

For the Love of a Horned Lizard

by Gary Lantz

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Texas horned lizards were once so common that in the 1950s a small West Texas gas station paid local kids a nickel for each reptile they collected, and then gave one to each customer who bought a full tank of gas. On dusty farms and ranches and in ramshackle oil-field camps in parts of the Great Plains, children played with the six-inch lizards – once numbering in the thousands – as if they were backyard pets. Some residents remember hitching the reptiles to toy Matchbox wagons with harnesses of thread. One woman even recalls sewing dresses for them. Times have changed.

Today, with the species' numbers dwindling, nostalgic residents of Oklahoma and Texas are teaming with wildlife biologists to save the lizards before they disappear from the wild. "Although we can't quote exact numbers, most biologists agree there has been a steady decline of Texas horned lizard numbers over the past 20 years," says Jeremy Garrett of the Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation. He blames the reptiles' decline on destruction of habitat, collisions with vehicles, predation by

house cats, illegal collection for the pet trade, and use of insecticides that exterminate the lizards' prey.

In Texas, horned lizards have disappeared from at least 30 percent of their historic range, mostly in the central and eastern portions, according to state biologists. The state listed the species as threatened in 1977, and both Texas and Oklahoma now prohibit collection. Yet the species still shows up in pet stores as far away as New Jersey.

The Texas horned lizard, one of 14 similar species from southern Canada to Central America, live primarily in the deserts and plains of Kansas, New Mexico, Oklahoma, and Texas. To survive each lizard needs some six acres with enough vegetation to escape predators and find shade on sweltering summer afternoons. The creatures spend winter months hibernating beneath rocks and woodpiles or in burrows.

Known also as "horny toads," the lizards are named for their prominent horns. But their most fascinating feature is their ability to eject a stream

of blood from their eyes as far as seven feet when threatened. The creatures also hiss, bite, and inflate into a spiny, unpalatable-looking reptilian pincushion to deter predators such as bobcats, owls, roadrunners, and snakes.

When not on the defensive, the reptiles sunbathe or use their sticky tongues to slurp up as many as 200 harvester ants a day. Mature horned lizards are resistant to the ants' venom (which causes a fiery sting in humans), but they are not immune to the effects of South American fire ants, accidentally introduced early last century. Not only do the lizards not eat the invading ants, but these ants attack the less pugnacious harvester ants, decimating the lizards' main food source. Insecticides used to control the fire ant plague further destroy the harvester ant population.

To help the reptiles survive, a group of Texans formed the Texas Chapter of the Horned Lizard Conservation Society in 1990. Its projects include urging homeowners to stop spraying pesticides on harvester ant mounds and working with the Texas Parks and

new! National Board of Directors

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For the love of a horned lizard *continued from page 1*

Wildlife Department's lizard watch program to encourage citizen participation in an ongoing state horned lizard census.

Near Laredo, researchers from Texas A&M University-Kingsville are also trying to learn more about the lizards by fitting them with hand-sewn backpacks containing dime-sized radio transmitters that track movements, sleep habits, and hibernation. And in central Oklahoma, Oklahoma State University graduate students are following the footprints of 40 horned lizards using fluorescent powder and a portable ultraviolet lamp to determine home ranges. Similar to Texas, Oklahoma's state wildlife department also asks citizens to report lizard sightings on its Web site or by calling its horny toad hotline. "We're starting to develop a decent distribution map simply from the reports we've gathered," Garrett says.

Bill Brooks, president of the Texas Chapter, says his group continues to get dozens of calls and letters every month concerning the reptile's plight. "We're tempted to say the horned lizard is making a slight comeback," says Brooks. "We continue to get new sightings, and we can only hope this is due to actual population growth rather than increased interest. But at the moment, it's a call that remains too close to make."

*Oklahoma writer Gary Lantz
has fond memories of growing up in the heart of
horned lizard territory.*

Editor's Note— Although Horned Lizards are protected in Texas as non-game species (collecting requires a permit), not all Horned Lizards are protected by the Endangered Species Act. The Roundtailed Horned Lizards have not been designated as Threatened.

