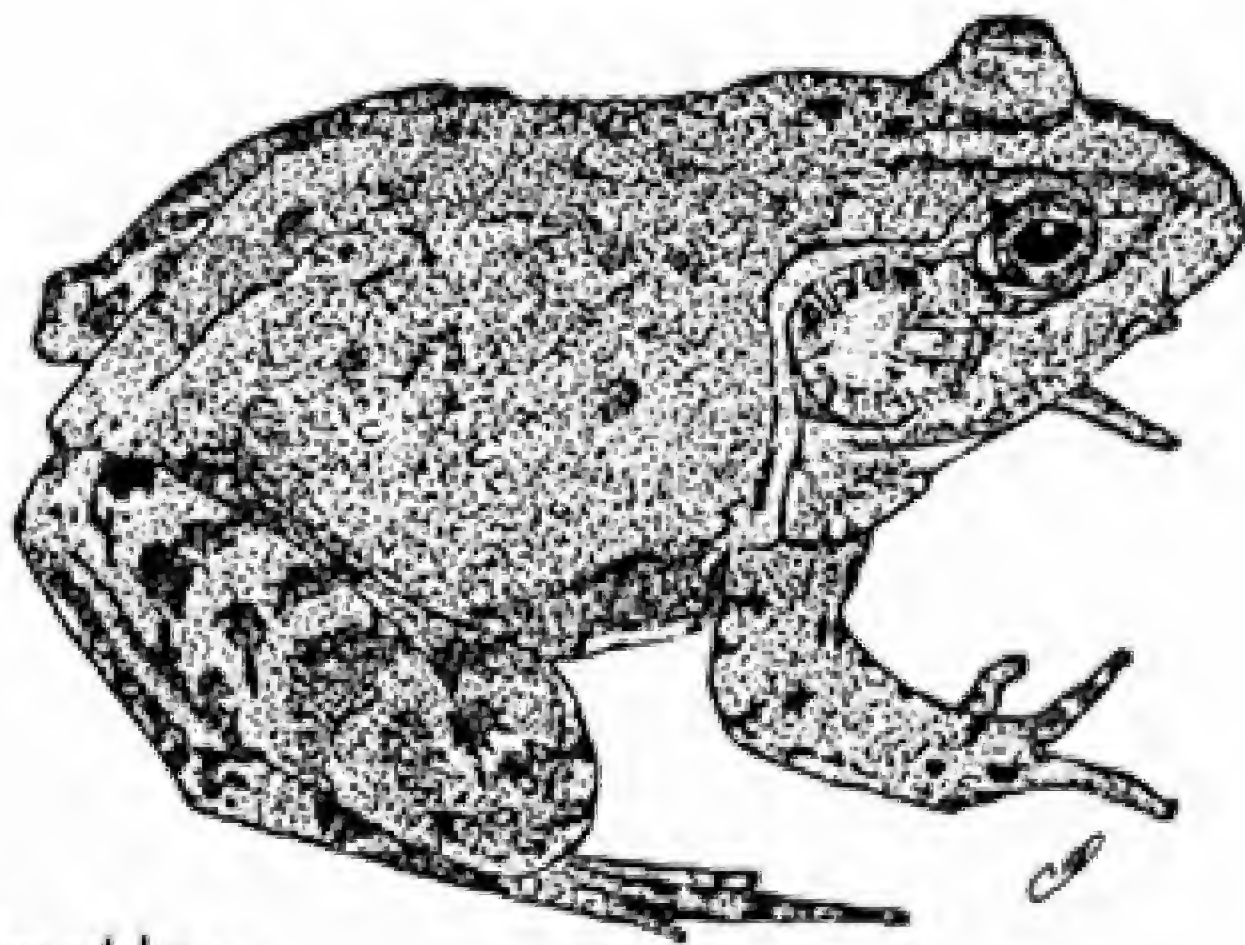


CATESBEIANA



Rana catesbeiana
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T.C.

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BULLETIN INFORMATION

Catesbeiana is issued twice a year by the Virginia Herpetological Society. Membership is open to all individuals interested in the study of amphibians and reptiles and includes a subscription to *Catesbeiana* and admission to all meetings.

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EDITORIAL POLICY

The principle function of *Catesbeiana* is to publish observations and original research about Virginia herpetology. Rarely will articles be reprinted in *Catesbeiana* after they have been published elsewhere. All correspondence relative to suitability of manuscripts or other editorial considerations should be directed to Co-editors, *Catesbeiana*, Department of Biology, Liberty University, Box 20,000, Lynchburg, VA 24506.

Major Papers

Manuscripts being submitted for publication should be typewritten (double spaced) on good quality 8½ by 11 inch paper, with adequate margins. Consult the style of articles in this issue for additional information. Articles will be refereed by at least one officer (past or present) of the Virginia Herpetological Society in addition to the editor. All changes must be approved by the author before publication; therefore manuscripts must be submitted well in advance of the March or September mailing dates.

Reprints of articles are not available to authors; however, authors may reprint articles themselves to meet professional needs.

(Editorial policy continued on inside back cover.)

CATESBELANA

Bulletin of the Virginia Herpetological Society

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Hyla cinerea
Feb. 1979
CAR

Amphibian and Reptile Survey of the Naval Security Group Activity Northwest, City of Chesapeake, Virginia

Michael J. Pinder

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Southeastern Virginia contains some of the highest numbers of reptile and amphibian species in the Commonwealth. A total of 19 anuran, 12 salamander, 23 snake, 12 turtle, and 8 lizard species are known from this portion of Virginia (Tobey, 1985; Mitchell, 1994). Climate, habitat, and geography contribute to this species diversity. The warm coastal waters provide this area with mild winters and hot, humid summers. Coastal dunes, blackwater rivers, and Lake Drummond, one of only two natural lakes in Virginia, offer a wide variety of habitats. Additionally, the Great Dismal Swamp, an expansive pocosin, contains vegetation such as bald cypress (*Taxodium distichum*), pond pine (*Pinus serotina*) and spanish moss (*Tilandsia usneoides*), which are more commonly found in southern clines. These factors allow many southern species to extend their northern distributions to southeast Virginia. The eastern glass lizard (*Ophisaurus ventralis*), chicken turtle (*Deirochelys reticularia*), lesser siren (*Siren intermedia*), and the southern toad (*Bufo terrestris*) are at their northern most distribution in this portion of the state.

The Naval Security Group Activity (NSGA) Northwest is a 961 ha radar station operated by the U.S. Navy located in the southeast corner of the City of Chesapeake, Virginia and into the northeast corner of North Carolina. This large section of property contains unique and rare species such as the two-toed amphiuma (*Amphiuma means*) and the state endangered canebrake rattlesnake (*Crotalus horridus*). Over the last two years, the U.S. Navy has funded Dr. Alan Savitsky of Old Dominion University to study the seasonal ecology of canebrake rattlesnakes. By implanting snakes with radio transmitters, researchers have been able to track the movements of canebrakes. Information gathered from this research will assist resource managers in the conservation of this species. The Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries (VDGIF) has been recently contracted by the facility to conduct a reptile and amphibian survey. The study will continue until summer 1999. In addition to these projects, a new environmental center has been built at the facility to educate the public about the region's unique flora and fauna.

