

CATESBEIANA



Rana catesbeiana
Jan 1879
T. C. C.

BULLETIN OF THE VIRGINIA HERPETOLOGICAL SOCIETY

ISSN 0892-0761

Volume 16

1996

Number 2

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.

Dues are \$10.00 per year and include a subscription to *Catesbeiana* numbers 1 and 2 for that year. Dues are payable to: Michael Hayslett, Secretary-Treasurer, 923 Euclid Avenue, Lynchburg, Virginia 24501.

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, 1971 University Blvd., Lynchburg, VA 24502.

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.)

CATESBEIANA

Bulletin of the Virginia Herpetological Society

Volume 16

Fall 1996

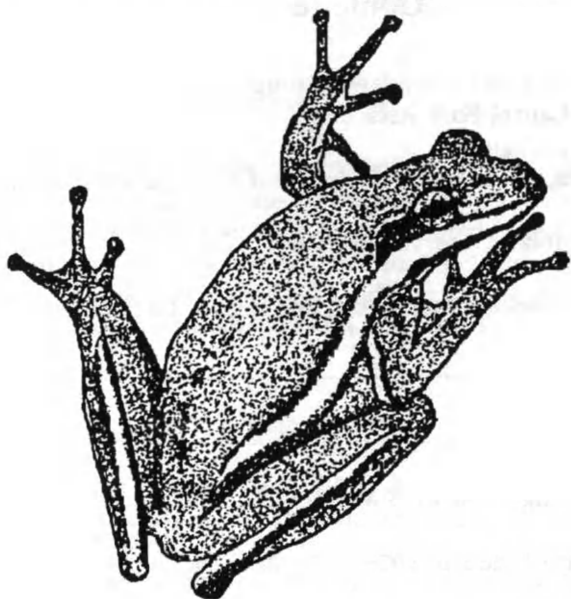
No. 2

Contents

Salamander Diversity and Abundance Along Buck Run in the Laurel Fork Area of Highland County, Virginia by H. Steve Adams, Michael S. Hayslett, and Chris Hobson.....	35
Reptile and Amphibian Observations, Floyd County, Virginia by Shay Garriock, Melody Kirkendall, and Shawn Carter.....	44
Field Notes.....	46
President's Corner.....	51
Minutes of the Spring 1996 VHS Meeting.....	52
Treasurer's Report of the Fall 1994 VHS Meeting.....	54
Fall 1996 Meeting Notice.....	29
1996 Membership List.....	57

MEETING NOTICE

The Fall 1996 VHS meeting will be held on 26 October 1996 at the Maymont Foundation, Richmond, VA. See pages 55-56 for details.



Hyla cinerea

Feb. 1979

CAR

Salamander Diversity and Abundance Along Buck Run in the Laurel Fork Area of Highland County, Virginia

H. Steve Adams¹
Michael S. Hayslett²
Chris Hobson³

¹Dabney S. Lancaster Community College, Covington, VA. ²Nearby Nature Inc., Lynchburg, VA. ³Virginia Division of Natural Heritage, Richmond, VA.

Salamanders are distributed mainly in the temperate regions of the world with most species occurring in North America. Individuals usually are less than fifteen cm long and, although some are entirely aquatic, many species live under rocks and logs in damp woods. North American species are primarily woodland and belong to the family Plethodontidae. The southern Appalachians contain the highest levels of salamander species diversity and endemism (Dunn, 1926; and Highton, 1971 *In* Pague and Mitchell, 1987). In Virginia there are forty-five species, with highest salamander species diversities being found in the southern Blue Ridge (including the Mount Rogers highlands) and the New River Valley (Pague and Mitchell, 1987).

Governor's School participants (1994) found that both diversity and density of salamanders were greater at lower elevations on Whitetop Mountain in southwest Virginia. They collected a total of 37 salamanders distributed among seven species at 1402 m, but only three species and thirteen individuals at 1646 m. The 1995 Governor's School students conducted a similar study of salamanders occurred at the highest elevation (1082 m). However, this "highest" elevation near the ridge of Peters Mountain was well below the lowest altitude on Whitetop. The dominant species at the highest and middle (945 m) elevations was the slimy salamander (*Plethodon glutinosus*). Slimy and redback (*P. cinereus*) salamanders were found mainly under rock, whereas the only Jefferson salamander (*Ambystoma jeffersonianum*) a species not previously reported from Alleghany County, was discovered beneath a log. At the lowest elevation (457 m along a stream), the mountain dusky salamander (*Desmognathus ochrophaeus*) was the only species found.

Methods and Materials

In 1996 the Governor's School surveyed the Laurel Fork area of Highland Co., in the extreme western portion of the Commonwealth.

The Laurel Fork area in Highland County is located within the George Washington and Jefferson National Forests. This area has vegetation resembling that of southern Canada because of the high elevations (914-1280 m) which provide a year-round cool, moist environment. Temperatures often are 5-10° C cooler than in nearby Monterey and commonly dip to 4-10° C on some nights in July. Red spruce (*Picea rubens*), a species more characteristic of New England or Canada than Virginia, is abundant in the forests. It is found with other northern hardwood species, including beech (*Fagus grandifolia*), black cherry (*Prunus serotina*), and yellow birch (*Betula lutea*). Such an aggregation of northern species is rare elsewhere in Virginia where oak forests typically predominate. This region may represent the largest expanse of uninhabited "wilderness found in Virginia.

