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Phrynosomatics

The Newsletter of the Horned Lizard Conservation Society

Our purpose is to document and publicize the values and conservation needs of horned lizards, to promote horned lizard conservation projects and to assist with horned lizard management initiatives throughout their ranges.

Volume 5, Issue No. 2

August 2000

news from California... it's really about education

by Lester G. Milroy III

Hello from California!

The court system is now aware of the Homed Lizard Conservation Society. Last week, I had jury duty. It is always a special occasion to observe the "system" at work.

Lwore my HLCS cap — my clean formal one — to the assembly area and many folks questioned the validity of the organization. This opened lines of communication with many people. Even the bailiff and several of the police officers asked about HLCS. I provided information and updates about the latest conservation issues to all and found that many folks are unaware of the declines of horned lizards. Most of the people shared the same stories of seeing the horned lizards as kirds and seeing many horned lizards in the area many years ago but not seeing them now. I explained about the continued loss of habitat and problems with domestic cats and dogs in areas of supposed protected habitat. Many people were unaware of the lack of law enforcement, not that the California Department of Fish and Game and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife folks are not doing their job, but that politics hinders them from doing their job by cutting their budgets and increasing their work loads. Now, some people are more aware.

Lexplained to the people, who asked questions, about the Endan-

gered Species Act and the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) that protection was not the evil that developers claim it to be. I had to explain to folks about the San Bernardino Kangaroo Rat, recently listed under emergency status as "Threatened", and that rats and kangaroo rats. are not the same thing. I explained that the kangaroo rats and the horned lizards occupy the same habitats in California, and that the Coastal Sage Scrub Community is unique. Talso mentioned that if they would research the information on California's listed species, they would find that many inhabit the Coastal Sage Scrub Community and that loss of habitat is where the problem began.

I was selected to sit on the jury and during the selection process answered questions as to my name and occupation, etc. My being retired military was no big deal, but my being a wildlife consultant and student working on a Masters degree in Conservation Biology was. I was questioned about my work and my HLCS cap was noticed by both the defense attorney and the district attorney. Those present in the courtroom learned about HLCS and the work that we do in education and conservation.

I was not picked to sit on the final jury, but was wished well by the judge, the district attorney, and the defense attorney. The judge commented that

she hoped we would meet again in a situation that would be constructive in protecting natural resources and wildlife. She wished the society well on its endeavor,

HLCS to be in the NEWS

In August, I will be providing an update on the status of horned lizards during another interview with Dave Scott from KUSI-TV, Channel 51(9) News in San Diego. In 1992 or 1993, I had done a field interview with him in San Diego at the habitat restoration project underway at the Naval Air. Station Miramar. I found a horned lizard on site for Dave and he was amazed at the horned lizard's appearance. Dave reported that KUSI-TV received numerous calls concerning the piece and the response was very positive.

With the new interview scheduled, HLCS will be in the spotlight. My, HLCS cap — the clean formal one—will be in full view. I will plug HLCS as much as possible. I hope the response this time will be as positive.

Digital Video Project on a Steady Course

"I started video taping homed lizard, activity in late March and have well over 7 hours of "inchage" now. I say "inchage" because footage, the term used in filming movies on film, does not quite apply. Minidigital video

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Visit our Website: http://www.psy.utexas.edu/psy/brooks/hlcs/index.htm

emerging... Nevada Chapter

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> HLCS P.O. Box 122 Austin, TX 78767

President's Corner by Scott E. Henke

Upcoming Symposium, October 20-21

Mark your calendars and pack your bags. The Horned Lizard Conservation Society will be hosting the 4th Horned Lizard Symposium, which will be held at the American Museum of Natural History in Portal, Arizona, on 20-21 October 2000.

I am looking forward to a gathering that will bring together scientists from around the United States and Mexico. I anticipate a rich exchange of information on research on a wide variety of topics, such as horned lizard ecology, morphology, biology, natural history, management, and harvester ant distributions. The symposium will provide many new opportunities for dialogue and collaboration. Information has been sent to over 200 universities with biology programs, and has been listed on herpetological and wildlife websites. We hope to have a fantastic gathering of people with an impressive amount of knowledge about horned lizards. Well-known herpetologist and horned lizard researcher, K. Bruce Jones, from EPA, has agreed to speak at the meeting. We have also invited Neil LaVene, of EarthLaw, to up-date us about the flat-tailed horned lizard lawsuit. The meetings should be interesting.