The Virginia Herpetological Society (VHS) annually selects one portion of the state to survey reptiles and amphibians. These sites are distributed throughout Virginia and are in need of additional sampling. Selection criteria requires that the site can be resurveyed at a later date in order to develop a species list of the area. The site selected for the 1997 survey was the NSGA Northwest property, City of Chesapeake, Virginia.

Study Area

The NSGA Northwest is located in the Coastal Plain physiographic province and adjoins the eastern portion of the Great Dismal Swamp National Wildlife Refuge. The base is dominated by mixed forest types such as bald cypress, loblolly pine (*Pinus taeda*) and a variety of oak species (*Quercus sp.*). Landuse surrounding the base is primarily agricultural and forested. Habitat types include flooded woodlands, open fields, ditches, streams, and small ponds.

Methods

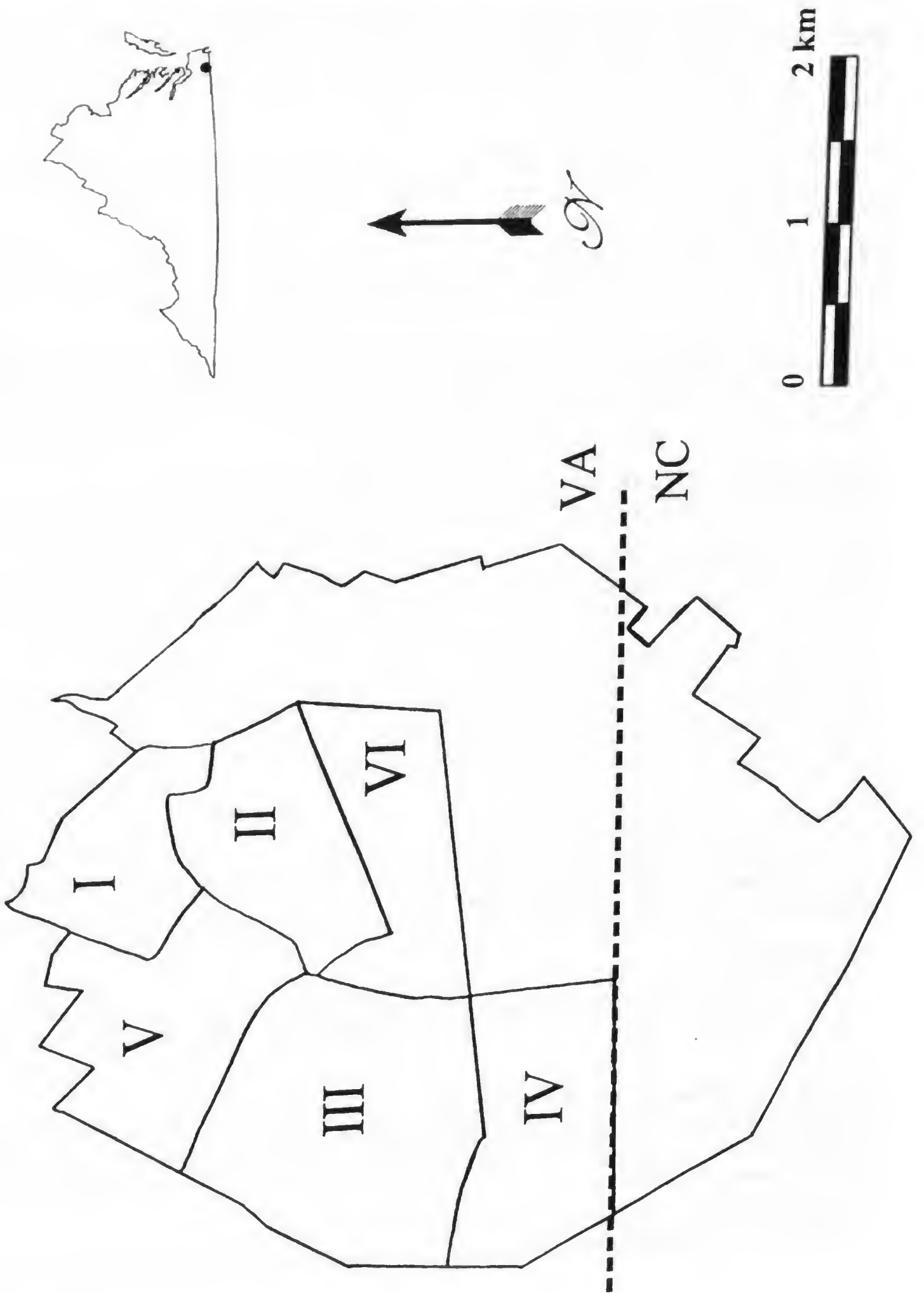
On May 10-11, 1997, the VHS membership conducted an intensive reptile and amphibian survey on the NSGA facility, City of Chesapeake, Virginia. The majority of sampling occurred between 1000 hrs and 1900 hrs. The base was sectioned into six sampling areas and a survey team was assigned to each section. Survey sites are presented in Figure 1. Minnow traps were placed to capture large aquatic amphibians, and chicken wire turtle traps, baited with sardines, were set to capture aquatic turtles. Most of the facility was sampled except for restricted areas and portions of the facility in North Carolina.

Each team was equipped with dip nets, thermometers, sample jars and containers. Specimens were positively identified and when possible, measured, weighted, sexed, and life stage (e.g., juvenile, adult, etc.) recorded. Frogs were identified either by examination or by vocalizations. Basking turtles were observed with the assistance of binoculars. Habitat and behavior was recorded for each observation. Below is an account of each species encountered and includes habitat, distribution, life stage, and site location:

Anurans

Bufo spp. There are three toad species including hybrids that could be found in the survey area. They include *B. americanus americanus* Holbrook.

Herps of NSGAN, Chesapeake, VA



B. fowleri (Hinckley), and *B. terrestris* (Bonnaterre). Nineteen toads were collected under boards, forest litter, in road ruts, and low vegetation. Tadpoles were found in an ephemeral pools in an open field. Site locations: I, III, V, VI.

Graostrophryne carolinesis (Holbrook). One adult and one juvenile eastern narrowmouth toad were found under boards and debris. Site location: III.

Hyla chrysoscelis (Cope). An immature Cope's gray treefrog was found on a tree near standing water. Site location: IV.

Hyla squirella (Latreille). Two juvenile (both 25 mm) and 4 adult squirrel treefrogs (includes one female w/eggs 35 mm SVL) were found hiding under brush and in a wood pile. All specimens were found in mixed oak-pine forests. Site locations: I, V.

Pseudacris ocularis (Bosc and Daudin). Seven adult little grass frogs were found in road ruts containing emergent vegetation. Site location: III.

Rana catesbeiana (Shaw). Three adult and one subadult bullfrogs were found basking along a ditch and pond edge. Tadpoles were observed in the shallow portion of Lunker Lake. Site locations: I, II, III, VI.

Rana clamitans (Rafinesque). Five adult and one subadult green frogs were found in road ruts, ditches, and near stream banks. One frog was missing a front leg, which may have been the result of turtle predation. Green frogs were observed basking and heard vocalizing. Site locations: II, III, V, VI.

Rana utricularia (Harlan). Seven adult and two subadult southern leopard frogs were found in a variety of habitats including grassy trails, water filled ruts containing vegetation, and small streams. Tadpoles were found in small, ephemeral pools in a field. Site locations: II, III, V, VI.

