



**A PUBLICATION OF THE UPSTATE HERPETOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION**  
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**VOLUME 16, ISSUE 9**

## **Through Wind and Rain and Sleet and Snow..... *but REPTILES?!***

Some funny anecdotes that had the mail personnel a little by surprise:

### **Python Found in UPS Truck Back With Owner**

August 09, 2005 11:43 PM EDT

O'FALLON, Mo. - A 9-foot albino Burmese python has arrived at its new home after startling a United Parcel Service driver who found it curled up among packages in his truck last week. The python was taken to the St. Charles County Pet Adoption Center after Brian Adams encountered it while making deliveries in suburban St. Louis. News reports about the find caught the attention of David Ostermeyer, who hadn't received a python he ordered from a dealer in Pennsylvania. Ostermeyer, 19, of suburban O'Fallon, told Theresa Williams, director of the division of humane services for St. Charles County, that he has a male albino python and ordered the female so he could breed them. Ostermeyer told Williams he got the delivery last week but discovered the box was empty. He said he tried to flag down the driver and then put in a claim with UPS.

Adams, 41, remembers delivering an overnight-air box to Ostermeyer's address earlier on the morning that he found the python, but didn't notice anything unusual. Later, after stopping for another delivery, he saw what he first thought was a stuffed animal or rubber snake. After he saw scales and realized it was alive, he called animal control. The 31-pound snake was prodded into a cloth mailbag and taken to the pet adoption center.

On Friday, Ostermeyer picked up the python after going to the shelter with proof of his ownership - a receipt, the UPS tracking information and the empty box. The python was shipped in a plastic container that was taped shut and placed inside the box. Williams said the tape was intact but the container cracked, and the cardboard box had a couple of tears in it. UPS, meanwhile, is investigating. Although the company accepts some live animals for shipment, snakes aren't on its list.

### **Ala. Woman Finds Snake in Post Office Box**

August 09, 2005 11:41 PM EDT

DOTHAN, Ala. - A typical early morning trip to the post office turned into a frightening experience for a Dothan ENT employee when she found a live corn snake hiding under the mail. The non-poisonous snake, measuring between two and three feet long, slithered into the business post office box that Jean White regularly checks, sending her screaming hysterically for help. "I reached in there and got some mail, and when I reached back in, I saw it under my mail. I saw its tongue," White said. "I screamed and I hollered and I screamed and hollered some more. Then I started hollering 'snake!'" She said it took a few minutes for employees to figure out who would remove the snake from the post office box. After removing the snake, employees called Dothan Animal Control, which disposed of it. "In my 33 years working with the postal service, I thought I had seen just about everything, but I've never seen or heard of anything like this happening before," postal employee Steve Simmons said. He said he did not know how the snake got into the post office box but speculated that it came from outside, seeking a warm, dry place. He said he does not believe it was a prank.

("Disposed of it"? I hope that means removed it from the building and NOT killed it!!)

# The Unclassifieds:

These are line ads are free for UHA members; for non-members the fee is \$2.50. Each ad will run for two months unless otherwise requested. (The date following each ad is the last issue it will run) UHA makes no warranty as to the quality of items advertised in the HerpBeat.

Ads should be sent by mail to Attn: HerpBeat, Diana Sleiertin, 980 Schaap Road, Jordan, NY 13080 or via email to [uha\\_herpbeat@earthlink.net](mailto:uha_herpbeat@earthlink.net). The deadline is the 10<sup>th</sup> of the month.

**EMAIL Submissions To:**  
[uha\\_herpbeat@earthlink.net](mailto:uha_herpbeat@earthlink.net)



## Publication Correction!

Please note that in the Board Member Biographies last month, Julie Hiscock's name was incorrectly noted further on in the bio as "Joyce".

We regret the error and apologize for any confusion that may have been caused.

As noted, Julie Hiscock is a new member and has happily volunteered to accept the responsibility of Borad Memerb. Please consider her when placing your vote for Board Members.

