass 6.2 g. Gravid female with 4 ova in right oviduct and 6 in left, measuring on average 3.86 x 3.32 mm. Rostral wider than high; nostril pierced near posterior margin; supranasal elongate; frontonasal broader than long; prefrontal separated by frontal; supracoculars 4; supraciliaries 5; upper labials 7; lower labials 7; suboculars bordering lip between 4th and 5th upper labials; mental wide and narrow with concave posterior margin; midbody scale rows 34. Overall brown colour with six longitudinal stripes extending from behind head to base of tail. This is the fourth recorded specimen from the Transvaal, only the second from the Transvaal Drakensberg and the first from a protected area. Jacobsen (1989, *A herpetological survey of the Transvaal*, Unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of Natal, Durban) recorded *M. h. smithii* from Iron Crown, Wolkberg (2429Bd). The colour and description of the Malta specimen is very similar to that described by Jacobsen (*op. cit.*), but the midbody scale row count of 34 is considerably higher than Jacobsen's counts of 29-30. *M. h. smithii* has a seemingly unusual distribution, with scattered populations in the E and NE Transvaal (Jacobsen, *op. cit.* and NE and SE Orange Free State (De Waal, 1978, *Mem. mus. Bloemfontein* 1: 1-160), with the main body of distribution in the E and S Cape Province (Plettenberg, 1943, *Mem. Transvaal Mus.* E: 1-528; Branch, 1990, *Herpetol. Assoc. Afr.* 37: 17-44). The taxonomy of *M. homalocephala* is confused and currently under revision (Branch & Broadley, in prep.). Reproductive data on *M. homalocephala* are scanty. The clutch of 10 eggs reported here is considerably larger than the clutches of two and three reported by Haagner, Branch & Hall (1993, *Herpetol. Assoc. Afr.* 42: 36). Visser (1975, *Zool. Afr.* 18(2): 215-217) recorded clutches of six eggs for *M. homalocephala* females from the western Cape Province.

Acknowledgements: The De Kock family for their hospitality; Dr W.R. Branch for confirming the identification and discussion on the problematic taxonomy.

Submitted by: G.V. HAAGNER (Port Elizabeth Museum, P.O. Box 13147, Humewood 6013, South Africa).

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Submitted by: O. BOURQUIN (Natal Parks Board, P.O. Box 662, Pietermaritzburg 3200, South Africa).
LACERTIDAE
PEDIOPLANIS LINEOCELLATA LINEOCELLATA (Duméril & Bibron, 1839): Spotted Sand Lizard; Zimbabwe, Mashava District, Gaths Mine (2030Ba); 2 February 1994; T.C. Masango; Natural History Museum of Zimbabwe, Bulawayo, NMZB 13219. One hatching collected at about 10h30 on scrub-covered red soil near asbestos dump; the specimen agrees in colour pattern with juveniles from Botswana, including NMZB-UM 13097 from 15 km SSE of Nata. A grey adult, believed to be of the same species, was seen in the area but was not captured. The Gaths Mine locality represents the first record. The new record extends the known distribution of the species approx. 240 km further south and is the first for the Transkei.

Submitted by: D.G. BROADLEY and T.C. MASANGO (Department of Herpetology, Natural History Museum, P.O. Box 240, Bulawayo, Zimbabwe).

SERPENTES
COLUMBIDAE
AMBLYODIPSAS CONCOLOR (A. Smith, 1849): Natal Purple-glossed Snake; South Africa, Transkei, District Umzimvubu, Mumbane, second beach south of Port St Johns (31°38'S, 29°34'E; 3129Da; 14 m a.s.l.); 30 December 1989; G.V. HAagner; Transvaal Museum, Pretoria, TM 69016. Young adult male found coiled under a stone in coastal forest at 09h15. Total length 472 mm (402 mm SVL + 70 mm tail length); mass 36.7 g; ventrals 151; subcaudals 27; lower labials 7 (3rd and 4th entering orbit); temporals 0+1+1; anal divided. This remains a poorly known species represented by less than 30 specimens in museum collections. Broadley (1983, FitzSimons’ Snakes of Southern Africa, Delta Books, Johannesburg) recorded only two localities in Natal, Durban being the most southerly record. The new record extends the known distribution of the species approx. 240 km further south and is the first for the Transkei.

Submitted by: G.V. HAagner (Port Elizabeth Museum, P.O. Box 13147, Humewood 6013, South Africa).

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AFRICAN HERP NEWS 21: July 1994

VENOMS AND SNAKEBITE

African Herp News publishes brief notes on the venoms, symptoms and treatment of envenomation from snakes of the African continent and adjacent regions, including the Arabian peninsula, Madagascar, and other islands in the Indian Ocean.