The Laurel Fork area in the northwest corner of Highland County is one of thirteen "local sites of special concern in Virginia" designated by Richard Hoffman (1987). The spruce forests represent a habitat type found at no more than fifteen other localities in the state (Adams and Stephenson, 1991), and the northern hardwood forests are among the most extensive examples of this forest type in Virginia. The uniqueness of the area has attracted herpetologists from Virginia and neighboring states for years. Pague and Mitchell (1987) reported nineteen species of salamanders from the Laurel Fork area alone (Young, 1993). One species which has sparked a great deal of interest since its discovery at nearby high elevation sites in West Virginia, is the Cheat Mountain salamander (*Plethodon nettingi*). Some (Brock Tucker, pers. comm.) have suggested this species may well occur at Laurel Fork. In fact, Hoffman (1987) claims that the Laurel Fork area is the most likely place for the occurrence of this species, if its range includes any part of Virginia.

The purpose of this study was to investigate the relationship of density and diversity of salamanders to elevation in the Laurel Fork area of Highland County. We hypothesized: (1) density and diversity of salamanders would decrease as elevation increased and (2) salamanders would be distributed in equal abundance under rocks and logs.

The first collection site at 884 m, along the elevational transect extending up the Buck Run Trail from Laurel Fork to the Locust Springs picnic area, was established near its junction with the Laurel Fork Trail. Each of four groups (six to seven persons each) spread out over an area of

SALAMANDER DIVERSITY ALONG BUCK RUN

approximately 50 X 50 m (0.25 ha) for a period of fifteen minutes to look for salamanders. All cover objects (*i.e.*, logs and rocks) were turned over and the bases of stumps and trees, as well as leaf litter, were thoroughly searched. All moved objects were carefully replaced. The search included Buck Run and its banks. Salamanders collected were tallied as to habitat and identified to species. This process was repeated at other elevations of 914, 945, 975, 1006, 1036, 1067 and 1116 m. Northern hardwood trees tended to dominate at all sites except for the highest elevation which was dominated by red spruce (*Picea rubens*). Collections at elevations 884 - 1,006 m were made in Buck Run, along its immediate banks, and on the slopes rising from either side. Slopes on the sides of Buck Run at the 1,006 m collection site were not as steep as those at sites located from 884 to 975m. The two collection sites at 1,036 and 1,067 m were on the northeasterly facing slope well above Buck Run. The collection site at the highest elevation (1,116 m) was in the very wet flat, dominated by red spruce and hemlock (*Tsuga canadensis*), located immediately above the beaver ponds near the Locust Spring picnic area. Collection sites at 914 and 1,006 m included seep areas.

Results

Overall, 225 salamanders were found representing nine different species (Table 1). Over fifty percent of the individuals were mountain dusky salamanders (*Desmognathus ochrophaeus*). The least abundant, the northern dusky salamander (*D. fuscus*), accounted for less than one percent of all salamanders collected.

Nearly ninety percent of all salamanders were collected from under rocks and logs, with few (3.1%) found in the water. Eight of the nine species were found under rocks and seven under logs. Only two species were actually collected from within streams.

The species and number of salamanders varied noticeably through the elevational gradient (Table 1). As elevation increased both the number and species of salamanders generally increased. The greatest numbers were found at 1,006 m, 1,036 m, and 1,167 m, whereas the fewest were collected at the lowest elevations (884 and 914 m).

Table 1. The distribution by species of Salamanders collected on 25 June, 1996 along Buck Run in the Laurel Fork area of Highland County, VA.

Elevation	Species	No.
Site 1 884	<i>Desmognathus ochrophaeus</i>	9
	<i>Notophthalmus viridescens</i>	1
	<i>Plethodon cinereus</i>	6
	<i>Plethodon glutinosus</i>	2
	Total	18
Site 2 914	<i>Desmognathus monticola</i>	2
	<i>Desmognathus ochrophaeus</i>	9
	<i>Gyrinophilus porphyriticus</i>	2
	<i>Notophthalmus viridescens</i>	1
	<i>Plethodon wehrlei</i>	2
	Total	16
Site 3 945	<i>Desmognathus monticola</i>	1
	<i>Desmognathus ochrophaeus</i>	19
	<i>Plethodon cinereus</i>	3
	<i>Plethodon glutinosus</i>	3
	<i>Plethodon wehrlei</i>	1
	Total	27
Site 4 975	<i>Desmognathus monticola</i>	3
	<i>Desmognathus ochrophaeus</i>	21
	<i>Gyrinophilus porphyriticus</i>	1
	<i>Notophthalmus viridescens</i>	1

SALAMANDER DIVERSITY ALONG BUCK RUN

	<i>Plethodon glutinosus</i>	5
	Total	31
Site 5	<i>Desmognathus monticola</i>	4
1,006	<i>Desmognathus ochrophaeus</i>	17
	<i>Notophthalmus viridescens</i>	1
	<i>Plethodon cinereus</i>	4
	<i>Plethodon glutinosus</i>	9
	Total	35
Site 6	<i>Desmognathus ochrophaeus</i>	16
1,036	<i>Eurycea bislineata</i>	1
	<i>Gyrinophilus porphyriticus</i>	1
	<i>Plethodon cinereus</i>	9
	<i>Plethodon glutinosus</i>	5
	<i>Plethodon wehrlei</i>	4
	Total	36
Site 7	<i>Desmognathus ochrophaeus</i>	4
1,067	<i>Eurycea bislineata</i>	2
	<i>Notophthalmus viridescens</i>	2
	<i>Plethodon cinereus</i>	12
	<i>Plethodon glutinosus</i>	6
	<i>Plethodon wehrlei</i>	1
	Total	27
Site 8	<i>Desmognathus fuscus</i>	2
1,116	<i>Desmognathus ochrophaeus</i>	21