Salamanders

Ambystoma opacum (Gravenhorst). One juvenile specimen of marbled salamander was found under a rotten log. Site location: IV.

Plethodon chlorobryonis (Mittleman). Twelve Atlantic coast slimy salamanders were found under logs and moist woodlands. Snout-vent lengths of four individuals were 20 mm, 20 mm, 65 mm, and 66 mm. Site locations: I, III.

Plethodon cinereus (Green). Seventeen redback salamanders were found

Herps of NSGAN, Chesapeake, VA

during our survey. Specimens were observed hiding under logs and plywood in forested areas. Both lead and red phases were present. Redback salamanders were the most abundant salamanders. Site locations: I, III, V.

Lizards

Eumeces fasciatus (Linnaeus). Two adult five-lined skinks were found basking next to stumps in deciduous woodlands. One individual was a male measuring 70 mm SVL. Site location: I.

Eumeces inexpectatus (Taylor). Four adult southeastern five-lined skinks were found hiding under boards and rocks. One individual was found along a ditch. Site locations: II, III.

Eumeces laticeps (Schneider). Four adult broad-headed skinks were found basking and hiding in and on wood piles. Site location: V.

Scincella lateralis (Say). Seven adult ground skinks were under boards, debris, and in grassy areas near potted plants. Site locations: I, II, III, V.

Snakes

Carphophis amoenus amoenus (Say). Two adult eastern worm snakes (one female 210 mm SVL) in our survey. One was found under debris and the other in a dump area. Site locations: III, V.

Coluber constrictor constrictor Linnaeus. One adult northern black racer was found basking along a dirt road bordering a deciduous swamp. Site location: I.

Diadophis punctatus punctatus (Linnaeus). Two adult southern ringneck snakes, one measuring 200 mm SVL, were found under asphalt shingles and rocks. Site location: I.

Elaphe obsoleta obsoleta (Say). Two adult black rat snakes were found during this survey. One was found along a pond edge, while another was observed preying on starling nestlings. Site location: II.

Heterodon platirhinos (Latreille). One juvenile eastern hognose snake measuring 230mm SVL was found in leaf litter of a mixed oak-pine

forest. Observers indicated that the specimen regurgitated a freshly digested toad. Site location: I.

Lampropeltis getula getula (Linnaeus). Of the 3 eastern kingsnakes we found, one specimen was observed hiding under railroad ties, another in concrete blocks, and the other basking along a grassy path. One adult male measuring 900 mm SVL and semi-adult female measured 650 mm SVL. Site locations: III, VI.

Nerodia erythrogaster erythrogaster (Forster). Two red-bellied water snakes, one adult and one juvenile, were found in ditches. Specimens were observed swimming and basking. Site locations: I, IV.

Thamnophis sirtalis sirtalis (Linnaeus). One adult eastern garter snake was found basking along a grassy lake bank. Site location: II.

Thamnophis sauritus sauritus (Linnaeus). One juvenile eastern ribbon snake was found along a grassy trail near water. Site location: III.

Turtles

Chelydra serpentina (Linnaeus). One common snapping turtle was found dead on a road that paralleled a ditch. Site location: VI.

Chrysemys picta picta (Schneider). Eight adult painted turtles were observed basking along a ditch. Three other adult turtles were seined from a ditch. One juvenile turtle was found dead along Lunker Lake. Site locations: II, IV, VI.

Clemmys guttata (Schneider). Two adult male and one adult female spotted turtles were in a flooded woodland and along a pond edge. Carapace lengths of male turtles were 100.8 mm and 100.1 mm. Site location: III.

Kinosternon subrubrum subrubrum (Bonnaterre). Two adult eastern mud turtles, 45 mm and 72 mm, were collected in our survey. One specimen was caught in a trap and the other was found in a drainage ditch under a rotten log. Leeches were attached to one of the turtles. Site location: V, VI.

Sternotherus odoratus (Latreille). One juvenile and one adult stinkpot

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were found in mud and along a canal. The adult turtle measured 60.75 mm CL. Site locations: II, IV.

Terrepenne carolina carolina (Linnaeus). One adult male eastern box turtle was found in the understory of a mixed oak-pine forest. Site location: V.

Trachemys scripta scripta (Schoepff). Two adult yellow-bellied sliders were found basking in this survey. Habitats include a log near a pond and on the bank of a small stream. Site location: II.

Discussion

A total of 10 anurans, 3 salamanders, 4 lizards, 9 snakes, and 7 turtles were collected in our survey. We collected less than 46% of the species recorded from the City of Chesapeake (Table 1). The discrepancy between number collected and known species may be partly explained by the unseasonably poor weather on the main survey day. On May 11, 1997, the weather was windy, overcast, and cold with temperatures as low as 17°C. In such conditions, many reptiles and amphibians that regularly bask would be difficult to find. Anurans were especially under represented in our survey. Of the 19 anuran species known from the base, we collected less than half and even common species such as the pickerel frog (*Rana palustris*) were not found. Regardless of weather conditions, certain species like the eastern spadefoot toad (*Scaphiopus holbrookii holbrookii*) would be unlikely in such a limited survey.

The ranges of several toad species are known to overlap in Southeast Virginia. *B. terrestris* is at its northern most distribution where it is known to hybridize with *B. fowleri* (Tobey 1985). Furthermore, there is possible three way hybridization with the two species listed above and *B. americanus* (Mitchell pers. comm). *B. americanus* is documented just south into North Carolina (Conant and Collins 1991). Because no vouchers were collected during our survey, proper species verification or determination of hybrids was not possible. To resolve this problem, electrophoretic and DNA analysis should be conducted on specimens from southeast Virginia and compared to specimens across the range of these species.

The protection of canebrakes at the NSGA Northwest facility is considered critical to reclassify this species from endangered to

threatened (VDGIF 1993). Our survey failed to find any canebrake rattlesnakes even though they are well documented at the facility (Mitchell 1993). Rattlesnakes are known to occupy oak-pine forests, canefields, and swamps, which are habitats present on the survey area (Mitchell 1994). The inability of our survey to find this species demonstrates the snake's secretive and elusive nature. Canebrakes have light tan to brown background and dark brown to black chevron bands, characters that allow them to be well camouflaged on leaf litter in the forest floor (Mitchell 1994). They are also "sit and wait" predators and will remain motionless for hours, thereby remaining undetected by most observers. Further survey work will be required to determine the population level and habitat use of canebrake rattlesnakes in this area.

Only a few management recommendations can be provided for a short term survey. Many species of frogs and aquatic turtles were present in two small ponds. Except for its upper end, the pond known as Lunger Lake had its grassy shoreline mowed down to the water's edge. Allowing some grass to grow uncut, even on the wetted margins of the shoreline, would be a great benefit to anurans and snakes. Additionally, placing a few logs gently angled in the water would provide excellent habitat for basking turtles (Johnson, 1994). Although no amphiumas or sirens were found, the ditches containing aquatic vegetation provides good habitat for these species (D. Schwab pers. comm.). Herbicides should not be used near or on these areas. The flooded woodlands are excellent habitat for spotted turtles. Like other members of the genus *Clemmys*, this species is vulnerable to habitat degradation and commercial collection. Ditching, road building, and other activities negatively affecting these wetlands should be avoided. Individuals should not be allowed to remove any native fauna without the mutual consent of facility and wildlife agency authorities. Dead standing trees, stumps, and logs all provide good shelter and feeding habitat for reptiles and amphibians and should not be removed. More recommendations will accompany the final VDGIF survey report (D. Schwab pers. comm.).