**Herp Beat** *Is a monthly publication of the Upstate Herpetological Association.*

UHA is a 501(C)(3) Not-for-Profit organization dedicated to the practice of herptoculture and herpetology. Membership is open to anyone who subscribes to the purposes of the Association.

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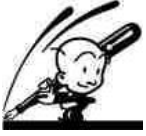
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## Editor's Corner Column Member Involvement!

Another reminder that elections are coming up in November. Next month's issue will be the first to have the "mail-in" ballots for those members too far away to attend the November meeting. Please be an active member and vote whether you can make the meeting or not. Having a Board is essential to our status as a Non Profit Organization and since it is a volunteer position, those who have volunteered in the past may not necessarily have bargained for long term tenure. Please consider all the biographies you have read and make your decisions for the future success of the UHA. Both the current members and the nominated members can have a huge impact on the group's future success, so please don't let November slip by.

On another note, the October Open house is getting very close! Please be sure to contact Terry Norris or Janet Calp about getting involved. The success of the Open House is dependent on all of us as members. The only way we can hope to get past the negative public perception of reptiles and reptile owners is to present a fun, educational and safe environment for the general public to meet and interact with us and our animals.

It may seem like months away, but summer is nearly over and it's really only TWO meetings away now. Tables need to be reserved; those needing electricity need to be set up in the correct areas. If you are interested in volunteering to help make the day run more smoothly, please let Terry or Janet know. They'll be happy for the extra assistance and support.

As editor, I have been actively sending out PR to the media in hopes of increasing the audience. PR has been sent as far away as Rochester and Ithaca, and to nearly every outlet here in the Syracuse area. Wouldn't it be wonderful if we had a full house ALL day at Beaver Lake? In anticipation of such a large showing, we need to have full tables also. Please, even if you only a a small collection, consider sharing and showing that day.

We look forward to seeing as many of you as possible that day. Thank you in advance for your participation.

### **New York Herpetological Expo**

**Drumlins Country Club      Syracuse, NY      August 27, 2005**

The NY Herpetological Expo has returned, backed by one of the original organizers, corporately supported by Brad Chambers and Animal Dreams. This year's show looks to be bigger and better than ever before.

Contact Brad Chambers at Animal Dreams (315)214-0340 for further information or mail to:  
NY Herp Expo, 309 South Main St, North Syracuse, NY 13212

### **TIME IS NEARLY OUT!!!**

**Interested in selling your animals at a UHA table? Special Available ONLY to UHA Members!!  
Contact Bob Cunningham immediately. Space is limited and time is of the essence**

# Board Member and Nominee Biographies

## Janet Calp - Current Board Member

Although not a founding member, I am a long term member of UHA and have held the position of Secretary for a number of years. I began attending board meetings shortly after joining UHA and was voted in as secretary a year or so later.

My father instilled a love of nature in me at an early age and my interest in reptiles and amphibians goes back to my grade school days. I was always catching turtles and frogs, studying them for a while and then releasing them. I now have a collection of various frogs and toads as well as lizards, (including prehensile tailed skinks, bearded dragons, and two large male iguanas), turtles, one tortoise and two western hognose snakes as well as a small library of identification and herptaculture books.

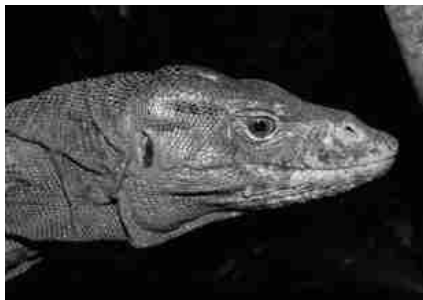
I'm an active member, always glad to participate in exhibits and displays at schools and scout meetings when my schedule allows. I'd love to be able to attend more meetings, but Sunday is a tough day for me. I'd like to remain on the board and urge you to vote for me.