<i>Eurycea bislineata</i>	2
<i>Gyrinophilus porphyriticus</i>	7
<i>Notophthalmus viridescens</i>	1
<i>Plethodon cinereus</i>	1
<i>Plethodon glutinosus</i>	1
Total	35

With the exception of the site at 1,067 m, where the redback salamander (*Plethodon cinereus*) was the dominant species, the mountain dusky was dominant. The northern dusky (*Desmognathus fuscus*) was found only at the highest elevation site, a seep habitat. The mountain dusky and slimy (*P. glutinosus*) salamanders tended to be more abundant in the mid-elevational segments, although the mountain dusky also was numerous at the highest elevation. By contrast, the Plethodontids (redback, slimy, and Wehrle's [*P. wehrlei*]) tended to be more abundant at the higher elevations (with the exception of the highest elevation where their numbers decreased). The spring salamander (*Gyrinophilus porphyriticus*) clearly attained its greatest abundance in the red spruce-hemlock stand at the highest elevation. The two-lined salamander (*Eurycea bislineata*) was found only at the three highest elevations, whereas the red eft (*Notophthalmus viridescens*) was found in generally low numbers long the entire elevational gradient. Surprisingly, the two-lined salamander was away from its normal habitat, water, by as far as 50 meters.

A Bray-Curtis ordination conducted on the eight salamander communities placed sites 1, 3, and 4 together near the middle of the two dimensional array (Figure 1). These sites were low in diversity and similar not only in composition of salamanders, but also in vegetation, aspect, and inclination. Note that Site 7 (1,067 m) at one end of the X-axis of the ordination, was dominated by the redback and had the highest diversity of any site. At the opposite end of the same axis, site 2 represents a unique assemblage of the seal, spring, Wehrle's and mountain dusky salamanders. The Y-axis constitutes a gradient from maximal importance by the slimy salamander (site 5) to the only site where the northern dusky was present (site 8).

SALAMANDER DIVERSITY ALONG BUCK RUN

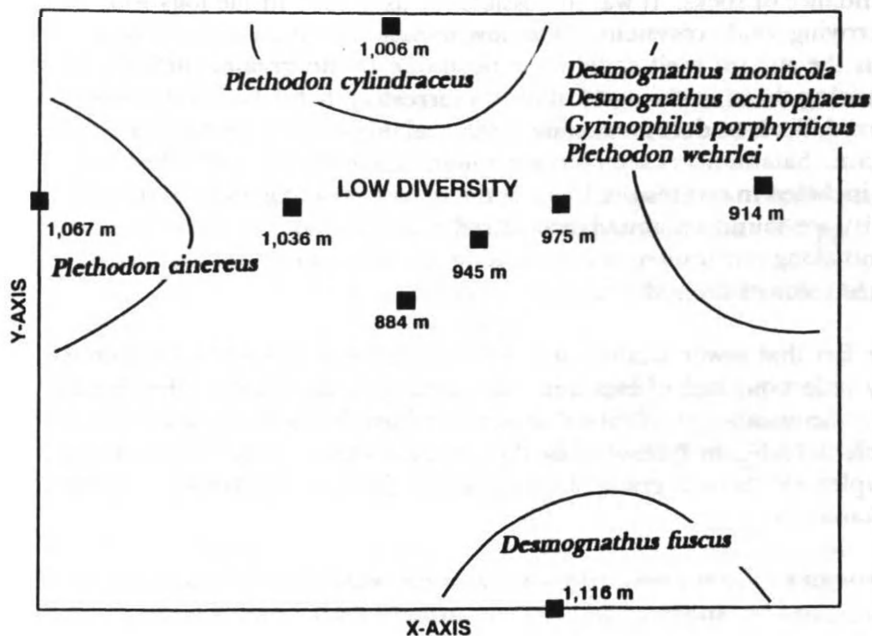


Figure 1. Bray-Curtis ordination based on assemblages of salamanders collected at each site along the elevational gradient.

Discussion

Weather conditions during our study were very favorable for collecting salamanders. It was humid due to thunderstorms that occurred the previous day and night, and the temperature was moderate throughout the day. The salamanders were active and easily found, even at a distance away from the stream.

Where diversity of trees was greater, the humidity seemed higher and moisture was present. This may explain why more salamanders were found in areas with a greater diversity of trees. In general, the salamanders preferred sites that were more moist. An area with level terrain and a high diversity of trees was associated with the largest number and species of salamanders collected.

The low number of salamanders found under logs could have been due

to the fact that some salamanders live inside logs, or due to the abundance of rocks. It was impossible for us to look inside logs without destroying vital ecosystems. The low number of salamanders collected from the stream itself could have been due to the greater difficulty of capturing them in the water than on terrestrial habitats. This made it more difficult to document some of the salamanders in and around the stream. Salamanders seen but not caught and definitely identified were not included in our results. Outside the survey area (e.g., the Laurel Fork Trail), we found an abundance of red efts. The low number of these found along our transect was surprising, especially given the distinctively bright color of the red eft.