The location should be impressive, as well. Portal is located on the edge of the Coronado National Forest in southeastern Arizona near the New Mexico line. It is approximately 3 hours from Tucson heading east on Highway 10 and then southeast on Arizona State Highway 186.

I encourage anyone who would like to make a presentation at the meeting, presenting either original research, anecdotal information, or just something that you find interesting, to do so. Please send me an abstract (less than 300 words) of your presentation. Send a hard copy and a diskette formatted for WordPerfect or Word to Scott Henke, MSC 156, Texas A&M University-Kingsville, Kingsville, Texas 78363-8202 or send an electronic copy to scott.henke@tamuk.edu. Abstracts must be submitted by 31 August because we plan to have the published abstracts available at the symposium.

The cost of the symposium is \$145/person for preregistration (before 15 September) and \$165/person after September 15th. Students receive a discounted rate of \$100/person if they register before 15 September. Registration costs include symposium registration, abstract publications, two nights lodging at the American Museum facility (Thursday and Friday nights), 5 meals, and refreshments during the conference. Prices are set regardless of whether you stay elsewhere or whether or not you take advantage of all the meals provided. It will not be possible to prorate fees for the Symposium. Enclosed in the newsletter is a registration form which can be photocopied as needed. Registration forms with payments should be mailed to:

Horned Lizard Conservation Society PO Box 122 Austin, Texas 78767

I'll see you there!

National Election and Membership

It is also time to hold the elections for the National Board of Directors. Please consider running for an office. It doesn't require specialized education or training, just a sincere desire to help horned lizards. Some of the present officers have been in office for quite some time and have requested a break from the duties of office. I also need to step down from office. My schedule for the upcoming year precludes me from running again, but it was an enjoyable term. Often members ask how they can become more involved in the Society. Well, running for office is an outstanding way to get involved.

There are four positions to consider — President, Vice President of Research and Recovery, Vice President of Member Services, and Treasurer. If interested in serving as an officer, write or e-mail me at the addresses listed above. I will make sure your name gets on the ballot. Please don't hesitate — you will make a wonderful officer, just trust yourself.

Recently I was asked how many members are in the HLCS and where everyone is from. The HLCS has 325 members from three countries (USA, Canada, and Germany). The US members are from 25 states and Washington D.C. We have three State Chapters (California, Oklahoma, and Texas), and three emerging Chapters (Nevada, New Mexico, and Utah). We have 7 members in Arizona. With 3 additional members, a Chapter could be organized. What do you say, Arizona? Is there someone who would like to get the ball rolling? I'll be happy to assist, just let me know.

Emerging New Mexico Chapter

A big "Thank you" is extended to member Tom McCain. Tom recently accepted the role of contact for the emerging New Mexico Chapter. Tom travels a great deal with his business, The Horny Toad Connection. If he travels through your area, make sure you stop, say hi, and thank him for his efforts.

As always, your suggestions, advice, and criticisms are welcome.

Old Rip Days at Eastland, Texas Saturday, September 16, 2000



At the starting line... as you can see, the competition is intense...

The Y2k Tie-Breaker!!!

What a great day we had at the HORNY TOAD DERBY last September (1999). The crowd gathered around and the remotecontrol horned toads were lining up. We were honored with new entries. We had three young people that created their own remote-controlled horned toads. So now, the challenge was even bigger for Larry Wisdom and Bette Armstrong, who had been the only competitors in the 1998 race.

On your mark-get set-GO. And the horned toads raced to the finish line! Who won? Well, the story goes like this . . .

1998 was a good year for Bette Armstrong! But, unfortunately, 1999 was a good year for Larry Wisdom!

But what does the year 2000 hold? Come to Eastland and find out...

note: If you are working on your HL racer for the 2000 race, according to sources, there are no rules as to the material to be used, the size of your racer, or kind of motor.

Make Old Rip proud!

Race History by Bette

Larry implied that Bette relied on unfair advantages in 1998 to win the race. He seemed to think that her practicing in advance on the racing surface and so knowing what her horned toad could do contributed to her winning (not to mention the "home town advantage")! And, of course, Bette's horned toad was much lighter in weight (technical advantage).

Following the 1999 race, though, Bette accused Larry of unfair practices!