The City of Chesapeake is one of the fastest growing regions in Virginia. As roads, malls, and subdivisions encroach the countryside, natural areas are becoming smaller and fragmented. Species that once had free movement are confined to a few protected areas. Therefore, large tracts of land such as the NSGA Northwest facility will be critical in the future protection of many species. The first requirement in providing longterm protection will be to conduct species and habitat inventories. In this

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regard, the VHS will continue to conduct these surveys to ensure the conservation of Virginia's reptiles and amphibians.

Acknowledgments

We are greatly appreciative to the following VHS members and guests for making this survey possible: Mitch Bolling, David Dawson, Chris d'Orgeix, Faye Ferrall, Whitney Ferrall, Shay Garriock, Bob Greenlee, Sara Greenlee, Mike Hayslett, Carol Heiser, Sara Heiser, Bill Henley, McKeever Henley, Jess Jones, Don Mackler, Tim Mathies, Konrad Mcbert, Rob McGarvey, David Perry, Steve Perry, Dirk Rodgers, Gene Sattler, Paul Sattler, Don Schwab, Don Schwab Jr., Jim Scranton, Gina Shepard, and Laurie Zuckerman. Thanks to Don Schwab, VDGIF and Pam Couch, NSGA Northwest Facility for their assistance in obtaining permission and access, and Shay Garriock and Paul Sattler for editorial assistance. The omission or misspelling of any person(s) who helped in this survey is purely accidental.

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OBITUARY

COSTELLO M. CRAIG

Costello (Cos) Murphy Craig (11 October 1914 - 17 November 1997) was a charter member of the Virginia Herpetological Society (VHS). His long-standing interest in snakes and other reptiles dated back to his childhood years in the Bedford/Roanoke area. Because of his interest in animals, Cos wanted to pursue a career in the zoo field. He often visited the National Zoo and became acquainted with the curator of reptiles at that time (Manning Davies). Despite the fact that no doors opened for him in this area, he contributed substantially by collecting several exotic animals for the zoo in Guatemala in 1938. Subsequently, his educational efforts on behalf of herps became a lifelong interest.

Passage to Central America was by boat in the 1930s. During his trip to Guatemala, Cos stayed with a plantation landowner and made numerous excursions into the tropical rainforest, much of which has long since been destroyed. His month-long adventure to the tropics resulted in the collection of 43 live birds, tarantulas, boas and other snakes, and crocodiles. On the return trip home he learned the hard way that tarantulas were cannibalistic. Two American crocodiles he caught were on display at the Reptile House in the National Zoo for 10 and 32 years. These were undoubtedly viewed by millions of people.

After service in World War II, Cos became a railway mail sorter for 10 years and then a rural mail carrier in Bedford County, Virginia (1958-1977). Many people on his route remember the candy he put in the mailboxes for their children. He was a long-time Boy Scout leader and amateur naturalist. As a Scout leader, he saw to it that seven members of his troop made Eagle Scout, including two of his sons. He was well known for his regional snake exhibitions and educational work on behalf of reptiles and amphibians. All of the snakes he exhibited were collected in Virginia, and most of these he and his sons collected themselves.

Cos attended many VHS meetings in the 1960s and early 1970s. He and his sons would always bring along some of their live collection for display. The Craigs would invariably bring in the most specimens during the field trips. They contributed several location records to the Virginia Herpetological Survey (Craig, 1967. VHS Bulletin 54:5) that resulted in the first atlas for the Commonwealth (Tobey, 1985. Virginia's Amphibians and Reptiles, a Distributional Survey. VHS, Purcellville, VA. 114 pp.).

Obituary

They also contributed several specimens from Bedford County to the herp collection at Virginia Tech (now at the American Museum of Natural History). They were instrumental in building herp teaching collections in the Bedford County high school and several regional colleges. Cos was a lifetime member of the VHS, a reflection of his interest in herp education and a view that science was to be enjoyed with others.

Cos was an avid hunter and in his youth was so accurate with firearms that he was a rifle range instructor at Camp Lejeune, NC, and Quantico Marine Base, VA. He served several years with the U.S. Marine Corps, reaching the rank of sergeant. He set up two sniper schools in the south Pacific and saw combat in Okinawa and Saipan during World War II.

Cos influenced many people, largely because of his high ethical standards, his embodiment of the tough outdoorsman, his love of nature, and his love of education. He was especially good with young people, many of whom looked up to him. As a young teenager, I spent parts of several summers with Cos and the boys, my cousins. It was there in the shadow of the Peaks of Otter that my interest in reptiles and amphibians received its initial spark. It was Cos who introduced me to the VHS and the science of natural history. And, it was Cos who inspired me to also become a Marine.

Some of my most memorable early VHS field trips were with Cos and family at fall weekends. One of them was on October 3-4, 1964, to Boy Scout Camp Monacan in Nelson County, now part of Wintergreen Resort. We stayed in log cabins and collected cricket frogs around the lake. The big dining hall was the meeting site where the talks were presented and the animals displayed. One member and his wife brought several exotic animals, and I remember Cos voicing complaint. He felt, as did the other founding members of the VHS, that this group should focus our attention and education on Virginia's herps and not have that effort diluted by the intrusion of exotics. He seemed genuinely bothered by the attention they generated. Such was Cos' devotion to Virginia's herps.

In later years, Cos became physically unable to spend long hours standing behind exhibits and gave his sons the live collection. The most famous exhibit was Brian's glass-top coffee table that contained a lower platform surrounded by screen doors and usually one or two timber

rattlesnakes and copperheads. Cos would occasionally show up at exhibits but his sons took them over and eventually, I understand, had to discontinue their efforts as well.

Cos will be long-remembered for his love of snakes, his education of the region's citizens, and his long-term membership in the Virginia Herpetological Society. He is survived by a sister, his wife Doris, his sons Mark, Brian, and Jerry, two grandchildren, and one great grandson.

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FIELD NOTES

Thamnophis sirtalis sirtalis (Eastern Garter Snake): VA: Roanoke Co, Carvin's Creek at intersection of Lamarre Drive and Hugh Avenue. 30 January 1998. William J. Hunley.

Records of winter activity among snakes in Virginia are infrequent (Mitchell, 1994. *The Reptiles of Virginia*, Smithsonian Institute Press, Washington, DC 352 pp.). This snake, an adult about 500 mm TL (estimated), was found basking on a steep south-facing slope adjacent to a stream. When first discovered, the snake was assumed to be dead. However, when touched by the observer it began to move about slowly, whereupon it retreated into a rock crevice. The snake was discovered in early afternoon (1345h.). Skies were clear and ambient air temperature was 7° C. Winds were northerly at 15-25 km/h. The previous night's low temperature was 4.5 degrees C (Roanoke Time and World News, 30 January 1998). Linzey (1981. *Snakes of Virginia*, University of Virginia Press, Charlotte, VA 173pp.) states that garter snakes may emerge as early as February and "have even been observed crawling over patches of snow". Mitchell (ibid.) reports an early date of January 28 for garter snake activity in Virginia.