The fact that fewer salamanders were collected at the lower elevations may reflect our lack of experience at catching them. On the other hand, since the number of salamanders we found gradually increased until we reached 1,067 m (presumably the driest site), the true effect of the complex-elevational gradient on their distribution seems a more likely explanation.

Although the mountain dusky was by far the most abundant salamander, it did drop substantially at 1,067 m to only 14.8 percent of the total collection at that site. The redback on the other hand, rose to its highest number making up 44.4 percent of the catch at this same site. This might reflect the fact, "that the *D. ochrophaeus* is normally found. . . not actually in the water, but where the ground is saturated." The redback is a terrestrial salamander confined more or less to wooded or forested areas (Conant and Collins 1991).

Acknowledgements: We wish to thank the participants in the 1996 Governor's School: Brooke Beard, Spencer Bissett, Jeff Davis, Brandon Fisher, Nelson Fox, Jennifer Green, Charles Harlow IV, Julia Heslep, Kellie Hirt, Anna Leffel, Christine Lyons, Dusty Maxwell, Wanda McKenzie, Peter Neofotis, Jennifer Nicholson, Cristina Paxton, Heather Pozum, Beth Sampson, George Sullivan, Jessica Tate for their contribution of field work without which this study would have been impossible.. Other contributors were Jane DeGroot (Alleghany High School, Low Moor, VA), Jon Pinckard (Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, Blacksburg, VA), Josh Craft (Dabney S. Lancaster Community College), John Haverlack (Central Shenandoah Valley Regional Governor's School, Fishersville, VA), and Samantha Jessee (Ferrum College, Ferrum, VA).

SALAMANDER DIVERSITY ALONG BUCK RUN

Literature Cited

Adams, H.S. and S.L. Stephenson. 1991. High elevation coniferous forests in Virginia. *Virginia Journal of Science* 42:391-399.

Conant, R. and J.T. Collins. 1991. A field guide to reptiles and amphibians (3rd ed.). Houghton Mifflin Company, Boston. 450 pp.

Dunn, E.R. 1926. The salamanders of the family Plethodontidae. Smith College Anniversary Publication. 441 pp.

Governor's School Participants. 1994. Density and diversity of salamanders at five different elevations on Whitetop Mountain. In Investigation Results, 1994 Governor's School, Field Biology, Dabney S. Lancaster Community College. 5 pp.

Governor's School Participants. 1995. The density and diversity of salamanders at two different elevations on Peters Mountain. In Investigation Results, 1995 Governor's School, Field Biology, Dabney S. Lancaster Community College. 6 pp.

Highton, R. 1971. Distributional interactions among eastern North American salamanders of the genus *Plethodon*. pp. 139-188 In: P. C. Holt (ed.). The distributional history of the biota of the southern Appalachians, Part III: Vertebrates. Res. Div. Monograph 4, VPI & SU, Blacksburg.

Hoffman, R.L. 1987. Local sites of special concern in Virginia. *Virginia Journal of Science* 38: 399-408.

Pague, C.A. and J.C. Mitchell. 1987. The status of amphibians in Virginia. *Virginia Journal of Science* 38: 304-318.

Young, D.A. 1993. An annotated checklist of reptiles and amphibians from Highland County, Virginia. *Catesbeiana* 13:3-8.

Reptile and Amphibian Observations, Floyd County, Virginia

Shay Garriock¹
Melody Kirkendall²
Shawn Carter³

¹PO Box 64, Eggleston, VA 24086. ²3942C McCoy Road, Blacksburg, VA 24060. ³248 Old Cedar Field Dr., Blacksburg, VA 24060.

The following species list was compiled from May 12 to August 20, 1996 in Floyd Co., Virginia while conducting field work for a bog turtle (*Clemmys muhlenbergii*) project at VA Tech. The only exception to this was *Rana sylvatica*, heard calling in early March, 1996. Listed species were sighted or heard incidentally, or found by visual searching. Site visitation frequencies varied as did searching intensity, and the number of sighted individuals for each species was not tallied in most cases. This survey, therefore, only provides information on some of the species present in Floyd County. Exact locations of five sites (A-E) are not provided because of the bog turtle's state-endangered status. Sites A-E are upland meadow bogs bordered by pasture and or mixed deciduous forest.

The following literature was used to aid in species identification: Conant, R. and J. Collins, 1991. *A Field Guide to Reptiles and Amphibians, Eastern and Central North America*. Houghton Mifflin Company, Boston, New York; Martof, B.S. et al., 1980. *Amphibians and Reptiles of the Carolinas and Virginia*. The University of North Carolina Press, Chapel Hill, North Carolina; Mitchell, J.C., 1994. *The Reptiles of Virginia*. Smithsonian Institution Press, Washington, D.C.