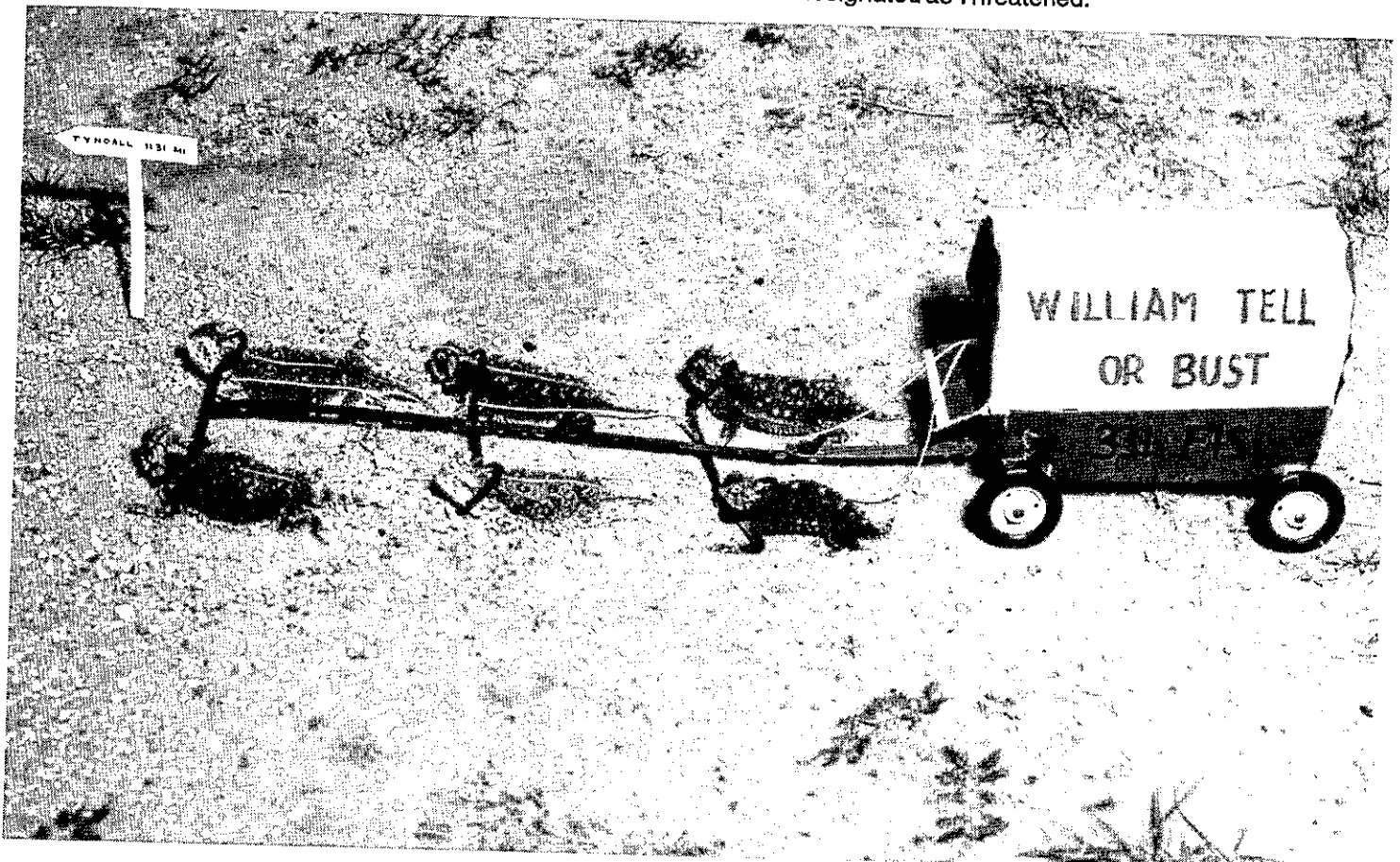


Photo submitted by Bill Davis

Air Force Photo— ca 1965— taken at Webb Air Force Base in Big Spring, Texas. The 331st was the F104 Starfighter squadron, which was competing with other squadrons across the country in the "William Tell" meet.

HLCS' own Bill Davis, whose father was a fighter pilot in the 331st at the time, reports "You have to remember that at the time there were horned toads EVERYWHERE and West Texas was "all dust and dirt" anyway. No one knew how delicate their life cycle is. Living there is why I joined the society years later."

OKLAHOMA CHAPTER NEWS

ROUNDTAIL HL SURVEY

The Oklahoma Chapter plans to conduct a small survey for the roundtail horned lizard in the Oklahoma Panhandle during the summer of 2002. The species is of special concern in Oklahoma and an isolated roundtailed horned lizard population was documented to occur in the Panhandle in the past. This survey will provide the current status of this population.

TEXAS HL STATUS SURVEY

The Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation has prepared a proposal for a new statewide status survey and assessment of Texas horned lizard populations in Oklahoma. Should the project be funded, the Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation has asked if HLCS could help with the survey.

Oklahoma Chapter Elections

The Oklahoma chapter of the HLCS is currently seeking and accepting nominations for officers. The elected officers define the responsibilities of each office following the election.

Members of the HLCS that live in the state of Oklahoma and are interested in becoming an officer, or nominating someone else for an office, please contact

Richard Stark at
StarkkRV@prodigy.net.

or

Richard Stark, President
1820 Lexington Road
Claremore, OK 74017

HLCS members in OK

Now is the time to step forward
on behalf of
your HLCS chapter.

This is an excellent opportunity
for parents to involve their families,
university, high school, and other
students and lovers of HLs
to step up
and get involved...

Ph.D. GRADUATE RESEARCH FELLOWSHIP

I seek to fill a graduate research fellowship with a student having a M.S. in zoology, biology, wildlife ecology, conservation biology, or related field to study ecological relationships between the Texas horned lizard and prescribed burning.

Work will include telemetry of horned lizards, sampling of vegetation and ants, and GIS; and is part of a long-term project on horned lizard ecology.

Qualifications: independent but able to work well in a team setting, ability to work in inhospitable climatic conditions, great work ethic, minimum of 1100 (verbal + quantitative) GRE score.

Graduate stipend is \$1,100/mo (MS)
with nonresident tuition waiver and health insurance.
Superior academic credentials may warrant consideration for
in-state tuition waiver as well. Starting date: 1 May 2002.

Submit letter of interest, resume, copies of GRE scores,
transcripts and names and phone numbers of 3 references by
15 January 2002 to:

Dr. Eric C. Hellgren,
Department of Zoology, Oklahoma State University
Stillwater, OK 74078

405-744-9671 (phone); 405-744-7824 (fax)
E-mail: ehellgr@okstate.edu E-mail applications are accepted.

Please Renew your annual HLCS membership!

HLCS depends on its membership for its conservation and educational presence in the community.

Categories for annual memberships include:

\$25 Regular
\$10 Student or Senior
\$25 Family + \$10 Additional Member
\$50 Contributing
\$250 Corporate
or
\$300 for a Lifetime membership.

The HLCS welcomes contributions in any amount you wish to submit and is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization.

HLCS Website Renovated!

by Wendy L. Hodges

Attentive readers noticed in the last issue of *Phrynosomatics* (page 2) the “New!” next to the HLCS website address.

A formal announcement was sent to HLCS members enrolled on the HLCS email list, and with membership renewal forms mailed by Bette Armstrong. I would like to invite everyone to look at our new electronic home at

<http://www.hornedlizards.org>

and send me any comments you want (email to phrynosoma@hornedlizards.org).

The site is best viewed by the most recent web browsers.

To join the HLCS spontaneous email list—
and receive breaking-news about horned lizards or upcoming events with short lead times—
send your email address to Bill Brooks at

brooks@psyvax.psy.utexas.edu.

The website incorporates the best of our previous website, articles from our newsletters and brochures, and information about the society. You can even pay your membership dues online. Payments can be made by credit card or electronic funds transfer through a secure connection via PayPal.com. Or, you can fill out your membership form, print it, and mail it along with your check if you prefer. Contact information for Officers and Chapters are available on the site. The future is bright for our website and we hope to add other great things to it in the future. Watch for new images of horned lizards and interactive sighting reports and maps.

Several people made this website a reality, and I thank them very much.

The membership forms and online payment method were set up by HLCS volunteer, **Kevin Barber**. Kevin lives near Dallas, Texas, where he works as a graphic designer and web developer. His folks live in Rockdale, Texas, where they are very lucky to still have horned lizards.

The design of our site was created by **Liz Osting** of Austin, Texas. Liz teaches art to elementary children in the Austin Independent School District. She grew up near Del Rio, Texas, where her parents still live and also have horned lizards on their property.

Programming and site implementation was done by **Scott Messec**, the manager for computing services in the Aerospace Engineering and Engineering Mechanics Department at the University of Texas at Austin. Scott grew up in Houston, Texas, where his parents live, but no longer see horned lizards.