William J. Hunley
2042 Lee Hi Rd. SW
Roanoke, VA 24018

Siren lacertina (greater siren): VA: Amelia County, approximately 0.8 km S of Co. Rt. 644 and approximately 2.4 km W of the intersection of Co. Rt. 544 and Co. Rt. 681, 1 March 1998. Joe Skinner

One adult greater siren was collected just before dark (roughly 1800 hours) approximately 3 m from the water on the dam of a private farm pond. This specimen was observed along with 3 others at the same time and location. While only 1 of the 3 was collected and positively identified, all were believed to be of the same species based on general appearance. All were moving in an eel-like manner away from the water. The pond is located just north of Flat Creek Swamp. The pond dam was covered with unidentified grass that was estimated at 10 cm in height. The specimen measured 372 mm total length (TL), 255 mm snout-vent length (SVL), and weighed 76 g (Mike Pinder, VDGIF, pers. com.). This is the first reported collection of a greater siren in Amelia County (Tobey, F.J. 1985. *Virginia's Amphibians and Reptiles, A Distributional Survey*. Virginia Herpetol. Soc. Purcellville. 114 pp.).

This is the western most recorded finding of the greater siren in Virginia. The specimen will be donated to the Virginia Museum of Natural History.

Karle O. Woodward
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Plethodon cinereus (Red-backed Salamander): VA: Campbell Co., Gladys, 0.5 km S. of Mollies Creed Bridge on Co. Rt. 650. 12 March 1997 and 20 March 1997. Doug Eggleston.

A total of three *Plethodon cinereus* were found under stones in the backyard of a residence bordering Co. Rt. 650 (Mosebrook Rd.). One specimen (approximately 7.5 cm TL) was captured on 12 March 1997 and two others (approximately 5.0 cm TL each) on 20 March 1997. The weather was sunny and dry on both days with the temperature 16° C. All animals were captured, photographed, and released at the same site as capture on 20 April 1997.

Doug Eggleston
Rt. 2 Box 25-A
Gladys, VA 24554

Wendy Shupe
1304 Rivermont Ave.
Lynchburg, VA 24504

Storeria dekayi dekayi (Northern Brown Snake): VA: City of Lynchburg, U.S. 501 Business, 0.8 km NW of Main Street. 2 April 1997. Doug Eggleston.

A *storeria dekayi* was found under some chickweed bordering a fence along Rivermont Avenue at its intersection with Bedford Avenue, on 2 April 1997. The weather conditions were sunny and breezy with a temperature of 21° C. the specimen (approximately 298 cm TL) was captured, photographed and released on 12 April 1997 at the site of capture.

Doug Eggleston
Rt. 2 Box 25-A
Gladys, VA 24554

Field Notes

Elaphae O. obsoleta (Black Rat Snake): VA: Campbell Co., Gladys, 0.3 km S of Mollies Creek Bridge. 30 August 1997. Doug Eggleston

Four neonates and 11 eggs of *Elaphae O. obsoleta* were discovered in a pile of rotting leaf litter at 1:15 pm on 30 August 1997. Two of the neonates had already hatched and were found in the nest. Two others hatched and left the eggs during the time of collecting. A 10 cm *Diadophis p. punctatus* (Southern Ringneck Snake) was also captured in the same leaf pile. The weather was sunny, dry, breezy and the temperature was 28° C.

Doug Eggleston
Rt. 2 Box 25-A
Gladys, VA 24554

Elaphae guttata guttata (Corn Snake): VA: Campbell Co., Gladys, 0.2 km S of Mollies Creek Bridge on Co., Rt. 650, 23 June 1997. Doug Eggleston

A female *Elaphae g. guttata* was found on the front porch of a residence at 10:15 am on 23 June 1997. The total length was 97.5 cm. The snake was calm when approached and was captured by hand.

Doug Eggleston
Rt. 2 Box 25-A
Gladys, VA 24554

Lampropeltis getulus getulus (Eastern King Snake): VA: City of Lynchburg. Central Virginia Community Collge. 6 May 1997. Wendy Shupe.

A road killed *Lampropeltis g. getulus* was observed and photographed on 6 May 1997 in the parking lot of Central Virginia Community Collge. The specimen was approximately 135 cm TL. When observed, the weather was clear and the temperature was 16° C. Mitchell (1994 The Reptiles of Virginia, Smithsonian Insitution Press, Washington, D.C. 352 pp.) does not report a voucher for Eastern Kingsnakes for Campbel Co. or the city of Lynchburg, making this a distributional record. The photographs are being deposited with the Virginia Museum of Natural History as a voucher.

Wendy Shupe
1304 Rivermont Ave.
Lynchburg, VA 24504

Chelydra S. Serpentina (Snapping Turtle) VA: Campbell Co., U.S. 501 N, 1.0 km N of Rustburg. 23 June 1997. Doug Eggleston.

A road-killed *Chelydra S. Serpentina* was found on U.S. 501 at 9:00 am on 23 June 1997. The weather at that time was dry and the temperature was 28° C. The carapace was approximately 30 cm in length. The head was approximately 7.5 cm at the widest part.

Doug Eggleston
Rt. 2 Box 25-A
Gladys, VA 24554

Terrapene carolina carolina (Eastern Box Turtle): VA: Roanoke Co. Banks of Carvin's Creek on the campus of Hollins College, 0.7 km north of Williamson Road (US 11). 9 February 1998. William J. Hunley

Box turtles are rarely encountered in Virginia during the winter months. Mitchell (1994. *The Reptiles of Virginia*, Smithsonian Inst. Press, Washington DC 352 pp.) reports that all records for the state are between the months of March and December. On 9 February 1998 an adult male box turtle (cl=142.0 mm) was found on the campus of Hollins College. The turtle was discovered in early afternoon (1315 h). It was basking on a grassy, southwest-facing slope on the banks of Carvin's Creek, 0.7 km upstream from the Williamson Road (US 11) bridge. Skies were clear and ambient air temperature was 10° C. Winds were light and variable. When examined, the turtle was relatively alert and active, and it appeared to be in good physical condition.

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Roanoke, VA 24018

President's Corner

I guess for my first President's Corner an introduction is in order. My name is Mike Pinder and I live along the New River in beautiful Giles County. I have been a resident of Virginia since 1994 after accepting a position as aquatic nongame biologist for the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries. By circumstance or fate, I was stationed in the Department's Blacksburg office, which was the same office for VHS President, Ron Southwick and newsletter editor, Sue Bruenderman. After Sue's departure to Missouri, I claimed responsibility for the newsletter and later became President Elect. Over the last 4 years, I've had some great experiences being a part of the VHS. Our meetings have been a terrific opportunity to meet others with the same interests and to learn volumes about Virginia's herpetofauna. I am most impressed with the inclusive nature of our society. Where else can amateurs and professionals, individuals and families, children and adults come together to discuss the subject they love? As your President, I look forward to seeing you at a future meeting.