## Diana Sleiertin - Nominee Member

I have been interested in reptiles for more than 12 years, and have been steadily expanding my collection since. At this point, I have iguanas, monitors, a variety of snakes and have begun a foray into turtles and tortoises. My schooling is diverse, including journalism and legal studies, but my personal research into reptiles has dramatically increased my knowledge about many species. After 12 years working with them, I consider myself fairly well versed with iguanas, and they remain a favorite of mine, with a special place in my heart.

I have only been a UHA member for a year now, but have been an active member, always glad to participate in exhibits, displays for schools and scout meetings, and at public events. Having accepted the position as Editor of the HerpBeat, I strive every month to provide the members with the best newsletter possible with the resources available.

With the resignation of one board member, I was enlisted ad hoc as a stand in member. However, I would be happy to serve the group as an elected Board Member, encouraging the future success of the group. So please the positive potential and cast a vote for me.



## Conservation News

Check out this site for more information

### Mampam Conservation

<http://www.mampam.50megs.com/>

Working to save the Buutan (or Gray's Monitor), the world's only true fruit eating lizard.

## New and Renewed Members

John and Karen Bradly, Syracuse  
Travis LaCroix, Elbridge (student member)  
James Kibbe  
Dan and Jill Migdall, Cleveland  
Jason Bladen, Syracuse  
Cris Steiber  
Karen Dohrn  
Kenneth Westcott  
Richard Wiese  
Chad Blair, Syracuse  
Wayne Fidler, Mexico  
Christian Espinosa, Clay  
Rachel Kieffer, Cicero  
Emily Holgate, Manlius (student member)  
Debra Fiero

## September's Guest Speaker

September's Speaker? Brad Chambers  
**Don't miss this great opportunity!**

Brad recently returned from an exciting trip to Big Bend, Texas. While most of you have been able to read about it here in the HerpBeat, Brad will be sharing many more tidbits of his experiences and more importantly, **PHOTOS** of his trip.

Since most of us missed this field trip, be sure not to miss his presentation, which is certain to be interesting! See you at the September meeting!!

### Advertising Info:

If you would like to place an ad not covered in the "UnClassifieds" column, but aren't sure how to lay it out, send us your information with payment and we will create a custom ad for you or your business. A full-page ad is \$50 per month, 1/2 page ad - \$25, 1/4 page ad - \$15 and business card size \$10.

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# Right around the Bend ... make that Big Bend, Texas

*Here's another chance to continue living vicariously through the field tripping adventures of our fellow herper. For all of us who couldn't make the trip.... Let's thanks Brad and those that could!*

## **The Continuation of: UHA Big Bend Trip 2005**

Brad Chambers

*Sunday, June 5*

This morning we got an early start, heading for Marfa road shortly after dawn. It was still cool, and the only snake was a DOR Texas longnose. But we sighted many lizards, and the road seemed alive with Texas horned lizards (*Phrynosoma cornutum*). They proved ridiculously easy to capture, usually choosing to flatten themselves to the ground rather than run, trusting their usually flawless camouflage. We photographed and released several. Carl was outraced by a female collared lizard (*Crotophytus collaris*), an obviously gravid specimen we found sunning in the middle of the road. Strangely, this was to prove the only specimen of this supposedly common lizard we would see on the trip. We were able to capture a few Prairie lizards (*Sceloporus undulates consobrinus*), a western relative of our own Fence lizards. But neither of us had any luck with the many whiptails (*Cnemidophorus* sp.) we encountered. My hat's off to the roadrunners and whipsnakes which are fast and agile enough to make these scaled streaks of lightning a regular part of their diet!

After the customary mid-afternoon siesta, we decided to try our luck in one of the region's harshest environments, the Black Gap Wildlife Management Area, which borders the eastern edge of Big Bend National Park. Storms were once again threatening, and even before dark the weather was ominously cool (80 degrees at 8 pm).

About 5 miles north of the road into Black Gap, we came across a gorgeous 5-foot Sonoran gopher snake (*Pituophis melanoleucus affinis*). This one exhibited the typical reaction of these snakes when discovered-it froze in place, flattening itself against the pavement. It also hissed loudly upon being picked up and bagged, but showed no inclination to bite.