Notes should be submitted in abbreviated form, following where possible the format of ‘Life History Notes’. The onset of symptoms and treatment should be given from the time of the bite. Circumstances relating to the bite should be listed, but only important details given. Reports containing unusual features or new information will be given preference. Information on bites by the rare venomous species, or those previously considered non-venomous or innocuous, are particularly important.

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COMMENTS ON VENOMS AND SNAKEBITE REPORTS

R.S.M. BLAYLOCK
Group Specialist General Surgeon, Goldfields of South Africa
Private Bag X2011, Carletonville 2500, South Africa

I was glad to see another excellent article on Black Mamba envenomation in a recent issue of the H.A.A. Journal (Durrant & HAagner, 1992, J. Herpetol. Assoc. Afr. 41: 46). However, I would like to raise a few points:

2. Pressure immobilisation as quoted in the recent Black Mamba case (Haagner, 1990, J. Herpetol. Assoc. Afr. 37: 59) and a recent Green Mamba case (Patterson & Morgan, 1986, J. Herpetol. Assoc. Afr. 31: 14-15) did not show any benefit in comparison to other Black and Green Mamba bites respectively. Early systematic envenomation and times of peak illness were not delayed. Neither was there benefit in the Naja mossambica case (Haagner, 1988, J. Herpetol. Assoc. Afr. 35: 40). Neurotoxicity does not occur in these cases and bites without any treatment whatever may not develop gangrene in spite of the presence of local swelling (and hence envenomation).
4. Lastly, I suggest that any poisonous snake bite case, and not just special ones, be published. There are too few in print to make out the correct natural history of many snake bites whether treated or not.

Editor’s Note: Authors of Venoms and Snakebite Reports should take note of Stephen Spawls’ suggestions regarding the writing of snake bite case histories (see African Herp News 18: 4-6).
FROM THE PRESS:

TORTOISE WITH A DIFFERENCE...

(Vista, 14 January 1994)

Luky Whittle

A white tortoise made its appearance at the Riebeeckstad home of Mrs Karen Oliemans last week, unintentionally causing her a lot of stress. When she was in her house on Thursday afternoon, she heard the dogs outside, barking their heads off. Wondering what could be amiss, she rushed outside to find one of her dogs holding the white terrestrial reptile of the order Chelonia in its mouth and trying to get a grip on it with its teeth, to the deafening barks of the other canine. Hornified, Mrs Oliemans rescued the tortoise, locked it into the courtyard after providing it with a lettuce leaf to chomp on and phoned the SPCA but the staff had gone home.

She then phoned the vet and asked him to tell her all about tortoises and how to treat them. He burst out laughing and said he had no idea. At her wits end, she decided to phone Vista, who, she says, always know everything. A reporter answered her call and became extremely excited at the news, convinced Mrs Oliemans had located a rare albino tortoise which would be a first for the Goldfields. When Mr Oliemans came home, however, he informed his wife that the tortoise was one of the common or garden variety and that some prankster had painted it white.

When she got home, however, she decided to phone Vista again. A reporter answered her call and became extremely excited at the news, convinced Mrs Oliemans had located a rare albino tortoise which would be a first for the Goldfields.

When Mr Oliemans came home, however, he informed his wife that the tortoise was one of the common or garden variety and that some prankster had painted it white. 'I felt such a fool!' she says. Her embarrassment soon gave way to anger when she realised that paint contains lead, a healthy dollop of which, when inhaled through the porous shell of the tortoise, may cause poisoning.

All is well that ends well. Mrs. Oliemans got hold of the SPCA who in turn contacted Nature Conservation.

Confident that the visitor is in good hands, therefore, Mrs Oliemans - and her dogs - are able to sleep again at night.

DAAR WAS 'N SLANG IN DIE PAD

'Besoeker' se kuer kortgeknip

(Vista, 4 February 1994)

Trudie Bona

'n Giftige boomslang, wat in Welkom onder 'n motor beland het, het vermoedelik in 'n vrugtekrat uit warm boomstamgebiede in die Oos-Vyfstaat, Natal of Noord-Transvaal na Welkom gekom.

'Dit is al logiese oplossing waaraan ek kan dink,' sê mev Rina van den Heever, 'n slangkenner van Welkom. Dit boomslang is eers deur mnr Roelof Byliefeld, wat per ongeluk daaroor gery het, as 'n mamba aangesien, omdat dit grasgroen is.