I am very grateful to my predecessors in establishing a solid foundation. The Spring meeting and field trips are now a regular and popular activity. During the fall meeting, the reptile and amphibian workshop for educators has been well received everywhere it's given. The Society homepage has been a huge success. I definitely have some big shoes to fill. Fortunately, I am not going at this alone. Shay Garriock has been working diligently as Secretary/Treasurer. The society's books are now being updated and balanced for the first time in years. Bob Greenlee, President Elect, has been instrumental in organizing the Society meetings and collecting trip. We are producing new bumper stickers that will be ready for the Spring meeting, and with any luck, new T-shirts also. Plans are even underway for the fall meeting, which will probably be somewhere in Richmond on October 24, 1998. For those who haven't done the math, it was 40 years ago that the VHS was founded. To commemorate our anniversary, I have already spoken to Frank Tobey, the Society's founding father, and he has agreed to speak at our meeting. I urge everyone to make plans to come to this historic event. I'll keep you posted in the newsletter with additional details.

I have a few goals I would like to see accomplished for the next two years. The first goal is to provide good customer service. I know this may sound trivial, but it's essential for a small Society that advertises mostly by "word of mouth." Basically I want people to get what they pay for. In our Society that means two newsletters and journals a year. If

you don't get either, please contact me at (540) 552-6992 and I'll make sure the problem is rectified. If you paid in the past and did not receive anything, I'll make sure that you get all appropriate back issues and a free year's subscription -- no questions asked!

My next goal is to increase attendance at our meetings. All too often, our meetings consist of myself and the same regulars. Now while I enjoy seeing old friends, it would be pleasant to see some fresh faces. In particular, I would like more students come to our meetings. Unfortunately, one of the biggest problems facing students is the cost of lodging. To resolve this problem, I propose that any high school or undergraduate student that attends our meetings get a 1/2 price discount on room rate. I would like to dedicate profits from raffles, bumper stickers, and T-shirts to go into a student travel fund to pay for this activity. In this way, I hope more students will be encouraged to attend our meeting, and in the process, bring on a new generation of herpetologists.

I would also like to work the next two years to increase membership involvement in the Society. As a nonprofit, volunteer organization, the Society depends on input from its members to survive. The mechanisms the Society has to share information and findings with your peers are Catesbeiana and the Newsletter. If you know of any herp-related activity, it is probably worthy for submission in the Society Newsletter. Catesbeiana is a great way to publish new county distributions, behavioral observations, and other scientific research relevant to Virginia. For members that want to contribute even more to the Society, I propose that we develop committees such as those for education, membership, and archive. These committees would help the Society tremendously by adding new points of view and sharing the work normally relegated to the executive committee. By working together, I know we can continue to make the VHS a first class organization.

My last goal is to increase the research component of our Society. The VHS is built on three principles; conservation, education, and research. Of the three, research is lagging way behind. The VHS grants up to \$200 annually for reptile and amphibian research relevant to Virginia. The only requirement is that the research must be published in Catesbeiana. The grant is an excellent opportunity for individuals to get additional assistance in conducting research projects that would probably go unfunded. Individuals interested in submitting proposals should see

President's Corner

this issue of Catesbeiana for additional information.

Well it's time to get off my soapbox and get to the business at hand. We are planning a terrific trip to Clinch Mountain Wildlife Management Area near Saltville, Va. The diversity of habitats and species at this area should make for interesting surveying. Everyone should be ready to hike and see some beautiful scenery. The business meeting will be held Friday at the Northwood High School library and will accompany a presurvey slide show of what herps we may encounter. We will be meeting early Saturday at the WMA concessionaire to finalize plans. On Sunday, people will have the option of returning to the WMA or making a trip to Mt. Rogers National Recreational Area. Until then, I wish everyone good health and happy herping.

Mike Pinder, President

Guidelines for VHS Field-Study Grants

The purpose of Field-study Grants from the Virginia Herpetological Society is to stimulate and encourage herpetological research in Virginia. These Grants will be in variable amounts up to \$200.00 and are available to VHS members who do not have access to other sources of funding, such as institutions of higher learning and government grants.

Grant requests should include a description of the proposed research or in the case of surveys of the extent of the geographic area to be surveyed and the methods which are to be used. A rough budget would be helpful. A brief justification of the importance of the work in contributing to the knowledge of Virginia's herpetofauna, citing standard works (such as Mitchell, J.C. 1994. *The Reptiles of Virginia*. Smithsonian Institution Press, Washington, D.C. and Toby, F.J. Jr. 1985. *Virginia's Amphibians and Reptiles, A Distributional Survey*. Privately Published, Purcellville, VA) should be included. The results of all funded surveys must be submitted in manuscript form for publication in *Catesbeiana*.

Minutes of the VHS Fall Meeting

Catesbeiana Report

140 Printed Vol 17(2)	\$139.00
120 Postage	<u>66.00</u>
Total	\$205.00

Treasurer's Report

Current Balance in checking \$3296.31 (Sept 1997)

Current Balance in savings 1316.88 (6 Aug. 1997)

Savings accounts need to have some periodic activity in order not to have the State seize the funds. A verbal notice was sent to the bank, as one of the possible means from keeping the fund from being declared inactive.

Savings account includes

- \$500 from SSAR for Poster
- \$500 from VDGIF
- \$ 50 from private individual

Joe Mitchell suggested possibly using these funds to help redo the Snakes of Virginia brochure, using photographs instead of drawings.

Further discussion centered on the need for a guide to identify the poisonous snakes of Virginia.

Membership Committee Report

Mary Rybitsky had suggested creating an 8½ x 11 one-page poster to send out, including information on the VHS and membership information. The cost of color copies needs to be looked into. A second suggestion was a membership drive contest.

North American Breeding Frog Survey and Amphibian Atlas.

The first volume will consist of a species account, map and picture of every US species. A second volume will consist of review chapters by the chairs of the different working groups. Each will be a regional overview. Invited essays will follow later.

The **Appalachian Working Group** is seeking a host for a two day symposium. There is considerable difference of opinion on the best way to monitor amphibian populations. Joe Mitchell has been contracted to draft a set of procedures for amphibian monitoring in Virginia. Don Schwab of the VDGIF is the Virginia Coordinator. Parties interested in

setting up long-term monitoring sites should contact Don.

Virginia Herpetological Atlas

The VDGIF has contracted with Joe Mitchell to compile a set of distribution maps to represent the current information on the state distribution of amphibians and reptiles. Don Schwab will then ask volunteers to submit additional distributional data following a protocol which will be outlined later. A photographic voucher will probably be requested in these instances. The target date for these maps is the summer of 1998.

State Reptile

There has been a push lately to support the Box Turtle for the State Reptile of Virginia. George Grayson, a delegate from Chesapeake is sponsoring legislation to this effect.

Treasurer's Report, Spring 1998

The combined VHS Checking and Savings Account balance in January 1998 was \$4730.14.

Expenditures since that time were:

Postage for <i>Catesbeiana</i> and newsletters	\$ 99.46
Books	238.50
T-shirts (Vernal Pool Association)	598.00
Office supplies and mailing list computer software	108.15
Paul Sattler (reimbursement for Fall Meeting refreshments, postage and printing costs)	205.00
Returned check service charge	15.00
Long distance phone calls concerning membership discrepancies	7.50

Revenues:

Membership dues	\$791.50
T-shirt sales	30.00
Book sales	45.54
Auction	43.00
Donations	6.50
Unknown from 1997	63.50
Savings Account earned interest	6.94

Ending Treasury Balance as of April 6, 1998 \$4445.51

The society has a current membership of 161

Submitted by,

Shay Garriock
Secretary/Treasurer

**Minutes from VHS Executive Committee, Blacksburg
30 January, 1998**

Members present: Paul Sattler (Pres. ex), Mike Pinder (Pres.) Bob Greenlee (Pres. Elect), Shay Garriock (Sec./Tres.)