Almost as soon as this snake was safely stowed away, the storm hit with a fury. Once again we were pelted by hail, heavy rain, and driving wind. We continued on, our wipers set on high for the next 20 minutes or so, when the storm finally passed. So much rain fell that several low spots in the road were under as much as a foot of water, and as it got dark we began to see scores of toads appear. Red-spotted, Texas, and Great Plains toads were joined by southwestern and Couch's spadefoots. It amazed me that this, one of the hottest and driest areas in Texas, was home to such numbers and diversity of anurans. Of course, this had to be the one night we forgot the camera! And it was a good thing for us the toads were out-for the snakes seemed to have been driven underground by the damp, cool conditions. We did have an interesting time spotlighting some road cuts. We found black widow spiders, scorpions, and tarantulas, and Carl even came up with the only Texas banded gecko (*Coleonix brevis*) of the trip.

At this point we also made a very interesting observation on the habits of southwestern earless lizards (*Cophosaurus texanus scitulus*). These speedy rock dwellers are almost impossible to collect during the day, but we found several sleeping soundly-not in the expected rock crevices, but in small depressions in the asphalt, smack dab in the middle of the road! The sleeping lizards matched the pavement so closely that we never saw one from the cab of the truck, but only when we were out walking with our lights. Even stranger, they were invariably sleeping in the safest spot on the road, the center line! It makes one wonder: just how fast can adaptive behaviors evolve? Here we have an example of a very strong selective pressure operating on a population, and from at least two directions - lizards sleeping in the road must surely be less vulnerable to the predators (such as snakes, ringtails, skunks, tarantulas and large centipedes), which hunt them at night in their traditional

sleeping retreats in rock crevices. But even on these less-traveled rural roads, any lizard, which habitually sleeps in either travel lane, is almost certain to be hit eventually. So those lizards which by chance prefer to snooze in the center line are safest from natural predators, as well as the wheels of the local rancher's truck! These are the individuals that survive to pass on their genes to the next generation. Since all this had to happen in the few decades since roadways and vehicles arrived in the desert, it's a telling reminder of the potential power of evolution. Speciation may take many thousands of years, but small changes can happen quite quickly under the right conditions. But we were having too much fun to dwell long on such weighty matters. Though the first gopher snake was the only snake found that night, we both considered it at least a modest success.

### *Monday June 6*

Another fine morning spent cruising the Marfa ranch road. This morning was warmer, and we quickly found two DORs from the previous evening—a male Mexican hognose and a juvenile western diamondback. A few miles further on we came upon a nice Sonoran gopher sunning on the warming pavement. This animal was still quite cold and barely moved when it was picked up. Not so with the gopher we picked up 20 minutes later—the air temperature had warmed to 80 degrees and the snake's temper with it. He hissed loudly, (as only a member of the genus *Pituophis* can) and struck repeatedly. It was another fine specimen, and we bagged it despite its protests.

But now it was getting really hot. Not feeling quite ready to head back to our motel for the obligatory midday siesta, we decided to head for the Davis Mountains in hopes of finding cooler temps. We had just begun ascending the foothills when we spotted an inviting roadside rest area, which bordered a steep mountain slope, covered with huge rocks and boulders. We couldn't resist stopping to investigate.

Clambering up the hillside, we immediately found a colony of small brown lizards. It would obviously be necessary to capture one for proper identification, but this was easier said than done. We eventually succeeded by surrounding one on a fairly isolated boulder, and it turned out we had a surprise—it was a Big bend tree lizard (*Urosaurus ornatus schmidti*), one of a population living on rocks rather than the preferred tree trunk habitat.

Carl continued investigating the rocks, but I went back to the car to retrieve my binoculars so I could take my time scanning the boulder field for bigger game. Given the habitat, I had the idea that we might see a much larger rock dweller, and it only took about five minutes of scanning and there it was: a gorgeous male crevice spiny lizard (*Sceloporus poinsetti*), the largest spiny lizard of the region and the second largest in North America. This guy was truly impressive, resplendent in glowing green, grey and blue coloration and nearly a foot in length. After considerable shouting and hand signals I was able to direct Carl to the specimen's home boulder, but his attempts to capture it were quite futile—this old guy had obviously spent a lifetime eluding swifter predators than a couple of humans! We decided at this point to call it a morning, happy to have gotten such a good look at so beautiful and impressive a lizard.