Pam Allison sent me electronic versions of the last several years of *Phrynosomatics*. That information along with older HLCS newsletters formed the basis of the written material. Pam is the HLCS newsletter editor and lives in Amarillo, Texas. [Editor's note: There are still horned lizards on the High Plains of West Texas, too; however, the numbers are not what they were 40 years ago—even where the habitat seems adequate or suitable.]

If you have time, skills, or materials you would like to contribute to the website, I would love to hear from you!



FWS Reinstates 1993 Proposed Listing of the Flat-tailed Horned Lizard

by Wendy L. Hodges

On 26 December 2001, the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) published a notice in the Federal Register (Vol. 66, No. 247, pp. 66384-66385) that it was reinstating the 1993 proposed listing of the flat-tailed horned lizard.

The FWS had withdrawn this proposal on 15 July 1997 and decided not to list the species as federally threatened. After two court decisions, however, this withdrawal was invalidated. The courts remanded the listing decision back to the FWS along with specific legal standards by which it must reconsider whether or not to list the species. The FWS now has 12 months from 26 December 2001 within which to issue its next listing decision.

Along with reinstating the proposed listing, FWS has reopened the public comment period for 120 days. Their purpose for reopening the comment period is to obtain information concerning the current status, ecology, distribution, threats to, and any management and conservation efforts currently in place for the species.

FWS specifically seeks information that has become available since 9 June 1997 – the date of the last public comment period – that includes:

1. threats to the species as a whole or to local populations,
2. the size, number, and/or distribution of known populations,
3. sufficiency of current conservation/management and/or regulatory mechanisms for the flat-tailed horned lizard, and
4. the conservation value of different populations across the range of the species.

The FWS will accept comments through the close of the business day 25 April 2002. It will accept requests for a public hearing up to 11 February 2002.

Comments can be mailed or hand delivered to FWS at
Field Supervisor, Carlsbad Fish and Wildlife Office
U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service
2730 Loker Avenue West
Carlsbad, CA, 92008

or electronically to — ftlh@r1.fws.gov.

**Additional information about the listing reinstatement is available from the Federal Register:
http://www.access.gpo.gov/su_docs/aces/aces140.html**

With sadness...

William G. Brooks, Sr --
HLCS member and father of
HLCS President Bill Brooks --
died May 1, 2001
in San Antonio, following
surgery.

Jim Pilant
longtime HLCS member and
supporter, died in San Antonio.
Heartfelt thoughts for his wife,
Nedra.

*Our thoughts are with these
friends and their families.*

WELCOME, new life member,

Diane M. Dycus!

ANSWERS to Crossword Puzzle, page 14.

- | | |
|--------------------|----------------|
| 14. Harvester Ants | 7. Watch |
| 13. Hot | 6. Tongue |
| 12. Nests | 5. Sticky |
| 11. Reptiles | 4. Eggs |
| 10. Fire | 3. Insects |
| 9. Tail | 2. Chameleon |
| 8. Blood | 1. Horned Toad |

RECENT PUBLICATIONS OF RESEARCH RESULTS

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- Manley, D. G. and W. C. Sherbrooke. 2001. Predation on velvet ants (Hymenoptera: Mutillidae) by Texas Horned Lizards (*Phrynosoma cornutum*). The Southwestern Naturalist 46(2):221-222.
- Middendorf III, G. A., W. C. Sherbrooke, and E. J. Braun. 2001. Comparison of blood squirted from the circumorbital sinus and systemic blood in a horned lizard, *Phrynosoma cornutum*. The Southwestern Naturalist 46(3):384-387.
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- Suarez Andrew V., Jon Q. Richmond, and Ted Case. 2000. Prey selection in horned lizards following the invasion of Argentine ants in southern California. Ecological Applications. 10(3):711-725.
- Zamudio, K. R. and G. Parra-Olea. 2000. Reproductive Mode and Female Reproductive Cycles of Two Endemic Mexican Horned Lizards (*Phrynosoma taurus* and *Phrynosoma braconieri*). Copeia. 1:222-229.

HLCS Letters from members...

August 20, 2001

Dear Friends,

I need to tell you a personal story about myself and the horned lizard. My former husband and I were living in Kentucky in 1962 when we decided to visit his mother in Fort Worth.

We caught and returned home with that beloved little critter (horned lizard). My husband was soon stationed at a Nike Missile Base in Wilmington, Ohio, and I was teaching 4th grade.

We kept "Horny" in an aquarium in sand (about 3 inches). He/she had a little water cup and we fed him/her the proper refrigerated worms at the designated times (that I think were a.m. and p.m.). When we were home in the p.m., Horny was free to explore the living room under supervision and on Saturday morning and Sunday we would take her into the yard to seek and explore with a little string of red around her neck so that we could track her. In the evening she would bury her little self in the sand beginning with her head and moving the sand eventually covering the body and finally with a tiny flip of the tail would be covered with sand for the night.

Morning time we would see her little horns first appear and then her eyes. A worm would bring the rest of her out of the sand. Winter came and we would cover her after she disappeared in the sand with layers of newspaper. One morning we removed the newspaper to find little horns and eyes above the sand with no life. We cried for that little being and wondered what we did that was wrong.

I shall never forget that little one so loved by me.

S.W.H.

Note from HLCS President

Some of our older members (ahem), of which I have to include myself, tried to keep horned lizards as pets before the laws forbade it. Far too often, the results were the same as in the story above. Horned Lizards are DIFFICULT to keep as pets. They should be left in the wild except for a very few that are in the hands of well-qualified individuals that keep them in captivity for research purposes.

It breaks my heart to see horned lizards in a pet store. States of New Mexico and Nevada still allow horned lizards to be collected from the wild and sold within and out of state. This should be stopped! In Texas, only two of the three species native to Texas are protected: the Texas Horned Lizard and the Short-Horned Lizard. The Roundtail Horned Lizard has no legal protection in Texas (other than that a permit is required by the collector).

If you are so inclined, please write the legislators of these states and ask them to change the laws so that horned lizards are protected – all species of horned lizards. We should outlaw all sales of horned lizards regardless of where they came from or where they are going.

Thank you!

Bill Brooks



In and Around Texas...

Bill Wood

Long Time Member of HLCS Honored at Old Rip Fest

Bill Wood of Abilene, TX, grandson of E.E. Wood and son of Will Wood, whose horned toad "Blinky" was put in the cornerstone of the courthouse in 1897, was honored this year at the OLD RIP Fest in Eastland.