Species	Site					BM ³	ID	
	A	MO ¹	TR ²	B	C			D
<i>Desmognathus f. fuscus</i>		x	x	x	x	x	x	visual
<i>Desmognathus monticola</i>			x				x	visual
<i>Eurycea guttolineata</i>				x		x		visual
<i>Gyrinophilus p. porphyriticus</i>		x						visual
<i>Hemidactylium scutatum</i>				x	x			visual
<i>Notophthalmus v. viridescens</i>	x	x	x		x	x		visual
<i>Plethodon c. cinereus</i>				x	x	x	x	visual
<i>Plethodon cylindraceus</i>				x		x		visual
<i>Plethodon wehrlei</i>							x	visual

HERPS OF FLOYD COUNTY

Species	A	MO ¹	TR ²	B	C	D	E	BM ³	ID
<i>Pseudotriton r. ruber</i>		x	x	x					visual
<i>Bufo americanus</i>			x						visual
<i>Hyla chrysoscelis</i>	x			x					vocal
<i>Hyla versicolor</i>			x	x					vocal
<i>Pseudacris crucifer</i>			x	x	x				vis./voc.
<i>Rana catesbeiana</i>			x	x	x	x		x	vis./voc.
<i>Rana clamitans melanota</i>			x				x		vocal
<i>Rana palustris</i>							x		visual
<i>Rana sylvatica</i>			x						vocal
<i>Elaphe o. obsoleta</i>			x			x			visual
<i>Regina septemvittata</i>				x	x				visual
<i>Nerodia s. sipedon</i>		x	x	x	x	x			visual
<i>Thamnophis sp.</i>	x					x	x		visual
<i>Thamnophis s. sauritus</i> *			x						visual
<i>Thamnophis s. sirtalis</i> *			x						visual
<i>Chelydra serpentina</i>	x		x	x	x	x	x		visual
<i>Clemmys muhlenbergii</i>	x			x	x	x	x		visual
<i>Terrapene c. carolina</i>	x		x	x					visual
<i>Eumeces fasciatus</i> ^{4*}	x								visual

¹ All species identified at the Moses site (MO) were found on 18 June 1996 along a tributary of West Fork Dodd Creek, 1.6 km northwest of Rt. 8 and VA 714 intersection in south central Floyd County (Woolwine quadrangle). The cover type is mixed deciduous forest.

² The Traynham site (TR) is a 50 acre farm located on VA 747 0.8 km east of VA 750 in western Floyd County (Alum Ridge quadrangle). The habitat is characterized by white pine forest and pasture. There are also three springs and a small pond on the property.

³ Six species were found on the south facing slope of Buffalo Mountain during a nighttime visual survey on 31 July 1996. Buffalo Mountain is located 7.0 km south of Willis, VA (elevation = 1210 m). The cover type is mixed deciduous forest.

⁴ On 4 August a female five-line skink was found guarding her nest 100 m E of the Blue Ridge Parkway (mile 169.6) in south western Floyd Co. (not listed in table). A second five-lined skink was seen at site A on 17 August 1996.

* Indicates distribution record for Floyd County.

FIELD NOTES

Amphiuma means (Two Toed Amphiuma): VA: Isle of Wight Co. Virginia Route 608, 1.5 km South of interstate with Virginia Route 635, 4.5 km Southeast of Windsor, 2 June 1993. M.D. Norman.

A single specimen was collected in a chicken wire funnel trap in a vernal pond located on property currently owned by Norfolk and Southern Railway. Identification of the specimen was confirmed by Dr. Joe Mitchell and was deposited by him in the Virginia Museum of Natural History in Martinsville (catalogue VMNH R-6660). This species has not been previously recorded from Isle of Wight County (Tobey, F. 1985. Virginia's Amphibians and Reptiles: A Distributional Survey, Privately Published, Virginia Herpetol. Soc., Purcellville, VA, 114 pp.).

The vernal pond was about 2.5 acres (maximum pool level) in size. The maximum depth observed was 38 inches. Water depth and temperature were noted as follows

Date	Time(Mil.)	Depth (inches)	Temp. (F)
4/22/93	1725	38	55
4/24/93	2225	38	59
5/07/93	1835	--	70
5/13/93	1915	34	73
5/22/93	1250	--	61
5/27/93	1815	--	73
6/02/93	1820	30	65
6/05/93	1543	--	72
6/09/93	1755	--	80
6/13/93	1624	28	71
6/17/93	1835	27	76
6/19/93	1225	18	76

The pond was dry on 8 September 1993. Sphagnum moss was very dense in the shallow, shaded portions of the pond. Submerged aquatic vegetation was sparse to absent in the deeper area. The water color was dark stained, presumably from high concentration of organic acids. The pH in each of two nearby vernal ponds was 5.8 on 14 March 1993.

Sampling efforts in the pond consisted of two chicken wire funnel traps set continuously from 7 May to 19 June 1993. The only other vertebrates collected in the pond were two specimens of spotted turtles, *Clemmys guttata*.

FIELD NOTES

Mitchell D. Norman
Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries
5268-B Godwin Blvd.
Suffolk, VA 23434

Chelydra serpentina (Common Snapping Turtle). VA: Pulaski County, main channel of Claytor Lake, New River, approximately 500 m above Rt. 672 bridge crossing. May 6, 1996. Victor J. DiCenzo and Joseph A. Williams.