That evening we headed south again, this time for another crack at the River Road, reasoning that the lowest elevation in the area would have the warmest nighttime temperatures. On the way down on Rt. 118 we drew first blood at sunset, when we intercepted a young western diamondback crossing the road just north of the Christmas Mountains (another famed locality for exceptional gray-banded kings). This was a very spirited individual, quickly whipping into the classic *Atrax* defensive stance as we photographed it and then hooked it safely off the road.

We had been correct in our assumptions about the weather, and it was hot and hazy as we began to cruise the length of the River Road. In addition, the area had experienced strong storms earlier in the day and some low points still had standing water. Almost as soon as we began we came upon another diamondback, this one a very recently run over juvenile, unfortunately. A couple of miles further on I caught a glimpse of a slender form sliding off the roadside, so I let Carl out then pulled over to the side. Unfortunately a motorist traveling behind us took offense at our behavior and stopped to loudly berate Carl. Now I have a lot of patience in most situations, but when a possibly prize specimen is escaping I've been known to lose my cool. I jumped out and ran back, yanked the light from

Carl's hand and, leaving him to deal with the obviously drunk local driver, ran into the grass to try to locate the snake. Very luckily I did so, for it was a fine yearling female desert kingsnake (*Lampropeltis getula spledida*), of the so-called "sockhead" variety, with a coal-black head and bright, crisp markings. It would make a fine addition to Animal Dreams' breeding program. Luckily the ill-tempered driver had by now given up and moved on, so we returned to cruising.

Because of the earlier storms, amphibians were very much in evidence, and we encountered the same species as the previous night, with one notable addition. Rounding a bend, we were faced with a temporary pool extending almost all the way across the road. In it were several large anurans, which looked a bit different, so we pulled off to investigate. Luckily, I'm probably the only person who'd bring an aquatic net to a desert, so we were soon able to capture some of the strange toads. These turned out to be Couch's spadefoot toads (*Scaphiopus couchi*), the first I've ever seen in the wild, and probably the most colorful and impressive spadefoot, in my opinion. Their call sounds like a loud bleat, almost like a dying sheep might sound.

Returning to the road we soon came upon a Texas night snake, which for some reason Carl couldn't seem to find (even though to me it appeared to be crawling slowly in plain sight in the middle of the pavement!), but it was eventually located and bagged. It was now 1 AM, and we were both ready to call it a night, since we faced a two-hour drive back to Alpine. But our night wasn't over. Driving through an area of steep cliffs and rockslides, a long, gray animal with a fluffy ringed tail darted across the road in front of us and jumped onto a roadside rock pile, giving us a great view of our first ringtail cat, sometimes called a "cacomistle". This slim member of the raccoon family is fairly common, though seldom seen, in the Big Bend region. Carl was especially entranced, since he had no idea such an animal even existed!

We had just turned onto 118 north and were proceeding through the Christmas mountains when we saw a small, pale snake in the oncoming lane. I was pretty certain what it probably was even before I ran over and scooped it up. It was a beautiful young adult trans-pecos ratsnake (*Bogertophis subocularis*)! My trip was made, for despite the fact that most herpers come to this region specifically to pursue the coveted alterna, I'll always maintain that "subocs" are the most beautiful and desirable snakes of the Big Bend. Even better, this one was a female! We both were on cloud nine all the way back, and the large Texas longnose we found further north was a bit anticlimactic. It had been our most productive day so far.