The honor was bestowed by Eastland's State Representative Jim Keffer, along with Honorable Judge Brad Stephenson and Retired Judge Scott Bailey.

Mr. Wood proudly accepted his recognition by the reading of the Proclamation. We are proud of you, Bill.

— story by Bette Armstrong



Bill Wood and a few of his supporting fans – Eastland, Texas, 2001. Photo by Jim Armstrong.

HOMETOWN HORNED TOADS

A historical essay contest featuring Texas' favorite reptile

They are the stuff legends are made of. Kids have kept them in shoeboxes on the back porch, stuffing them full of big red ants. They've traveled across the country by the boxload to Boy Scout jamborees. Purple and white ones adorn football pennants. One especially famous individual reportedly spent three decades in the cornerstone of the Eastland county courthouse.

People have loved telling stories about their beloved horny toads. Now, Texas Parks and Wildlife wants to hear those stories and more in a historical essay contest called

Hometown Horned Toads.

Many Texans can recount fond memories of our official state reptile, the Texas horned lizard (not actually a toad), but many of these same Texans have noted that horned lizards have become increasingly rare over the last 30 years. The goal of *Hometown Horned Toads* is for students to document Texas horned lizard abundances, characteristics, and habitats in their communities and counties over time by recording personal experiences and oral histories.

***The emphasis
is on recording local knowledge
and accessing local public
records.***

Students will compete in three age groups. Grades 3-5 will submit a paper not exceeding 300 words in length. Grades 6-8 will submit a paper not exceeding 500 words in length. Grades 9-12 will submit a typewritten paper not exceeding 1000 words in

length. Deadline for submission is March 1, 2002. Submissions will be judged by participating organizations, including Texas Parks and Wildlife's Wildlife Diversity Branch, Texas Historical Society, Texas Agricultural Extension Service, Texas Herpetological Society, and the Horned Lizard Conservation Society.

Winners will be announced and prizes awarded by May 15, 2002.

Beginning in fall 2001, students should conduct interviews of local residents and research local historical reports such as newspaper articles, crop records, aerial photographs, etc. Students should explore the abundance of Texas horned lizards past and present, habitats used by Texas horned lizards, changes in habitat in the local community over time, and unusual experiences people have had with horned lizards.

In counties where Texas horned lizards have declined, the overall goal should be to document when and perhaps why horny toads disappeared. Prizes will be awarded based on a combination of several criteria, including thoroughness of investigation, number of people interviewed, number of local written sources accessed, and quality of the presentation, including historical perspectives, scientific analysis, neatness, and creativity.

Texas Parks and Wildlife biologists will compile results of the students' research and analyze trends in horned lizard decline, along with changes in the species' habitat. The recollections of Texas residents may provide the

key to helping the species recover, according to Lee Ann Linam, coordinator of TPW's Texas Horned Lizard Watch. "We believe that people's memories are a valuable collection of knowledge about this popular species. We hope that this essay contest can help to capture that knowledge before it is lost forever. These viewpoints may help us to develop better conservation approaches."

The essay contest will also offer personal rewards to its participants, says Linam. "For older Texans, Hometown Horned Toads may offer a chance to remember — to recall long summer days filled with lemonade stands, swimming in creeks, and horned lizards on string leashes.

For another generation, the students, perhaps it offers a chance to connect with a Texas legend and the people who knew it best."

For more information about Hometown Horned Toads essay contest or to receive a set of participant guidelines, visit

<http://www.tpwd.state.tx.us/nature/education/tracker>

or call
512-912-7011.

Prepared by:

*Lee Ann Linam
Texas Parks & Wildlife
Wildlife Diversity Program*

HOMETOWN HORNED TOADS – *additional requests and details*

WANTED: Your stories and your help!

Even if you're not in grades 3-12 anymore, we'd be interested in hearing your recollections and perspectives about horned lizards over time in your community.

Feel free to email me at: **lalinam@wimberley-tx.com**

In addition, we need volunteers to help read and judge the student entries. If you are willing to help, please drop me an email to the address above (send your address and phone number) or provide the information outlined below.

We'll judge the essays in batches of 10-12,
so that no one will be overwhelmed!

Name: _____

Phone: _____

Address: _____

Email: _____

PARTICIPANTS

Students will compete in three age groups.

Grades 3-5 will submit a paper not to exceed 300 words in length.

Grades 6-8 will submit a paper not to exceed 500 words in length.

Grades 9-12 will submit a type-written paper not to exceed 1000 words in length.

**Deadline
for submission
is
March 1, 2002.**

A Report about Horned Lizards by Scout Butcher

Bette Armstrong received this story from a 95-year old friend. Scout – 8 years old and in the 3rd grade – is the great, great nephew of her friend.

Horned toads live in western North America. There are eight kinds of horned toads that live in the U.S. Six kinds are found in Mexico. But, the truth is, they are not horned toads. They are really horned lizards.

Humans and horned toads have shared company for thousands of years. This relationship is recorded in the pottery of Anasazi, Hohokam, Moyoibo and Mimbres cultures.

A Mexican common name for horned toads is "*torito de la virgin*" or the virgin's little bull. This name was given to the horned toads because of their horns and because horned toads are sacred to many people due to their blood squirting behavior. Some say they have "tears of blood."

Horned toad species are distinct and easy to separate from each other. I have put a photocopy in of many species of

toad. [Note: the original report contained the photo, which is not included here.]

Horned toads are insectivores and are iguana-like lizards. They have horny spines on their heads and a flat body covered with spiny scales. They live in burrows in the ground. These creatures are not poisonous and are possible to be held by humans.

My family has had an experience with horned toads.

One day my great, great aunt was working in a drug store in Eastland, Texas. They were tearing the courthouse down and when they opened the cornerstone there was a horned toad alive inside! "Old Rip" had been sleeping for thirty-one years! My Aunt fed him red ants. After thirty-one years he was pretty hungry. After that he was famous. Met the President of the U.S.



OLD RIP FEST 2001 – Eastland, Texas

Horny Toads, Horned Toads, and Horned Lizards!

by Bette Armstrong

Eastland, home of the most famous Horned Toad in Texas, was again honored to hold its Old Rip Fest September 15.

It all began at 8 am with the Old Rip 5K run. A group of runners gathered for this event, two of which were HLCS members, Wendy Hodges and Scott Messac from Austin. Both Wendy and Scott won 1st place in their divisions.

The HLCS booth was set up and included Larry Wisdom's unique Horned Lizard replica display. Everyone is always amazed at this exhibit. A unique 32-inch metal sculpture by Larry Gross added to the booth – along with his and his wife Barbara's presence. However, an added educational attraction for the booth this year was *alive* – six 10-week old and one adult horned lizards.