Mnr Byliefeld sê hy was verteled Donderdagavond van die kafie na sy huis onderweg toe by hy in Brutuslaan, Bedelia, oor die slang gery het. Die slang was ongeveer 1,4 meter lank.
Dr Mouton, who had previously discovered two new kinds of gecko, has the honour of naming the lizard - Latin for "the lizard that lives in the clouds".

The discovery has again drawn attention to the unique fauna of the Hottentots-Holland Mountains, but more importantly "to the gap in our knowledge of the fauna in the Western Cape mountains in general," Dr Mouton said.

University researchers believe the present knowledge of lower vertebrates and invertebrates of the Western Cape mountains is so poor that a definite plan should be made to improve the situation.

From a conservation point of view they are deeply concerned about the future of these small, isolated populations, as indiscriminate burning on their natural habitat could easily lead to extinction.

**PAAZAB - A BRIEF DESCRIPTION**

Pan African Association of Zoological Gardens, Aquaria and Botanical Gardens, P.O. Box 87692, Houghton 2041, South Africa

The Pan African Association of Zoological Gardens, Aquaria, and Botanical Gardens (PAAZAB) was formed in 1989 and formalized in 1990. It is a regional member of the World Zoo Organization, otherwise known as the International Union of Directors of Zoological Gardens (IUDZG) and of the Captive Breeding Specialist Group (CBSG) of the World Conservation Union (IUCN). It has also been recognized by the American Association of Zoological Parks and Aquaria (AAZPA), whose 125 North American members hosted between them 105 million visitors in 1991, or one in every three persons in the U.S.A. and Canada. In 1993 PAAZAB was awarded the Chicago Zoological Society's *International Zoological Achievement* award together with prize money of US $8333.00.

PAAZAB’s membership has grown steadily since its launch in 1990. Full membership is limited to permanent establishments open to and administered for the public to provide education, recreation and cultural enjoyment through the exhibition, research, conservation and preservation of animals and plants. Twenty-one institutions from ten African states (Cameroon, Ivory Coast, Madagascar, Malawi, Mozambique, Morocco, Namibia, South Africa, Zaire, Zimbabwe) presently make up PAAZAB’s full members. Fourteen associate members and 200 individual members from the U.S.A., Canada, Zaire, Malawi, South Africa, France, Madagascar, Senegal, Tunisia, Algeria and Egypt make up the balance of membership.

Individual membership of PAAZAB is open to any interested person. Annual membership fee is presently R60.00 for members of the public and R35.00 for staff members of institutions which are Full Members of PAAZAB. A PAAZAB Bulletin is produced twice annually and contains news about its members and the zoo/aquaria business in general in Africa.

Full Members of PAAZAB host between them about 10 million visitors annually and employ about 4000 people.
PAAZAB "AFRICAN ZOOHELP" FUND

Humans throughout Africa have been migrating towards towns and cities by their millions. Perhaps as much as 60-70% of sub-Saharan Africa's human population is now urbanized, living under poor and squalid conditions. Civil wars, economic failures and natural disasters have been driving this.

For these tens of millions of Africans, nature and wildlife is irrelevant to their day to day lives. Africa's people of tomorrow have almost no value for it. The only opportunity they have to experience it in their own personal lives is to visit a local, affordable and accessible zoo or aquarium. Such facilities have an enormous and crucial role to play in education and recreation if Africa's rich and special wildlife is to survive its present journey toward marginalisation.

The PAAZAB African ZooHelp fund has been established to enable the provision of training in zoo/aquarium management, marketing and education, and in proper animal care and husbandry, to zoos in Africa. Such training, advice and guidance can be given by the larger and more established zoos/aquaria in Africa, provided the additional funding required for this is available. The focus is not on evacuating zoo animals to other places, but rather to provide on-site training to improve, stabilise and advance local zoos and aquariums so that they can, effectively and ethically, fulfill the above roles. Evacuation is a last resort only.

Your donation, of any amount no matter how small, will be put to wise and responsible use, as indicated above, for the future of nature and wildlife in Africa. Donations should be sent to PAAZAB ZooHelp, P.O. Box 87692, Houghton 2041, South Africa (Tel: [011] 646-2000). Thank you for your support.

FROGLOG

Newsletter of the World Conservation Union (IUCN), Species Survival Commission (SSC), Declining Amphibian Populations Task Force (DAPTF) and Center for Analysis of Environmental Change (CAEC). Available to interested parties upon request.

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Funding for FROGLOG is provided in part by a special donation from Frog's Leap Winery, St. Helena, California 95474, USA.