## *Tuesday June 7*

We once again headed for Marfa at dawn. It turned out to be a good morning for gopher snakes-we found a juvenile and a rather large specimen in quick succession. The usual variety of lizards was also seen, as well as pronghorn, javelina and mule deer. On the trip back to Alpine a large DOR coachwhip was found. Flushed with our success of the previous night, we once again decided to tackle the drive to the River Road. This evening was clear and hot, the temperature only dropping into the low 80s. We caught a night snake and a glossy (*Arizona elegans*) early, and then hit a several hour dry spell. Finally, on our way out at 1:30 AM, we came upon a small diamondback. After a brief photo session we hustled it off the road and continued on, only to find another rattler of similar size stretched out in the road about 2 miles further. This one was a very handsome baby blacktail rattlesnake (*Crotalus molossus*). Since it was the only one we'd found we spent considerable time on photos. Unlike further west in Arizona, where the blacktails are usually a rich yellow gold color, most Texas specimens are patterned in greenish gray and black on a light gray background. Either way, a very attractive snake indeed.



Photo by B. Chambers

The rest of the night was uneventful, except for another longnose on 118 at around 2:30 AM. That night our friend Troy headed for Black Gap, where we had been royally skunked 2 nights before. However, now was much more favorable weather-wise, and he was able to come up with a Mojave rattler, ground snake (*Sonora semiannulata*), several night and longnose snakes and not one but two *Subocularis*! Carl and I berated ourselves for not giving it another try.

### *Wednesday, June 8*

Our last day dawned sunny and warm. The Marfa road produced a smallish gopher snake right off, but we were getting a bit blasé about gophers by this time. That is until we came up on a section of road that bordered a steep, sandy bank honeycombed with rodent burrows. From almost a quarter mile away we saw what looked like a thick rope stretched seemingly almost completely across the road. Surely this couldn't possibly be a snake? But it was. By far the biggest gopher snake of the trip, nearly seven feet long and as thick as my forearm! This animal had a hiss that had to be heard to be believed, but it made no attempt to bite as we bagged it in one of our largest bags.

Further down the road, at a small road cut, we were finally successful at catching one of the elusive whiptail lizards, which turned out to be a trans-pecos striped whiptail (*Cnemidophorus inornatus heptagrammus*). As we were admiring it, we heard a rustle in a nearby bush, and I spotted a section of slender coil, moving very fast. It was a snake I hadn't expected to see, let alone capture—a central Texas whipsnake (*Masticophis taeniatus*). By surrounding its bush, (and disregarding a number of bites) I was able to get my hands on a coil and eventually succeeded in separating snake from plant. Unlike the baby coachwhip we'd caught previously, this animal didn't hesitate to bite!

We decide to spend our last evening hunting the Boy Scout road and Limpia Canyon, along highway 17. We had immediate success, finding a small diamondback just north of Ft. Davis. It made me uneasy to find a snake so quickly, and events later confirmed my suspicions. Our next find was a small adult rock rattler, crossing the road through Limpia Canyon. I quickly bagged it, overjoyed to catch a female (The earlier juvenile had been a male), since my NY venomous permit allows me to keep a pair. I bagged it, shoved it in the "hot box" in the truck and forgot it.

Shortly afterward we saw an oncoming state police car hit a snake, which had been crossing in the opposite lane. I almost wish we hadn't decided to check it out, for it was a depressing sight: a thoroughly dead but gorgeous trans-pecos ratsnake! This set the tone for the rest of the night—a DOR blacktail, a DOR Emory's ratsnake, and a DOR diamondback rounded out our total, before the Davis Mountains cooled too much to allow snake activity. We were cheered that we had at least avoided the skunk by catching the lepidus.

The final shoe fell when we got back to the room and checked on our catch. The rock rattler must have been hit by a car earlier, for it was now quite dead! A perfect end for our worst night of the trip. We tried not to dwell on it as we tried to grab a few hours' sleep before our departure.

The next morning we had to hurry to get those animals we'd decided to keep packed and loaded before the motel's checkout time. Neither of us was ready to leave, but the morning was flawless as we set out, enjoying our last views of the desert (at least until next trip). Just south of Ft. Stockton came the last snake of the trip, a huge western coachwhip that darted across the highway and off into the chaparral before we even had time to stop. We wished it well and settled in for the long drive back to North Syracuse.