Transfer of VHS treasury discussed. Account transfer information, documentation was given to P. Sattler by M. Hayslett, of which Paul presented at this meeting. Also included with account info were previous correspondence concerning memberships, blank checks, money bags, postage stamps, and roughly \$380.00 in cash and uncashed membership checks. All of this information and money was placed in the care of Shay Garriock.

Purchasing of books was discussed. The VHS may have an active account with the Smithsonian Press, but this is not confirmed. It was decided that The VHS will purchase—depending on the present account balances -- 5 copies of "Amphibian and Reptiles of the Assateague and Chincoteague Islands", 5 hardback copies of "Reptiles of Virginia", and 5 paperback copies of "Reptiles of Virginia".

The following topics were discussed concerning the 1998 spring meeting:

1. Turkey season will be in during the meeting and survey at Clinch WMA. Precautions should be made to avoid hunting accidents, mainly herpers should be aware of potential danger and wear bright clothing.

2. Available accommodations will be at the Salinas Motel in Saltville and primitive camping is available at the WMA. Questions arose as to the availability of other lodging localities further from the WMA, and whether or not the VHS or participating individuals should make lodging reservations. This issue was not resolved.

3. Areas for survey plots and quadrats were discussed.

4. The location of a meeting place was discussed as well as meeting times. It was tentatively decided that the Saturday morning meeting location would be at the WMA concessions pavilion. A location and time for a Friday night opening gathering was not decided upon. The final Sunday closing meeting will be held at the Salinas Motel, tentatively.

5. WMA Species lists and maps need to be acquired as well as directions, phone numbers, etc. and forwarded to P. Sattler by mid-March, early April for publication in next issue of *Catesbeiana*.

6. Equipment needed for survey participants included: seines, nets, night snorkeling equipment for very cold water, ID guides, collection jars, snake handling equipment, chaps, insect repellent, raingear, waders, canoes and life preservers. (What are present laws concerning life preserver requirements?) This information will be printed in *Catesbeiana*.

It was decided that guidelines for VHS research grant will be printed in next issue of *Catesbeiana*, if funds are available. The next deadline for the proposal submissions will be March 15, 1999.

Discussion of '98 Fall Meeting. Ideas presented were: 1) Invitation of founding fathers to visit and give presentations. VHS would pay reasonable travel costs, 2) location possibilities are Charlottesville and Richmond (Three Lakes Park, Maymont park, or Lewis Ginter Botanical Gardens) 3) Meeting date will be sometime in mid-October.

Discussion on "Snakes of VA" brochure. The brochure will include: 1) introduction to snake species, their biology and life history; snake education and conservation, 2) as many photos as possible will come from VHS collections, 3) Text content will be contracted out.

Funding: VDGIF will provide \$20,000 towards brochure budget, while the SSAR will provide \$500.00 (from current VHS savings) and the VHS will provide \$50.00 (previously donated money currently in VHS savings account). The allocation of funds by SSAR must be confirmed in VHS records. Do I have this right?

A proposal to fund a snake brochure will be presented at the next business meeting, and requests for snake photographs will also be made.

Development of VHS membership policy:

1. Membership dues paid after September 1 of any given year will apply to the membership for the following calendar year.
2. Membership dues payment reminder cards will be sent out at the beginning of each calendar year, but only to members who have not paid dues for that calendar year.
3. By March 1 of each new year, members who have not paid dues for

Minutes from VHS Executive Committee

the previous two year will be dropped from the membership list.

Bumper stickers discussion. Shay will find out what information is needed to produce bumper stickers from Francis Little. We will need drafts for next meeting for members to vote on.

T-shirts: It was decided that a new design will be ordered for next batch of t-shirts, with a cap of \$500.00 maximum order. We decided the new design would be Gray treefrog #2.

Taxes: Questions arose concerning taxation status of VHS. Paul mentioned the VHS does have a tax ID number, but nothing else is known. Is the VHS tax exempt?

New developments

Following the meeting, Paul and I went to the Central Fidelity Bank in Blacksburg and successfully transferred both accounts. Balances were \$1332.53 savings (dormant) and \$33978.61 checking. I have since then received the new checks, activated the savings account with a deposit of \$172.50, and also deposited \$400.50 in the checking account. Paul and Mike were reimbursed for previous expenditures.

There is presently an unsettled account with the Vernal Pool Association, but I don't know how much we owe yet. I mailed them on Feb. 17 about this problem. Also, the T-shirt colors available for the chosen design are "slate" and "sage". Sage is a gray-green color, slate is a dark gray color.

**ANNOUNCEMENT
SPRING 1998 MEETING OF THE
VIRGINIA HERPETOLOGICAL SOCIETY**

This year we will be surveying the Clinch Mountain Wildlife Management Area (WMA). The WMA provides a diverse array of habitat including high elevation red spruce forests, spring seeps, mountain streams, wet meadows, beaver ponds, lake edges, marshes, rivers, rock outcrops, and a cave. Survey opportunities range from relatively easy access along Big Tumbling Creek and Laurel Bed Lake, to a rigorous trip off trail to Beartown Mountain. Access to a number of backcountry "roads" will be provided to us during the survey, therefore, it is recommended that those with 4WD vehicles bring them. USGS topographic maps (1:24,000 scale) will be provided to each survey group along with potential species lists.

Directions to Salina Motel: Take I 81 to Exit 35 at Chillhowie. Turn right on Va. 107 (north), go approximately 8 miles to Saltville. Turn left on Va. 91 (south), go approximately 0.2 miles to first traffic light (intersection of Va. 91 and Allison Gap Road). At this intersection you will find the Salina Motel and Restaurant on the left.

Direction to Clinch Mt. WMA: At intersection with Salina Motel turn right on Allison Gap Road, go approximately 2 miles to Route 613. Turn left on Route 613, and travel approximately 3.7 miles to Tumbling Creek Road on right. Turn right on Tumbling Creek Road (gravel) and continue approximately 1.5 miles to shelter/pavilion on the right.

Direction to Northwood High School Library: *By foot*, the library is about a 2 block walk from the Salina Motel. From the Salina Motel walk towards the center of town. Take left before the bank. There is a road running behind the bank and then take a driveway left that goes up to the school. *By car*, go through intersection at Salina Motel. Bear left onto Palmer Ave. Take next first left onto Panther Lane, which will take you to the school. There will be signs directing you to the library.

Announcements

Schedule:

Friday May 15, 1998

- 7:00 PM Business Meeting (Northwood High School Library)
- 8:00 PM Break (Snacks and drinks provided)
- 8:15 PM Slide show and initial coordination meeting for survey on Saturday
- 9:00 PM Adjourn

Saturday May 16, 1998

- 8:00 AM Coordination Meeting at the Clinch Mountain WMA Shelter (see directions)
- 8:30 AM Break into survey groups and head to designated survey locations
- 12:30 PM Free to survey outside of initial survey areas
- 7:00 PM - Meet at Salina Motel (room TBA) to compile survey reports, compare adventures, and organize a search party for folks lost on Beartown Mountain

Sunday May 17, 1998

Return borrowed equipment, data forms and maps. Release any collected specimens. On the return trip, individuals may want to visit Mt. Rogers National Recreation Area.