Snapping turtles are well known predators of fishes, both game and nongame (Lagler, 1943. *The American Midland Naturalist* 29(2):257-312); however, little specific information is available describing fish predators of snapping turtles. For instance, Ernst and Barbour (1972. *Turtles of the World*. Kentucky Press, Lexington, KY., 347 pp.) indicate that "large fishes" are predators of hatchlings and juveniles, but provide no details on species. On May 6, 1996, while conducting an age and growth study on Claytor Lake black bass (*Micropterus sp.*), Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries biologists found a hatchling snapping turtle in the mouth of a spotted bass, *M. punctulatus* (280 mm TL). In the stomach of this particular bass, we also found one crayfish (*Orconectes sp.*). Measurements of the snapping turtle were: carapace length = 30.62 mm, plastron length = 19.36 mm, carapace width = 29.11 mm, and weight = 7.4 g. We suspect the turtle was eaten recently because it showed no evidence of degradation. In reviewing the diet of spotted bass, no reference could be found to indicate that small turtles are a normal part of their diet (Vogele, 1975. *The Spotted Bass*, Sportfish Institute, Washington, D.C., 34-45 pp; Hess, 1983. *Proceedings New River Symposium*, National Park Service, Glen Jean, WV, 15-21 pp). Rather, these fish are aggressive, opportunistic feeders that are attracted to small, moving prey, like a hatchling snapping turtle. Even though snapping turtles prey on fish, the contribution of young snappers in the diet of some fish species may outweigh most negative effects turtle predation has on these populations.

Michael J. Pinder
Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries
2206 South Main Street, Suite C
Blacksburg, VA 24060

FIELD NOTES

Eumeces fasciatus (Five-lined skink): VA: Floyd Co., Rocky Knob, 100 m E of Blue Ridge Parkway, mile 169.6, elevation = 1050 m. Shay Garriock.

A female five-lined skink was found guarding her nest in Floyd Co., VA on 5 August 1996. The nest was located beneath a flat rock (0.3 x 0.2 m) in a pasture on Rocky Knob. The female attending the nest was photographed, measured, and released: snout-vent length = 68 mm; total length = 163 mm; clutch size = 6; avg. egg length = 13.9 mm. This is a distribution record for Floyd Co. (Mitchell, J.C. 1994. *The Reptiles of Virginia*. Smithsonian Institution Press, Washington, D.C. 352 pp.). Slides were sent to VHS for verification.

This may be the only documented sighting in Virginia of a female attending her nest in August. Mitchell (1994) reported findings of five lined skinks attending nests from 16 June to 26 July.

Shay Garriock
P.O. Box 64
Eggleston, VA 24086

Thamnophis sirtalis sirtalis (Eastern garter snake): VA: Floyd Co., 1.0 km N of the intersection of VA 750 and VA 747. 4 August 1996. Shay Garriock.

On 4 August 1996, an eastern garter snake was found dead on VA 750 in Floyd Co., Virginia. The specimen was measured and preserved: snout-vent length = 412 mm, total length = 537 mm. This is a distribution record for Floyd Co. (Mitchell, J.C. 1994. *The Reptiles of Virginia*. Smithsonian Institution Press, Washington, D.C. 352 pp.). The voucher specimen was sent to VHS for verification.

Shay Garriock
P.O. Box 64
Eggleston, VA 24086

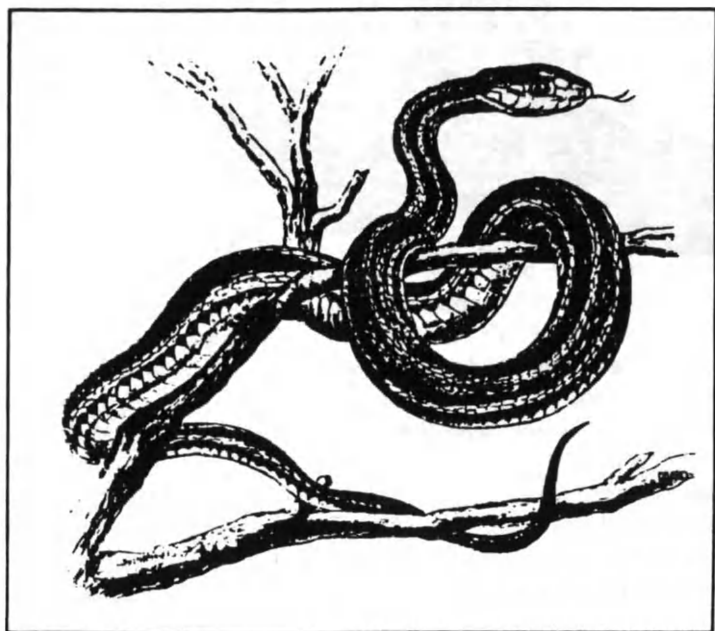
FIELD NOTES

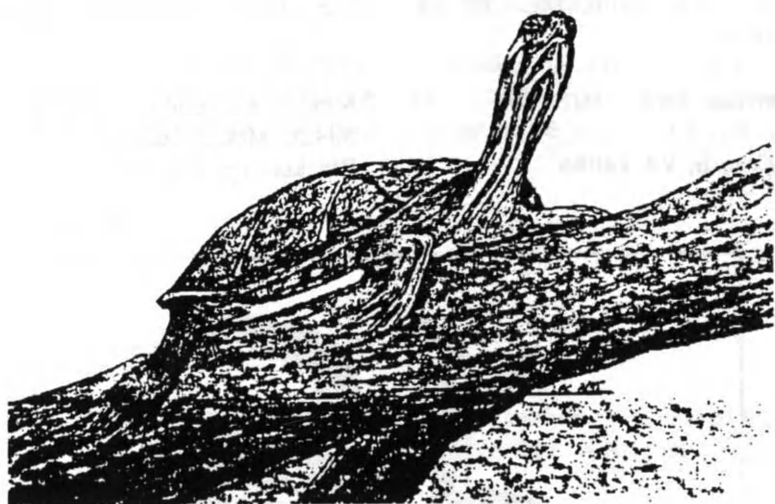
Thamnophis sauritus sauritus (Eastern Ribbon Snake): VA: Floyd Co., VA 747, 0.8 km E of VA 750. 16 July 1996. Shay Garriock and Melody Kirkendall.