The Old Rip parade was the big event and began at 10 am. Larry Gross' metal sculpture was displayed on the Old Rip float titled "Best Friends", along with passengers Clare Zoellick, Lindsay Riffle, and Old Rip. Several of Bette Armstrong's textile creations – stuffed horny toads – also paid homage to Old Rip. At age 5, Clare Zoellick is the youngest Lifetime Member of the HLCS.

At 1 pm the crowd started to gather at the Horned Toad Derby track. Yes, we had horny toad races! Well, not with live horned toads, but remote-controlled cars with horny toad designs on them. Unique entries in the derby by Johnathon Wilson, Joshua Mey, and Bette Armstrong endured the race. Each won his or her own division and received a trophy. Johnathon Wilson earned the Grand Champion title.

But let's not forget the true meaning of the annual Old Rip festival. After all, Old Rip lived in the cornerstone for 31 years and came out alive on February 18, 1928. We honor you, Old Rip.

This year, however, a new Little Rip attended the festival. His name is Forrest John Wayne and is the grandson of Jim and Bette Armstrong (Bette aka Old Rip in costume). What a treat he was for his family and for the festival. Forrest John made his debut along with the horned lizards on display at the HLCS booth.

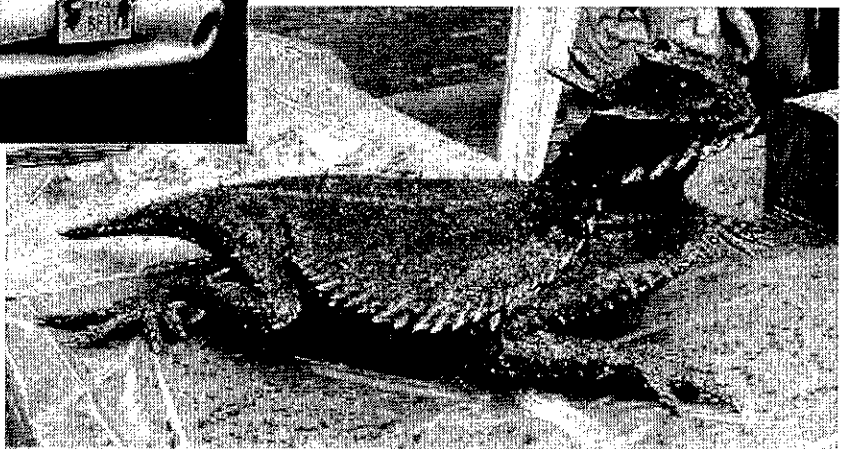
It will be a day to remember for all that attended the Old Rip Fest this year.



Best Friends Parade – exactly how many HL can you find in this picture?

Photos

by Jim Armstrong



Larry Gross' HL sculpture on display at Eastland.



Could this be Bette's Forrest John?

Eastland's Old Rip Festival

by Wendy L. Hodges

Every third Saturday in September, Eastland, Texas, holds its annual hometown party, the Old Rip Festival. I went a few years ago, but haven't been able to return until this year. This year, I was excited to start the day off running the "5K Rip Roaring Run-Walk." During the race, Bette and Jim Armstrong and Leigh Sanders had been trying to set up our booth, but the weather was being a bit ornery. Jim picked up some clear plastic to cover the displays and we were ready for the visitors. The parade started at 10 am and afterwards, we had a steady stream of people stopping by to talk "loads" with us.

Leigh Sanders, who has been keeping our captive horned lizards this summer, brought a few along at Bette's request. News of live lizards spread throughout town and we had people flock to the tables to see the live ones – some out of admiration, some out of awe, others out of terror! Reptiles bring out some strange human qualities, and horned lizards are no different, except that, generally, people like these lizards far more than any other reptile. We had many brave kids summon up the courage to touch the horned lizard. Once they did, they were

hooked and we saw them several times throughout the day coming back to show Mom and Dad or to satisfy some internal pleasure at seeing and touching these wonderful lizards. As a booth sitter, it's quite a joy to see the lights turn on inside these kids as they experience something new and something that they previously would never have done (touch scaly animals - no way!).

In addition to reaching out to kids, we also gathered a lot of reports of personal sightings of horned lizards in the Eastland area. Eastland is in that zone – the area of Texas where the lizards are disappearing, the front lines, so-to-speak. The residents and their sightings were indicative of this. We had some people who told us they see them all the time on their property, and other people said they hadn't seen one in years. It was great to hear so many people tell us where they were seeing horned lizards; some places were definitely hot spots that we heard about over and over again.

I hope our presence at the Festival helped Eastlanders realize how fortunate they are to have horned lizards in their area and what they can do to keep it that way. Many people did not know about state laws regarding horned lizards, and we had many people ask if they could buy one of ours! It still surprises me in a state where laws protecting horned lizards have existed since 1967, people still don't know that it is illegal to sell horned lizards as pets or to even pick them up and keep them in their homes.

Now a few more Texans know the laws.

We would like to thank
Bette's Bits, Inc.
and
**The Eastland
Bed & Breakfast**
for sponsoring
the two spaces for our
booth.



Wendy and Bette share the wonder of a live Texas horned lizard with Bette's grandson, Forrest John. A lifelong love for horned lizards is inevitable.