It was Sure-Bet (Bette's) and Snappy Red Ant Eater (Larry's) that were the entries in the 1999 OLD RIP Horned Toad Derby, along with three other entries.

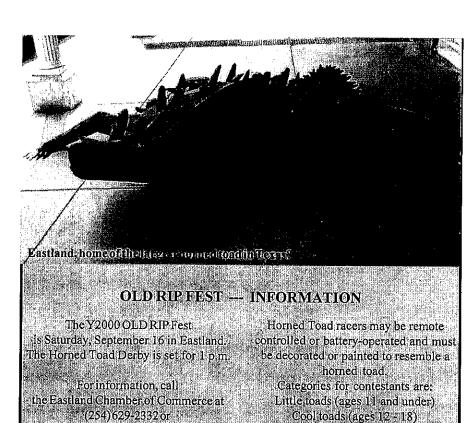
As Snappy Red Ant was running down the track with Sure-Bet coming up close behind, Larry quickly turned Snappy Red Ant right in front of Sure-Bet, thus cutting her off from the finish line!!! Larry had planned it out this year.

Let's just say it's not over yet!

Bette Armstrong

... and as of September 1999, Larry Wisdom now belongs to both Snappy Ant Eater and Sure-Bet! Feed'en well, Larry!





toll free 1-877-20ldrip.





Jason Elmore, his trophy, and "Old Rip"

Old Rip & the pine box derby...

On January 30, 1999 at 4 pm, Jason Elmore entered the pine box derby race in Eastland, Texas, with the derby car he designed himself -- his own version of "Old Rip" the Horned Lizard. Jason. from Cub Scouts Pack #23, Den #5, entered and won several races that afternoon among nearly 40 other competitors. Prior to the event, Jason had told his dad that he hoped he would at least make it to the finals since this was the first race he had ever entered. As the afternoon wore on, Jason and "Old Rip" did indeed make it to the finals and eventually laid claim to 2nd place in their division.

Some of the scouts had made fun of Jason's "car" but others loved it. The trophy presented to Jason by the judges read "Cub Scout Pack 23 - 1999 Pinewood Derby - Untraditional." On the contrary, one could argue that "Old Rip" is quite traditional. After all, this is Eastland, Texas, and Old Rip the horned lizard is a colorful and endearing part of Eastland's history!

The troop's den leader is John Yearv and the scout master is Dick Meade.

Quote from Jason's dad, Tim Elmore, "Let's try to keep Eastland, Texas, and Old Rip the Horned Lizard alive!"

TEXAS CHAPTER NEWS

Earth Day

Attending Earth Day (April 22,00) at the University of North Texas in Denton was a first for HLCS. It was a well-organized event with about thirty booths and informative sessions on Sound Ecology running continuously in the surrounding classrooms. HLCS was the second booth on the ground floor in a three-story atrium. Essentially we had the best seats in the house. Other prestigious organizations, such as the Native Plant Society of Texas and the Sierra Club, were on the second floor.

Bette & Jim Armstrong and I (Larry Wisdom) manned the booth. We displayed the Texas HL Life Cycle, Texas HL Species, HL Petting Zoo and the HL Critter Tester.

Coincidentally, a herpetology meeting was being held in the same building. As a result, we had some enthusiastic visitors, such as Dr. Hinckley of Littlefield, Chip Ruthven of Chaparral Wildlife Management Area, and Tiffany Russell, a new VP of the Oklahoma HLCS chapter. Ms. Russell presented a fine paper on Thermoregulation of HL. I asked her to write a summary of the publication for a future newsletter article.

Bette delighted the kids when she put on her Ole Rip outfit and posed for many pictures.

We gained 6 new members and 2 renewed members at this event and passed out literature and applications that may push this number higher. Not a bad return for a six-hour show.

Larry Wisdom



HLCS photos by Jim Armstrong

TEXAS CHAPTER NEWS

Kenedy, Texas — HL Capital of Texas

HLCS members were invited by a Kenedy resident, Carter Snooks, to speak on June 2 and 3 to an assembly of local folks at the Hercules Incident Command and Training Center. The HLCS group included national president Dr. Scott Henke and Texas members Carolyn Todd, Clare Freeman, Bill Brooks, Leigh Sanders, Bill Davis (and his very gifted daughter), Nelson Guda, and Tammy West.