An eastern ribbon snake was found under a pile of old boards (10 m from a small pond) on 16 July near Willis, VA on the property of Mac and Jenny Traynham. This snake was captured, photographed, measured, and released (SVL = 371 mm, total length = 584 mm). Positive identification as a ribbon snake was verified by lateral stripes on the third and fourth scale rows. This is a distribution record for Floyd, Co. (Mitchell, J.C. 1994. *The Reptiles of Virginia*. Smithsonian Institution Press, Washington, D.C. 352 pp.) Slides were sent to the VHS for verification.

Shay Garriock
P.O. Box 64
Eggleston, VA 24086

Melody Kirkendall
3942C McCoy Road
Blacksburg, VA 24060





PRESIDENT'S CORNER

The Spring Meeting was, I thought, a large success. There were six groups which surveyed selected sites all over Massanutten Mountain in Warren and Shenandoah Counties. We covered a lot of ground and had primary and secondary sites for all the groups. Mike Pinder, who did a spectacular job in meeting with the Forest Service to obtain the information used in planning the sites each of the groups would visit, is also coordinating the report which will detail the results from the survey. We hope to have this report ready for the next (Spring 1997) issue of *Catesbeiana*.

The Virginia Herpetological Society is a volunteer organization. As such the input of ideas and time from our members is very important. There are many areas in which the opportunity for service is needed. The newsletter is always in need of new material. Keep your eyes open for articles in your local newspaper which are of herpetological interest, then clip them out and send them to the editor. *Catesbeiana* is always in need of field notes, artwork, and major articles of any length. The VHS needs member input as to where to hold our next Spring survey. We are already working on Copper Creek and/or Whitetop Mountain in the southwest and Massanutten Mountain in the north. Other sites in the southeast, south central or other localities are needed. Accommodations less than one hour's drive, with a large meeting room are necessary. We often find that different people contribute ideas on meeting sites and accommodations. Bring your ideas to Richmond. Another opportunity for service would be on two committees which are needed. We used to have a raffle at some of our Spring meetings during the Social which follows the paper presentations. We need one or more persons to coordinate this activity. They might phone different individuals who have been "regular contributors", check with the Secretary/Treasurer to see if we have any books to donate, and perhaps phone some pet stores or other businesses to ask if they would like to contribute a (nonliving) item. Other persons may have additional ideas. A membership committee could be useful to examine ways and sources with which to advertise the VHS. Volunteers are needed to coordinate these activities. Do you have a little spare time to contribute? Have you been looking for a place of service in the VHS? Others will have ideas and be willing to help. Think it over and talk to me at the Richmond Fall meeting.

MINUTES OF THE SPRING 1996 VHS MEETING

The VHS held its spring business meeting at the Smithsonian Conservation and Research Center in Front Royal on May 3, 1996. President Paul Sattler opened the meeting and the minutes were approved as submitted from the Fall 1995 meeting. Initial discussions focused on the suggestion to produce a post card mailer to go out to members whose dues had lapsed past one year, to provide one last opportunity to keep these as VHS members. There was also concern expressed over the rental cost of the Smithsonian's facility.

I. OLD BUSINESS

1. Mike Pinder gave the report on the Fall 1995 newsletter, stating that 150 issues went out at a cost of \$48.48, with 25% of those having reminders for membership renewal. Mike requested newsletter information on related meetings and for the development of the "Virginia Native" article series.
2. Discussion then focused on the status of the society's once tax-exempt number, obtained in the early 1970's and cited by Frank Tobey. It was pointed out that the "old" VHS ended in 1979, and the "new" society emerged with the beginnings of *Catesbeiana* around 1981.
3. The final item of old business revisited the \$1,100.00 set aside for the VHS "snake" poster, and there was discussion as to whether a color brochure would be an alternative to the long-awaited poster.

II. NEW BUSINESS

1. Joe Mitchell informed the members of an archival agreement for the society with the Virginia Museum of Natural History in Martinsville. The museum will be the official archives for all VHS materials (slides, voucher specimens, etc.) from hence forth. He pointed out the need for a well-organized slide repository, and reminded members that the key characteristics for identifying herp species must be clearly recognizable in the photo for county records being vouchered by color slides.