Printed on recycled paper using soy ink.
INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS OF CHELONIAN CONSERVATION
GONFARON (near NICE) - FRANCE - 6, 7, 8, 9 July 95

Secretariat: SOPTOM / B.p.24 / 83590 GONFARON / FRANCE
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Date: ________________ Signature: ________________
FOURTH HERPETOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION OF AFRICA SYMPOSIUM ON AFRICAN HERPETOLOGY
ST LUCIA
30 OCTOBER TO 2 NOVEMBER 1995

BIODIVERSITY AND CONSERVATION OF AFRICAN HERPETOFAUNA

You are cordially invited to attend the Fourth H.A.A. Symposium on African Herpetology, to be held at St Lucia, Kwazulu Natal, South Africa, from 30 October to 2 November 1995. This will be the first H.A.A. Symposium with an official theme, which includes such topics as taxonomy, genetics, distributions, population sizes, species richness, threats to species/populations, conservation measures and wise use of herpetofaunal resources, but presentations on any aspect of African herpetology are welcome.

St Lucia village is set in the Greater St Lucia Wetland Park, next to the St Lucia estuary. There will be formal sessions, an annual general meeting, social functions, a boat trip on the Lake, and a tour of the Natal Parks Board Crocodile Centre. Arrangements can be made for visits to other Lake stations, or to nearby game reserves such as Hluhluwe, Umfolozi or Mkuzi. Anglers can also use free time to fish in the estuary or the sea.

ACCOMMODATION

Accommodation is available in St Lucia village. Tariffs range from R40,00 to R100,00 (US $12-30) per night.

PAPERS, POSTERS AND SLIDE SHOWS

Presentations should be made in English. Time allowed is 15 minutes, plus 5 minutes for discussion. Please use the Intention Form on page 37 to indicate provisional titles of presentations.

IMPORTANT DATES

Intention Form: Complete and return by 31 December 1994.

ENQUIRIES AND ADDRESS FOR INTENTION FORMS

Dr O. Bourquin
H.A.A. SYMPOSIUM COMMITTEE
Natal Parks Board
P.O. Box 662
Pietermaritzburg
3200
South Africa

Further details regarding the Symposium, including the Second Announcement and Call for Abstracts, will be published in the next issue of African Herp News.
REPORT OF THE AUDITORS TO THE MEMBERS
HERPETOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION OF AFRICA

We have examined the annual financial statements set out on pages 2 and 3. Other than as explained in the following paragraph, our examination included such audit procedures as we considered necessary.

In common with similar organisations, it is not feasible for the association to institute accounting controls over collections from subscriptions and fund-raising projects prior to the initial entry of collection in the accounting records. Accordingly, it was impracticable for us to extend our examination beyond the receipts actually recorded.

Subject to the effect of any adjustment which may have been necessary had it been possible for us to extend our examination of receipts, in our opinion, the Financial Statements fairly present the financial position of the organisation at 28 February 1994 and the results of its operations for the year then ended in accordance with Generally Accepted Accounting Practice.

SELVAN PILLAY
Chartered Accountants (S.A.)
INCORPORATING D'ABBADIE & PARTNERS

DURBAN
1 July 1994
HERPETOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION OF AFRICA
MEMBERSHIP FEES AS AT 1 JANUARY 1994

AFRICAN MEMBERSHIP

ORDINARY MEMBERSHIP

1 year membership R40.00. Submit in Rand or equivalent U.S. Dollar plus 10%.
3 year membership R110.00. Submit in Rand or equivalent U.S. Dollar plus 10%.

SCHOLARS MEMBERSHIP

1 year membership R30.00. Submit in Rand or equivalent U.S. Dollar plus 10%.

OVERSEAS MEMBERSHIP

DOLLAR PAYMENTS

1 year membership $25.00. Submit in U.S. Dollars by personal cheque or money order.
3 year membership $70.00. Submit in U.S. Dollars by personal cheque or money order.

RAND PAYMENTS FROM OVERSEAS

1 year membership R80.00. Submit in ZAR or Rand by bankers draft or money order.
3 year membership R220.00. Submit in ZAR or Rand by bankers draft or money order.

Owing to numerous banking problems, members are kindly requested not to submit payments directly to any Building Society or Bank account. All payments must be submitted directly to:

THE SECRETARY/TREASURER
HERPETOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION OF AFRICA
P.O. BOX 20142
DURBAN NORTH
4016 REP. SOUTH AFRICA

PLEASE STATE IN WHICH YEAR YOU REQUIRE MEMBERSHIP TO BEGIN. MEMBERSHIP RUNS FROM 1 JANUARY TO 31 DECEMBER OF ANY YEAR. SHOULD MEMBERSHIP BE TAKEN OUT IN THE LATTER PART OF THE YEAR, YOU WILL RECEIVE ALL JOURNALS AND NEWSLETTERS PERTAINING TO THAT YEAR.