Friday night, we showed slides and talked about lizard food and habitat requirements. Scott remarked that Kenedy is the Horned Lizard Capital of Texas, referring to the Mayor and City Council proclamation made the past week. Bill Brooks shared, "This is a great chance to do some real science — a great project to keep going."

After a relaxing and friendly overnight stay in Joe and Ann Lang's newly renovated bed and breakfast, Anne's Cottage, we set out to survey several lots around town. At the first site, a vacant lot owned by City Hall, we found six males and three females of various sizes and ages. Our assembled crowd of HLCS veterans and some 15 local citizens located 4 harvester ant mounds, 22 termite mounds, 10 horned lizard scats, one hatchling and 2 dead lizards.

HLCS Clare Freeman, Carolyn Fodd, and Kenedy's Carter Snooks. Photo by Bill Brooks



Next, at Fifth and Nicols near a church, we found 5 harvester ant mounds, 3 termite mounds, 9 scats, 2 male horned lizards, 2 spotted whip-tails and 2 geckos. On a small lot with a trailer on Fifth, we found 10 females in three different encrypted colors (just like assorted hair colors in humans, according to Clare).

We continued to survey different lots belonging to townspeople. The temperature began to rise and finding lizards became more difficult.

The big disappointment to the group resulted from surveying the private ranch where many of the horned lizards had been released the previous year. Under authority of our permit and with participation from Texas Parks & Wildlife Department's Andy Price and

HLCS Dr. Scott Henke, the lizards had been moved due to the construction and poisons to be used during the cottage renovation. The ranch was selected due to its proximity to the collected site. Unfortunately, the ranch owner apparently did not understand the impact of herbicides on harvester ants and the impact of devastated ant mounds on horned lizards. We found many dead ants and no evidence of horned lizards.

We began and ended our surveys at Anne's Cottage and found many lizards still living in the back yard and adjoining yards. All surveys were conducted with the local residents' participation and permission.

If you are interested in visiting these sites, plan on staying at Anne's Cottage. Email Joe and Ann Lang at

JoeandAnnLang@aol.com.

We enjoyed sharing lizard sightings with the local citizens who will continue to provide sustainable environments for our Texas state lizard. We gave encouragement to the young folks to participate in the horned lizard watch program of TPWD and we hope they consider long term studies of horned lizards in their science programs at school.



difficult to share in B/W print. Photo by Bill Brooks

- Carolyn A. Todd

(DV) tape is very small, but the quality is excellent. While recording, I have had some interesting encounters in the field. Several of the encounters have been nerve racking and probably cleared any plaque from arteries and veins that may have accumulated. Unusually close encounters of the rattlesnake kind were in high order this year.

Two large (4 to 4 1/2 foot long) and impressive Red Diamondback Rattlesnakes were encountered: their colorations and markings were artistic treasures, if you like rattlesnakes. Their heads were as large as a clenched fist. They were not aggressive or confrontational, thank goodness. But the five Southern Pacific Rattlesnakes, encountered on different occasions, were very confrontational. This thing about territory and space - which they were given without argument. The Southern Pacific Rattlesnakes were each about 3 1/2 to 4 feet in length. The attitudes of these snakes are just something else. One went into a defensive posture almost immediately and headed for the brush. I made my way around the brush and attempted to give him/her wide berth, but to no avail. My passing the bush within 6 to 8 feet was too close. according to this particular snake. In passing, the snake took a strike at me just for positive measure. Impressed? I was. Let me tell you about the adrenalin rush. Come on heart, back into normal rhythm.

I have "inchage" of habitat, behaviors, predators, and prey. I am currently taping hatchlings in the wild for the finale, and waiting for 23 eggs to hatch that were laid by one of my females that has not laid eggs for 3 or 4 years. I guess she was just waiting for that special moment. The eggs are doing well and should hatch any time.

I should have final copy available by the October conference. This DV project is part of my Masters project, "The Ecology and Behaviors of the San Diego Coast Horned Lizard, *Phrynosoma coronatum blainvillei*, of Southern California." I hope to have it on CD-ROM and on VHS tape once it is completed. Bertrand Baur has offered horned lizard footage of other species that he has encountered, so this project may branch out to cover all horned lizards species. No problem. It is definitely needed.

Other Notes

I finished a research paper that I will be submitting for publication on the San Diego Coast Horned Lizard concerning nesting and hatchling survivability. I had chance encounters with two female horned lizards nesting at two study sites last year. I monitored the temperatures of the nests using remote recording sensors and followed the hatching of the eggs from the natural nesting sites. I pit-trapped the hatchlings and excavated the nest to gather the unhatched eggs and remnant egg shells. This was a unique experience for me to observe this in the natural setting rather than in my captive study group.