MINUTES OF THE SPRING 1996 VHS MEETING

2. Mike Pinder described the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries' "Virginia Wildlife Information System", their computer database for receiving herp distributional information. Joe Mitchell then mentioned that members can obtain verification of amphibian records by sending a self-addressed stamped envelope to him with their requests.
3. There was then brief discussion about the fall meeting site of Maymount in Richmond, and the prospect for attracting local teachers and educators to participate in the traditional teachers workshops. The added attraction of the Nature Center on the grounds was cited as a plus for the meeting.
4. Mike Hayslett then described Society Tee shirts that were going to be obtained from the Vernal Pool Association in Massachusetts. The tee shirts will have the VHS logo on the front and a spotted salamander design on the back. These will be available at the fall meeting.
5. Final announcements included descriptions of the membership services that are available, such as books, color plates and bumper stickers.
6. The meeting was adjourned and followed by refreshments and then an orientation presentation by Joe Mitchell to prepare participants for the survey activities along the Massanutten Mountain range that followed the next day.

Respectfully submitted,
Michael S. Hayslett
Secretary/Treasurer

VIRGINIA HERPETOLOGICAL SOCIETY
 TREASURER'S REPORT
 Spring Meeting, May 3, 1996

**Balance in checking reported at the Spring 1996 meeting was
 \$1,356.40.**

Expenditures to date:

10/28/96	Chk# 157	Appreciation Plaque	\$28.74
01/01/96	158	Office Supplies	21.88
01/18/96	159	Office Supplies	9.20
01/23/96	160	Office Supplies	24.55
01/24/96	161	Display materials	5.47
01/26/96	162	Office Supplies	1.50
03/13/96	163	Postage (Newsletter)	48.44
03/13/96	164	Smithsonian Rental	1,255.00
04/04/96	165	Topographic maps	38.28
04/10/96	166	<i>Catesbeiana</i> /postage	261.49
04/11/96	167	Spring meeting supplies	58.52
05/03/96	168	Office Supplies	<u>27.90</u>

Total expenditures **\$1,780.97**

Receipts to date: (dues and book sales) **\$3,621.02**

Balance in checking **\$1,356.40**

Balance in savings **\$1,277.96**

Total VHS treasury as of May 3, 1996 **\$2,634.33**

Respectfully submitted,

Mike Hayslett, Secretary/Treasurer

ANNOUNCEMENT
FALL 1996 MEETING OF THE
VIRGINIA HERPETOLOGICAL SOCIETY

The Fall 1996 VHS meeting will be held on 26 October at the Maymont Foundation in Richmond, Virginia.

Schedule:	8:30 am	Herp Workshop for Teachers
	10:30 am	Business Meeting
	12:00 pm	Lunch
	1:30 pm	Announcements Afternoon Sessions Social

This year we will repeat the highly successful educational workshop for teachers, in Richmond. Lora DeVan, Doug Eggleston, Mike Hayslett, and Mike Pinder will conduct the educational workshop. The workshop is being directed specifically toward teachers and will include information on the identification and captive care of local amphibians and reptiles, regulations regarding endangered species and the collecting and/or holding of herps, and possible classroom activities.

Please bring a contribution of food and/or drink to share at the social which will follow the afternoon paper session. The Fall Meeting is a great time for interacting with our widely dispersed membership. Please plan on joining us.

If you would like to present a paper during the afternoon session, please call Paul Sattler at 804-582-2209 (work), 804-385-6605 (home), 804-582-2488 (FAX) or send a note giving your title to the co-editors of *Catesbeiana*. Presentations should be 15-30 minutes in length.

Directions to Maymont Foundation (Hampton entrance):

From Interstates 64 and 95:

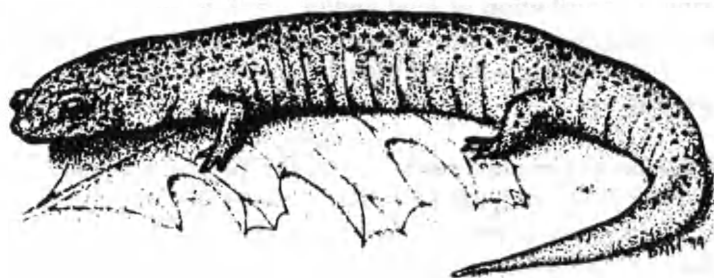
Take the Boulevard exit (#78). Go south one and one-half miles to Cary Street and take a left. Go one-half mile to Meadow Street and take a right. Go one mile to Pennsylvania Avenue and take a right. Then go one block to Maymont's Hampton Street parking lot.

From the Powhite Parkway:

After the Chippenham Toll Plaza, get in the right-hand lane. Bear right onto 195 East (the Downtown Expressway). Take the Maplewood exit from 195 and bear left onto Maplewood. Go one block to Shepherd and take a right. Go one block and take a left on Grant Street. Go straight into Byrd Park at the Columbus Statue (Grant will turn into Lakeview). Go one-half mile to Meadow Street and take a right. Go seven-tenths of a mile to Pennsylvania Avenue and take a right. Go one block into Maymont's Hampton Street parking lot.

From the Downtown Expressway:

Take the Meadow Street exit immediately after the toll plaza. Take the first left onto Meadow Street. Go one mile to Pennsylvania Avenue and take a right. Go one block to Maymont's Hampton Street parking lot.



Pseudotriton ruber

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: Michael S. Hayslett, 923 Euclid Ave., Lynchburg, VA 24501

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 TITLE (species or area), COUNTY AND LOCATION, DATE OF OBSERVATION, OBSERVERS, DATA AND OBSERVATIONS. Names and addresses of authors should appear one line below the report. 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: Croy, S. 1984. Field Notes: *Lampropeltis getula niger. Catesbeiana* 4(1):12.

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.