Quest for research and knowledge

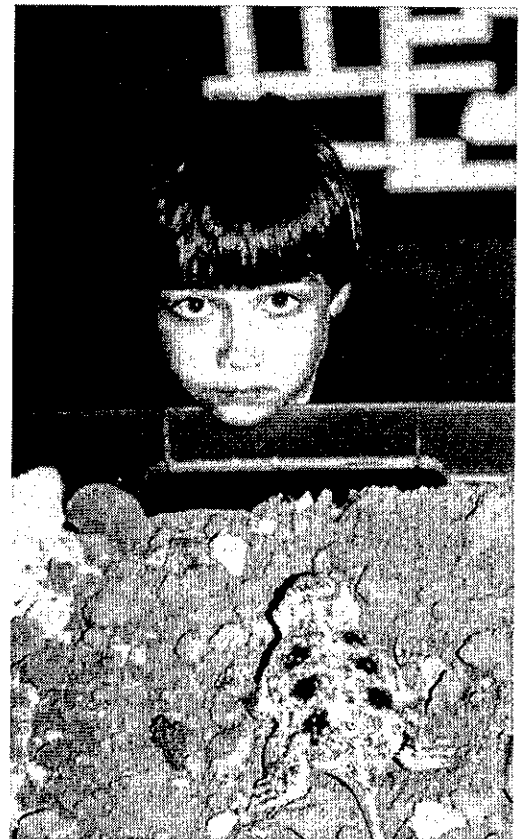
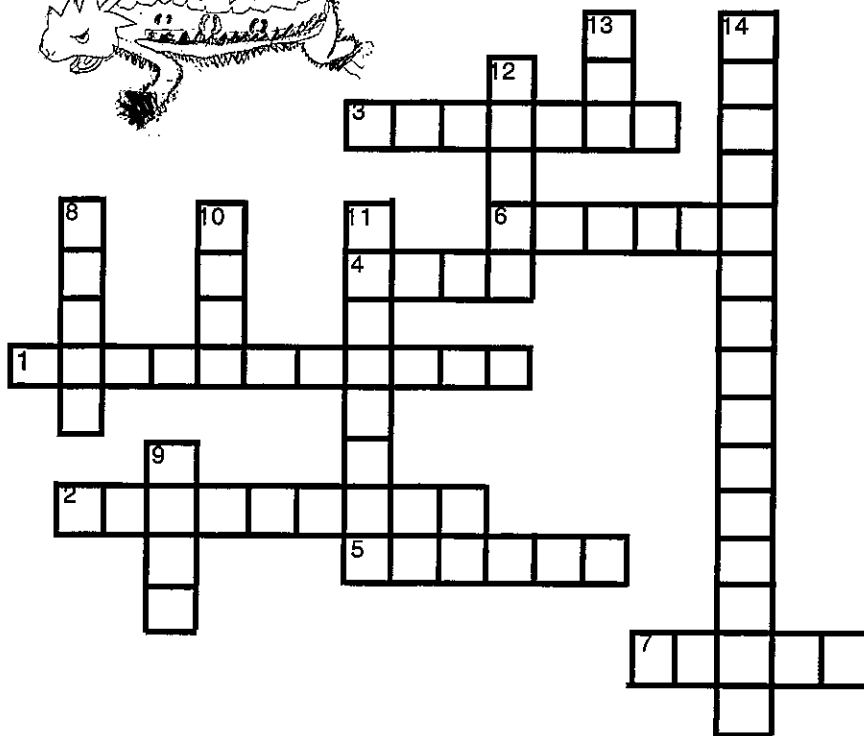
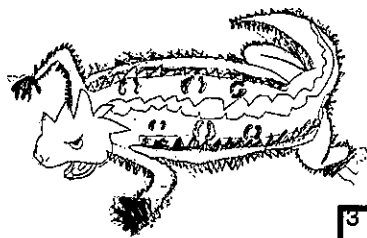
On April 23, 2001, David Smith gave a short presentation about chameleons and horned lizards. His presentation – part of the Quality Utilization and Enrichment of Student Talents (QUEST) program – included a computer slide show, 3-dimensional sculptures, a crossword puzzle, graphs, surveys, and information from the HLCS web-site. David, with encouragement and assistance from his mother, Silvia Nikolaeva, had also hand-painted 22 ceramic 3-inch chameleons and horned lizards to give to his classmates.

David, 7 years old, is in the second grade class at Cedar Park Montessori School in Cedar Park, Texas.

His conclusion – following his research – was that whether you call horned lizards THREATENED, ENDANGERED, or not, the problem remains the same: *Horned Lizards are in trouble and need our help.*

A CROSSWORD PUZZLE

by David Smith



David accompanied by one of his 3-D models

HORIZONTAL

1. The state Reptile of Texas is _____.
2. A lizard that changes its body colors is a _____.
3. Both horned toads and chameleons are carnivores and eat _____.
4. Both horned toads and chameleons lay _____.
5. The chameleon's tongue is _____.
6. This body part of the chameleon can be longer than its whole body length: _____.
7. When approached by people, horned toads freeze and just _____.

VERTICAL

8. When in danger, horned toads shoot _____ out of their eyes.
9. This chameleon body part is curled: _____.
10. These _____ ants are horned toads enemy.
11. Both horned toads and chameleons are _____.
12. Both horned toads and chameleons lay and cover their eggs in _____.
13. Both horned toads and chameleons like this kind of weather rather than cold: _____.
14. Horned toads' favorite food is _____.

Answers to David's crossword puzzle are on page 6.

Phrynosoma mcallii – please note correction

Due to a typographical error, the scientific name for the flat-tailed horned lizard was incorrectly reported in "A Horned Lizard by any other name" in the previous issue of *Phrynosomatics* (Vol. 6, Issue 2). The editor of *Phrynosomatics* would like to apologize for the error and any confusion it may have caused. It seems that advancements in technology have yet to overcome typographical errors.

Conclusions and spellings of the other two horned lizard species, *P. douglasii* and *P. hernandesii*, were correct.

For interested readers, the following articles clarify the zoological nomenclature for the flat-tailed horned lizard.

Funk, Richard S. 1981. *Phrynosoma mcallii* (Hallowell): Flat-tailed horned lizard. Catalogue of American Amphibians and Reptiles. pp. 281.1-281.2.

International Commission of Zoological Nomenclature. 1999. International Code of Zoological Nomenclature, Fourth Edition. The International Trust for Zoological Nomenclature, London.

GRADUATE'S HONORS

by Sandra G. Holland

Annette Funicello says that she owes her acting career to "those ears" (the ears on the hat from The Mickey Mouse Club TV show that she was in). Although not as famous as Ms. Funicello, Abraham Holland owes his successes to the horny toad.

If it wasn't for his early work for this reptile, Abraham and his family would not have had the experience to continue with other volunteer work later. After leading the Texas horned lizard (*P. cornutum*) to the Texas legislature as the official State Reptile in 1993 at age ten, Abraham and his younger brother became Spike and Spot, The Traveling Toads. They wore costumes for 3 ½ years at schools, clubs, museums, and other venues, such as the Old Rip Festival in Eastland.

For this, local people began calling Abraham "the horny toad boy". They greeted him not with "hello" but "Seen any horny toads lately?" Sometimes they still do.

On June 16, 2001, Abraham graduated from home school, which he and his brother named Horned Toad Academy. His brother Noah graduates in 2003.

Abraham was vice president of his 4-H club and his project placed in State competition three times (once in Wildlife). On the day that he graduated, he became an Eagle Scout. His project was organizing a team to collect toys for a children's hospital.