One of my field study sites will probably be lost to development late this year or early next year. It is a 640+ acre site that was an active vineyard, but abandoned for about 25 years now. It is in an alluvial area and was reestablishing to a natural plant community. The population density of horned lizards was approximately 1 horned lizard per acre during my 10 years of monitoring. I guess we need more shopping centers though. I have identified the San Bernardino Kangaroo Rat on the site, and hope its recent emergency listing as "Threatened" will help to stop the loss of the area as habitat for a while longer.

I will be in Las Vegas on September 1 to make a presentation to the Southern Nevada Herp Society, to provide an update on horned lizard issues.

If any one has the chance, go to kingsnake.com and check out the horned lizard forum. There are folks there that would benefit from education about horned lizards. This cricket and mealworm diet-thing is ridiculous. Education is an ongoing effort, but you know how that goes.

Pet Trade

Roundtails from Texas are still in the pet trade, as are the Desert Horned Lizards from Nevada. I get e-mails quite often about sick horned lizards. These e-mails are from New York, New Jersey, Florida, Indiana, and other places. Some day, maybe, folks will listen. Some folks are listening and I get positive responses. And of course, there are those folks that just want to make money on animals.

Until next time, keep the horned lizards safe and educate those that need to know the facts about horned lizards.

Lester G. Milroy III, President Southern California's Chapter

Lester can be contacted at:

Les4toads@aol.com



Noah (left) and Abraham Holland, Spike and Spot, the Traveling Toads in years past.

Always ambassadors for HLCS and Horned Lizards, Abraham was selected to serve as a Student Ambassador by the People to People program. He is representing his home town of Pleasanton TX and the USA in Europe this summer.

Congratulations, Abraham!!!

4TH HORNED LIZARD SYMPOSIUM REGISTRATION FORM

Payment MUST accompany this form. Note: Please make photocopies of this form for additional registrants. ***************************** Please Print Name__ First Middle Initial Last Mailing Address_____ City State/Province Zip Country **REGISTRATION*** Early Registration - Received By September 15 _ Registrant \$145 __ Student registrant \$100 School Affiliation _____ Regular Registration - Received September 16 - October 14 ___ Everyone **∮**].65 After October 14, Please Register On Site! *Registration fee includes Symposium registration, abstract publication, two nights lodging at the American Museum facility (Thursday and Friday nights), five meals, and refreshments during the conference. PLEASE TELL US. The Chef needs to know if you prefer vegetarian fare. Please check one. __ Non-vegetarian fare ___ Vegetarian fare Please mail this form with payment to: Horned Lizard Conservation Society, P.O. Box 122, Austin, Texas 78767 Refund Policy: Registration fee (less a \$15 processing fee) will be refunded provided that a written request is received by October 1.

IMPORTANT MEMBERSHIP NOTICE

Starting in January 2000 there will be a change in the kinds of membership categories and in the way renewals are dated. Subscribing Memberships no longer will be offered. All other levels will be retained and dues at those levels will remain the same but all memberships will expire on December 31, 2000.

Dues for renewing members during 2000 will be prorated on a quarterly basis so that memberships renewed during the months of January, February and March 2000 will be due at the full rate for the category chosen; those renewed during the second quarter, April through June, will be 3/4 of the full rate; July through September dues will be 1/2 the full rate and October through December renewals will be 1/4 of the full rate.

On January 1, 2001, all memberships will be renewable at the regular rates.

New members joining in 2000 and later will pay for the full calendar year and receive a packet of all newsletters to date for that year as well as any still to be published.

We hope this will serve as an economical way to remind members when to renew. Photocopy the form if needed.

THE HORNED LIZARD CONSERVATION SOCIETY PO BOX 122 AUSTIN, TX 78767 MEMBERSHIP FORM

Name:		
Mailing Address:		
City:	State	ZIP
·	ership Category (Please of audent or Senior (65+) (\$1)	
	Regular (\$25)	
	Contributing (\$50)	_
Patron (\$100)	•	Lifetime (\$250)

Current HLCS Membership by States or Country:

Family members will be accorded separate voting privileges at all levels for an additional \$10 each. HLCS is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization. Dues and contributions are tax deductible to the extent allowed by law.