That's not the end of the story, however. We're already planning next season's trip. While the dates haven't been finalized, it's safe to say we'll time it to bracket the new moon in June. I'll post the details in the HB as they become available.

# October Open House –October 2<sup>nd</sup>

**Let's get together and have a great Turnout.**

Just as an FYI, the Chicago Herp Society holds a Two-day Reptilefest that is *Phenomenally* well attended, by both members and audience. Let's aspire to a similar turnout by our members. New efforts will be taken to widely publicize the Open House, so let's make sure we are all involved! It's not too early to plan to be there...

**Mark your calendar and Plan your table!!**

**You need to book now to insure you have the electricity and space you might need.**

## **SHOW YOUR SUPPORT FOR THE UHA**

**Show your interest in educating the public,  
Share your beautiful animals, your knowledge and your time!**

**Contact Janet Calp or Terry Norris to schedule your table! (Contact info on Page 2)**

## **Reptile News – can things get any weirder in California?**

LOS ANGELES - Park visitors have gone from feeding ducks and fish to nourishing a scaly green creature more likely found in Amazonian swamps than a Los Angeles lake - a giant crocodile-like caiman.

Since a gardener spotted it last Friday, people have tried to glimpse the 200-pound reptile wading and sunbathing at Ken Malloy Harbor Regional Park.

Like many Angelenos, the animal is an immigrant who is quickly adopting to its new home. It has already acquired, for example, a nickname matching its Latin American roots and its penchant for tortillas tossed by visitors: Carlito. "They'll swallow anything, and if they can't swallow it, they'll tear pieces until they can eat it," said Jarron Lucas of the Southwestern Herpetologist Society.

Lucas' group, at the request of park rangers, is attempting to capture the animal with nets and a raw chicken, then give it a home at the Los Angeles Zoo. That could take a month, officials say.

Cousins to the crocodile, caimans are mostly found in Central and South America. Experts believe this one, estimated to be as long as 8 feet, was released by its owner. "They pick up this little reptile that looks really cute when it's little. But when it gets big and starts looking and acting scary, they don't want it any more," Lucas said. On Saturday, visitors lobbed French bread and jelly doughnuts at the park's 50-acre lake. The caiman didn't bite, though it surfaced several times. In the afternoon, it was found sunbathing on a grassy area along the shore. When a small lifeguard boat whizzed by, the animal slid into the water and disappeared.

On Sunday, visitors scanned the waters with binoculars and video cameras while officials kept them 80 feet from shore behind yellow police tape. "It's such an urban area, people just don't see wildlife and people run across it, and they're like, 'Oh, nature!' It scares them," said Bonnie Lea, a member of the herpetologist society.

Eight-year-old Cheyenne Espinoza was among those irked by the caiman. She wanted to bring a metal bat from her Harbor City home, but her father wouldn't let her. "I was going to knock the gator out," she said.

# September Meeting!

Did we miss you at the picnic in August Meeting? Be sure not to miss the September meeting!

**HIGHLIGHTS:**

**Presentation by Guest Speaker –  
Brad Chambers,  
Slide Show and Talk about  
the Big Bend, Texas trip**

**Name Tag Raffle:  
Zoo Med Gift basket**

**Socialize:  
Sip, snack and chat at social moments**

**When: September 18, 2005**

**Time: 2:30 pm**

**Where: Beaver Lake Nature Center,  
Baldwinsville**



**Directions From I-81 or I-90 - Take I-690 W. (changes to N. at NYS Thruway) to second Baldwinsville exit, 370 W. Proceed west on Rte. 370, 2 miles, turn right onto E. Mud Lake Rd.**

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## DON'T FORGET!!!

September Meeting will be on September 18, 2005!!!

~ Be at Beaver Lake!

Don't Miss a Fantastic Follow Up on the Big Bend Trip!

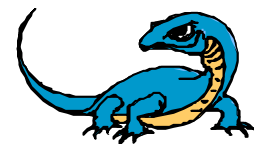
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## Herp Beat

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