He has volunteered with the Red Cross, the San Antonio Zoo, the Humane Shelter, Habitat for Humanity, museums, nursing homes, the public library, the San Antonio Botanical

Gardens, and is active in church work. He studies French, German, and Italian. He is a member of the World Affairs Council of San Antonio, Christopher Columbus Italian Society, U.S. Fencing Coaches Association, and South Texas Artist-Blacksmith Association, among others. He is an apprentice blacksmith, plays the fretted mountain dulcimer, and passionately follows current events, especially foreign affairs. He has had several jobs, mostly as a lifeguard. Abraham attended Presidential Classroom in Washington D.C., was a Delegate to the State YMCA Youth & Government Conference, and a People to People Student Ambassador to Europe. He was always required to do chores at home.

Abraham has been awarded scholarships from Kids Hall of Fame, President's Student Service Challenge (with matching funds from Adept Construction, Bert Williams Insurance, Mark Hanna CPA, Brush Country Republican Women's Club), Westside Ministerial Alliance and Jouranton Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 4853.

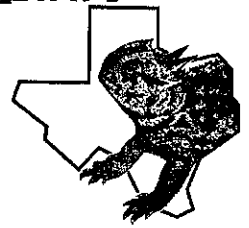
Abraham entered the University of Texas at San Antonio this past fall, majoring in Anthropology.

Because of the experiences of the contact with the public and the media and the ability to learn while doing, Abraham and the rest of his family found later activities to be easier. Certainly some of the awards were due to his horned lizard work being on his resume.

Thank you to the members of the Horned Lizard Conservation Society for early encouragement of Abraham. This meant a lot. He will always be a "horny toad boy".

TEXAS PARKS AND WILDLIFE'S EXPO 2001

by Bill Brooks



With Special Thanks to Larry Wisdom and Bette Armstrong
for Above-and-Beyond the Call of Duty

Seventeen thousand (17,000) people walked through the gates of the Wildlife Expo on Saturday October 6th, 2001. The following day, Sunday, I believe that even more people visited this huge wildlife show. This has been our biggest public out-reach program of the year. We were out in force with Larry Wisdom's exhibits, flyers, kids' games, and our horned lizards goods to sell. Larry came prepared with red, white and blue "patriotic" horned lizard pins for every booth-sitter.



Old Rip and (prey) harvester ant pose at the TPW sign.

With help from two Texas Parks and Wildlife employees, Lee Anne Linam and Maria Araujo, we enjoyed twice as much booth space in the international tent this year. Thank you, Lee Anne and Maria! We filled our booth!

Larry Wisdom unveiled new exhibits along side of ones he had created in the past. As always – and as anyone that has ever seen Larry's exhibits would know – these were real show stoppers and received many compliments, not to mention the "ooohs" and "ahhhs".

Even Old Rip dropped by the booth for awhile on Saturday. The rest of us were kept busy handing out information, selling t-shirts and jewelry,

and talking to visitors. Larry Wisdom even gave away one of his wonderful painted Texas Horned Lizard models in a display case, as a membership incentive, to a lucky new member signing up during the Expo. We picked up 9 new members during the weekend and new member, Florence Wong, won this wonderful prize.

We also made over \$600 in sales for the Texas Chapter.

Saturday night Larry, Jim, Bette, Ruth, Clare, and I attended the barbecue sponsored by Texas Parks and Wildlife for the participants of Expo. It was quite nice even though we didn't win anything at the raffle. Bette donated one of her big fabric horned lizards for the raffle and it was displayed on stage for all to see. Thank you, Bette.

Many thanks for the members who worked the booth on this long weekend. It was appreciated.

Saturday's crew: Bette and Jim Armstrong, Bill Brooks, Clare Freeman, Ruth Lewis (Jim's sister and new member), and Larry Wisdom.

Sunday's Crew: Bill Brooks, Bill Davis, Clare Freeman, Wendy Hodges, Scott Messec (new life member), and Larry Wisdom.

Photos by Jim Armstrong



Bette Armstrong (aka Old Rip) and Texas Parks & Wildlife employee Maria Araujo

HLCS Board of Directors Meeting

On September 1, 2001, I called a special meeting of the National Board of Directors of the HLCS. Although there were no pressing issues for the board, it seemed important because Cheryl Franks, the new Texas Chapter Treasurer, and Roger Repp, the new National Treasurer, will now fill the shoes of Clare Freeman. Clare has been both the National and Texas chapter Treasurer for years. While the three of them discussed treasury details, the rest of us discussed an 8-point agenda I drew up with the help of others on the board. Cheryl Franks and her husband John, Roger Repp, Clare Freeman, Wendy Hodges, Bette and Jim Armstrong, and I attended.

We discussed and decided to bring to the membership several small bylaws changes. We would like our members to consider:

- 1) Making the president-elect a voting member of the board.
- 2) Making the office of membership services an appointed office and not an elected one.

We discussed the options of appointing a Vice-President for Research and Recovery, a Vice-President for Programs, and a Vice-President of Marketing and Publicity. We felt it was important to fill these positions

with persons that are interested in serving the organization on a committee. You will hear more about this in the future.

We talked about whether or not memberships should follow the calendar year (as it is now) or a 12-month cycle following the date of a new member's joining. We decided to keep the present system in place for another year.

We standardized the requirements for chapter formation.

We discussed selling advertising for the newsletter. It seems that if we do sell ads, only a portion of our dues will be income tax deductible. Is the convenience of allowing our members to deduct all their donations more helpful than the money we would receive from advertising sales? Are there other issues to consider? Members, do you have a preference?

We also discussed some Texas Chapter issues. We voted to donate some prizes (plush horned toads) to Lee Ann Linam for her Texas Parks and Wildlife's Horned Toad Essay contest. We also talked about wholesale pricing for our sales items. We voted to reward Leigh Sanders

for her time-consuming colony work this past summer with a lifetime HLCS membership. We also discussed details of our release project scheduled for spring 2002.

If anyone would like more details from this meeting, please contact me at <Brooks@psyvax.psy.utexas.edu>.

And after the meeting

After the meeting, Scott joined Roger, Wendy, and I for a little fun. We rarely get Roger down from Arizona so we took the time to do a little night road hunting and then drove to Kenedy the next day. Kenedy came through for us again. We found more than a dozen horned lizards. We then cruised the roads and headed to Aransas National Wildlife Refuge.

Let me make this perfectly clear. This was not a collecting trip. We didn't have a snake bag between us. Mostly we just observed the animals. Occasionally we took pictures. It was a good trip. We saw a couple of rattlesnakes, a western cottonmouth, wild pigs, deer, an alligator, javelina, and a large number of other reptile and amphibian species.