Alabama 1 Arizona 9 Arkansas 1 California 33 Colorado 5	Illinois I Iowa I Kentucky I Maryland 3 Massachusetts 2	Nevada 6 New Mexico 8 New York 3 North Carolina 2 Ohio 1	Oregon 1 South Carolina 2 Tennessee 2 Texas 211 Utah 3	Washington 2 Washington D.C. 1 Canada 1 Germany 1
Florida 2	Mississippi 1	Oklahoma 20	Virginia 1	TOTAL 325

Out and About ... Upcoming Events

August 26th - Our own Clare Freeman will show slides and talk about Horned Lizards at Austin's Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Research Center at 1 pm. This should be a good one.

September 2-4 - HLCS field trip to Matagorda Island State Park, Texas.

Last year, while booth sitting at the Texas Parks and Wildlife's Expo, we saw a very odd looking Horned Lizard at the Matagorda Island State Park exhibit. Last summer, Bill Brooks and Leigh Sanders camped at the park and intended to look for Matagorda Island Horned Toads but were chased off the island (on the last boat out) by Hurricane Bret. This field trip will be preceded by a short sea-kayaking and shelling trip on Friday, September 1 for those experienced and interested. We will have campsites on the island, but amenities are primative and it WILL BE HOT!!! We will do surveys on Saturday and Sunday mornings. We are looking into moving over to Mad Island Sunday afternoon and surveying there Monday, Labor Day, and then driving home.

IF YOU WANT TO GO on this Matagorda Island trip, you must make your own Ferry Reservations at (361) 983-2215.

There are NO roads to the island and you cannot take your car to the island! The ferry leaves Port O'Conner at 9am on Friday and returns at 4pm. On Saturday and Sunday there are departures at 8am, 10am and 3pm with returns at 9am, 2pm and 4pm. Arrive at least 30 minutes before your scheduled departure time for the 45-50 minute ferry trip. Bring your own water, food, hats, camping gear, insect spray, sunblock, and water!

For more info, contact Bill Brooks at (512) 581-0377 or by e-mail at Brooks@psyvax.psy.utexas.edu.

September 16 (Saturday) - We will be booth sitting at Eastland's Old Rip Festival. If you haven't visited the home of Old Rip, you should. The contacts for this trip are Bette and Jim Armstrong. You can e-mail them at Jimbett@eastland.net or call (254) 629-3976. You really need to see their new statue. It's now the largest horned lizard statue in Texas.

September 23 (Saturday) - A new festival for HLCS to booth-sit will be the Lonesome Dove Festival in Kenedy, Texas. Kenedy proclaimed itself the "Horned Lizard Capital of Texas." According to our recent surveys down there, they just might be right. Lots of horned lizards living in the city! It was great. Contact is Bill Brooks (512) 581-0377 or e-mail Brooks@psyvax.psy.utexas.edu.

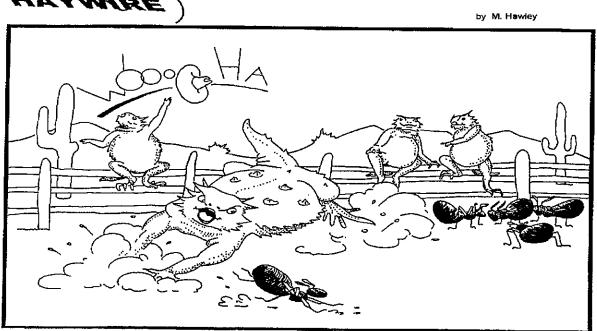
October 7 & 8 - We will booth-sit again at the Texas Parks and Wildlife's EXPO. This is a great event! For more information, contact Carolyn Todd at (512) 868-0811 or e-mail ctodd@mail.utexas.edu.

and last but not least,

October 20-21 - HLCS National Convention at Portal, AZ.

There will be more information on this as it draws closer. Contact Dr. Scott Henke at (512) 593-3689 or scott.henke@tamuk.edu.

This looks to be an exciting four months!



THE ANT CUTTING FINALS



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PLEASE JOIN US NOW! Students/Seniors 65+: \$10, Regular: \$25, Contributing: \$50, Patron: \$100, Lifetime: \$250

(Families=\$25 for the first person and \$10 for each additional member).

HLCS is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. Contributions are deductible to the extent allowable by law.

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