Accommodations:

Lodging is available in Saltville at the Salina Motel (540) 496-4444, where VHS has obtained a 10% discount on rooms (approximately \$40 plus tax). To obtain the discount rate, please indicate that you are with the VHS. Room reservations should be made by May 1st. Smoking and non-smoking rooms are available. Other hotels include the Knights Inn and the TavelLodge in Chilhowie. Primitive camping is available on Clinch Mt. WMA.

There is a large grocery store and a number of restaurants in Saltville. Restaurants include the Salina Restaurant, the Saltbox, Subway, and the Pizza Factory. In addition, food services are provided by the WMA concessionaire and there are fast food outlets and restaurants in the town of Chilhowie.

Equipment list:

- Blaze orange vest (as turkey season will be underway until Saturday 1200 noon)
- Sampling equipment: taxonomic identification guides, waders, seines, dip nets, collection jars, snake stick, bag, chaps, camera, insect repellent, compass, headlamps,)
- Canoes, life preservers, throw lines (Everyone in a canoe must have a lifejacket)
- Night snorkeling equipment for very cold water (night lights, hood, jacket.)
- Raingear and other clothing suitable for the changeable weather, with often occurs in the mountains of Virginia in May

Clinch Mt. WMA Potential Species List

<i>Ambystoma jeffersonianum</i>	Jefferson salamander
<i>Ambystoma maculatum</i>	Spotted salamander
<i>Aneides aeneus</i>	Green salamander
<i>Cryptobranchus alleganiensis</i> <i>alleganiensis</i>	Eastern hellbender
<i>Desmognathus fuscus</i>	Northern dusky salamander
<i>Leurognathus marmoratus</i>	Shovelnose salamander
<i>Desmognathus monticola</i>	Seal salamander
<i>Desmognathus ochrophacus</i>	Mountain dusky salamander
<i>Desmognathus quadramaculatus</i>	Blackbelly salamander
<i>Desmognathus wrighti</i>	Pigmy salamander
<i>Eurycea cirrigera</i>	Southern two-lined salamander
<i>Eurycea longicauda longicauda</i>	Longtail salamander
<i>Eurycea lucifuga</i>	Cave salamander
<i>Gyrinophilus porphyriticus</i>	Northern spring salamander
<i>Notophthalmus viridescens viridescens</i>	Red-spotted newt
<i>Plethodon cinereus</i>	Northern redback salamander
<i>Plethodon glutinosus</i>	Northern slimy salamander
<i>Plethodon jordani</i>	Jordan's salamander
<i>Plethodon kentucki</i>	Cumberland Plateau salamander
<i>Plethodon richmondi</i>	Ravine salamander
<i>Plethodon wehrlei</i>	Wehrle's salamander
<i>Plethodon welleri</i>	Weller's salamander
<i>Plethodon yonahlossee</i>	Yonahlossee salamander

Announcements

<i>Pseudotriton montanus diastictus</i>	Midland mud salamander
<i>Pseudotriton ruber ruber</i>	Northern red salamander
<i>Bufo americanus</i>	American toad
<i>Bufo fowleri</i>	Fowler's toad
<i>Gastrophyrne carolinensis</i>	Eastern narrowmouth toad
<i>Hyla chrysoscelis</i>	Cope's gray treefrog
<i>Pseudacris brachyphona</i>	Mountain chorus frog
<i>Pseudacris crucifer crucifer</i>	Northern spring peeper
<i>Pseudacris triseriata feriarum</i>	Upland chorus frog
<i>Rana catesbeiana</i>	Bullfrog
<i>Rana clamitans melanota</i>	Green frog
<i>Rana palustris</i>	Pickerel frog
<i>Rana sylvatica</i>	Wood frog
<i>Scaphiopus holbrooki</i>	Eastern spadefoot toad
<i>Apalone spinifera spinifera</i>	Eastern spiny softshell
<i>Chelydra serpentina serpentina</i>	Common snapping turtle
<i>Chrysemys picta picta</i>	Eastern painted turtle
<i>Graptemys geographica</i>	Common map turtle
<i>Sternotherus odoratus</i>	Common musk turtle
<i>Terrapene carolina carolina</i>	Eastern box turtle
<i>Eumeces fasciatus</i>	Five-lined skink
<i>Sceloporus undulatus</i>	Northern fence lizard
<i>Agkistrodon contortix mokasen</i>	Northern copperhead
<i>Carphophis amoenus amoenus</i>	Eastern worm snake
<i>Coluber constrictor constrictor</i>	Northern black racer
<i>Crotalus horridus horridus</i>	Timber rattlesnake
<i>Diadophis punctatus edwardsii</i>	Northern ringneck snake
<i>Diadophis punctatus punctatus</i>	Southern ringneck snake
<i>Elaphe obsoleta obsoleta</i>	Black rat snake
<i>Heterodon platirhinos</i>	Eastern hognose snake
<i>Lampropeltis getula nigra</i>	Black kingsnake
<i>Lampropeltis triangulum triangulum</i>	Eastern milk snake
<i>Nerodia sipedon sipedon</i>	Northern water snake
<i>Regina septemvittata</i>	Queen snake
<i>Thamnophis sirtalis sirtalis</i>	Eastern garter snake

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

I wish to initiate renew membership in the Virginia Herpetological Society for the year 19____.

I wish only to receive a membership list. Enclosed is \$1.00 to cover the cost.

Name _____

Address _____

_____ Phone _____

Dues Category: Regular Family Under 18 Life
 (\$10.00) (\$12.50) (\$6.00) (\$150)

Interests: Reptiles Amphibians Captive Husbandry
 Distribution Research
 Specifically _____

Make checks payable to the Virginia Herpetological Society and send to the treasurer: Shay Garriock, VHS Secretary/Treasurer, 703 Burrell Drive, Blacksburg, VA 24060

Field Notes

This section provides a means of publishing natural history information on Virginia's amphibians and reptiles that does not lend itself to full-length articles. Observations on geographic distribution, ecology, reproduction, phenology, behavior, and other areas are welcomed. Reports can be on single species or fauna from selected areas, such as a state park or county. The format of the reports is species' scientific name (common name): State abbreviation: County, locality. Date. Observer(s) or collector(s). Report or observations given one line below the data mentioned above. Author(s) name and address are given one line below the report or observation. Consult published notes or the editor if your information does not readily fit this format.

If the note contains information on geographic distribution, a voucher specimen or color slide should be sent for verification and deposited in a permanent museum or sent to the Virginia Herpetological Society. Species identification for observational records should be verified by a second person.

The correct citation format: Tobey, F.J. 1989. Field notes: *Coluber constrictor constrictor*. *Catesbeiana* 9(2):35.

Herpetological Artwork

Herpetological artwork is welcomed. If the artwork has been published elsewhere, we will need to obtain copyright before we can use it in an issue. We need drawings and encourage members to send us anything appropriate, especially their own work.