I'd like to thank the folks that made it to Austin. It was good seeing you.

— Bill Brooks

TATER PEOPLE

Some people never seem motivated to participate, but are just content to watch while others do the work. They are called "Speck Taters."

Some people never do anything to help, but are gifted at finding fault with the way others do the work. They are called "Comment Taters."

Some people are always looking to cause problems by asking others to agree with them. It is too hot or too cold, too sour or too sweet. They are called "Agie Taters."

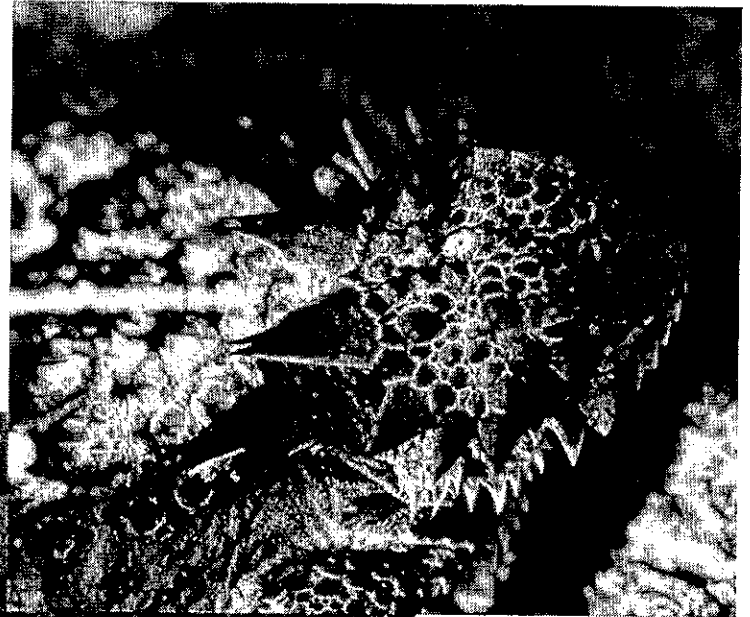
There are those who say they will help, but somehow just never get around to actually doing the promised help. They are called, "Hezzie Taters."

Some people can put up a front and pretend to be someone they are not. They are called "Emma Taters."

Then there are those who love and do what they say they will. They are always prepared to stop whatever they are doing and lend a helping hand. They bring real sunshine into the lives of others. They are called "SWEET TATERS."

A Regal Horned Lizard (*Phrynosoma solare*) with only two occipitals

Pima County, Arizona
by
Bertrand E. Baur



Photos
Top: Regal Horned Lizard
Pima Co, AZ 1999.

Left: Habitat of Regal
Horned Lizard, Pima Co,
AZ 1999.

Bottom: captive Regal
Horned Lizard 1997

Photos
© Bertrand Baur

On September 13, 1999, about one hour before sundown, we saw a rather large female Regal Horned Lizard (*Phrynosoma solare*) basking on a rock in the last sunrays. It was not far from the turning point of the Rattle Snake Trail in Sabino Canyon. We had gotten some rains about one hour before. The specimen did not move when I slowly approached to get some shots, even when I was close enough to get a close-up of the head with the 200 mm macro lens. I realized that this specimen had just two, instead of four, occipitals only when I saw the head in my viewfinder. Both occipitals were very broad at their base, but had each two, very slender, sharp tips.

It was only after the last sunrays had left the small rock that the specimen moved slowly from it and walked under a cactus bush. It always looked at me but did never show any fear. Of course, I avoided fast movements. It was still sitting close to the rock under that cactus bush when we left and it was probably going to spend the night there.



The nature of these spines could point to the possibility that the four horns have developed from originally two horns and are not inter occipitals as could also be speculated. It is a matter of a fact that very few specimens of *P. solare* do have a single, slightly developed inter occipital.

Bertrand Baur coauthored, with Richard Montanucci, *Krotenechsen*, a book about horned lizards in German.

HLCS Thanks You For 2001

The tumultuous happenings of 2001 have left me with a need to tell my friends that I care and appreciate all they do. This is true for the HLCS, too.

Firstly, I want to thank all our members. Your support and willingness to pitch in when necessary, is inspiring.

To our 38 life members, your confidence is a testament to what we do.

To Larry Wisdom, thank you for the exquisite exhibits you have provided the society. Your new exhibit, unveiled at EXPO 2001, was fantastic. Thank you for your support over the years, your horned lizard range maps, the wonderful membership incentives and the eye catching "patriotic" horned lizard pins you provided to the booth sitters at EXPO 2001.

Thank you Wanda Woods (and your business, Woods Woods) for donating a portion of your sales to the society. Great!

Tom McCain, you sent your horned lizard replicas to all our members. What a wonderful present. THANK YOU!

Mary Surginer, who has now donated TWO horned lizard quilts to the HLCS. They are both works of art and labors of love. What else can I say?

Nedra Pilant, our hearts go out to you for the loss of your husband. James was a friend and ardent supporter of the HLCS. Thank you for the memberships and gifts given in his memory.

Leigh Sanders, thanks for the donation of your time and energy in keeping our horned lizards alive.

Howard K. Barber, thank you so much for your help on the web site and the very generous gift. We are in your debt.

Thanks to the elected and appointed volunteer staff of the national organization and chapters of the HLCS – both today and in the past. Without you, we simply could not exist.

My apologies to the folks I have left out. Anyone with a wish to save the Horned Lizard should be thanked. Together we shall make this a reality.

My best to you all in 2002.

– Bill Brooks

UPCOMING EVENTS

2nd Annual Horned Toad Roundup & Chili Cookoff, Rankin, Texas – Saturday, February 2, 2002

If you would like to booth sit for HLCS for this memorable event,
please contact Bill Brooks at (512) 581-0377

Texas Parks & Wildlife Essay Contest – deadline March 1, 2002

contact Lee Ann Linum (info on page 10-11, this issue)

Sonora Desert Herpetofauna conference in Tucson, Arizona – April 4-7, 2002

for information, contact Roger Repp at repp@noao.edu

HLCS Horned Lizard Survey at Chinati Hot Springs Preserve – May 4 & 5, 2002

contact Carolyn Todd at chsoffice@brooksddata.net

or

Chinati's web page <http://www.chinatihotsprings.org>
for more information

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OKLAHOMA
Chapter
Now Accepting
Nominees
for officers

ESSAYISTS

Enter
Texas Parks &
Wildlife
Contest
deadline
March 1, 2002
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