

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.

Fall 1994

Greetings from The President

As the new National President of the Horned Lizard Conservation Society, I would like to take this opportunity to thank you, the membership, for your vote of confidence by electing me to the Presidency of HLCS. I hope that the next two years will take us to new avenues working for the conservation of horned lizards throughout their ranges. I also hope that HLCS will continue to add chapters in other states that have horned lizards in addition to the Southern California and Texas Chapters. There are a lot of projects I hope to be able to put into play to help with this growth and educate the public as to the plight of horned lizards.

I think a good place to start this introduction is to let you know of my work and background with horned lizards. I grew up in southern California in an area where horned lizards were fairly common. I always had a "horny toad" and was fascinated with their appearance and character. I enlisted in the military, and lost contact with horny toads for a long time. About 20 years later, I discov-

ered that horned lizards in southern California were having big problems. With my medical retirement from the military in 1985, I returned to college to continue my education and expand my degree in Nuclear Engineering and technology.

In 1989, I renewed my ties with horned lizards by finding one in an abandoned vineyard. My daughters, Kim and Sabrina, were impressed with the horny toad. I thought this horny toad, that we later named Herbie, would be an excellent way to teach my daughters about science and nature. We went to libraries to find books about the horned lizard, but found very little. We found bits and pieces about this "little dinosaur," but nothing in detail. I contacted the California Department of Fish and Game to try and find information that they

might have available and learned of the status of the San Diego Coast Horned Lizard, *Phrynosoma coronatum blainvillei*. It is a candidate species for protection under the Endangered Species Act. Then, I began a new relationship with horned lizards.

I worked out a plan with the California Department of Fish and Game to update habitat information and study behaviors and ecological requirements of the San Diego Coast Horned Lizard. I started captive research with four adult males and four adult females collected from a sight that was slated for development. I gathered materials and tried to duplicate the habitat on a smaller scale. I experimented with different artificial light combinations and food items. After my first year, the horned lizards seemed to be doing well. I

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Upcoming Event

February 5, 1995

Texas Chapter Meeting

LCRA -Main Room, 1st Floor
-1/2 Blk. from Enfield Rd on Lake
Austin Blvd., Austin

-2:00 pm

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**For Information
Write: HLCS
PO Box 122
Austin, TX 78767**



From The President...

cont'd from p. 1

observed other horned lizards in the wild to try to understand their behaviors and natural requirements. I observed my captive group to compare variations in their behaviors and health. All of this initial getting to "know" my toads paid off. My captive group increased by 30 individuals. Eggs were laid, and in about 45 days, cute little horned lizards emerged. This was well worth the hours spent in the field on hot days observing horned lizards in their natural habitat.

I still maintain my captive group, a total of 48, for continued study and observation. I periodically use one or two of my horned lizards to give presentations at schools, herp societies, and other conservation groups. I have found that most people do not realize what has and is happening to horned lizard populations. Information and education are our most powerful tools to heighten awareness of the plight of horned lizards.

Some projects I hope to start include:

1. A calendar featuring the different species of horned lizards.
2. A video tape showing the activities of different horned lizards and their habitats.
3. A poster that will feature the different species of horned lizards and where they are located (possibly an addition to the education packet).
4. Possible use of the new craze called POGs, featuring horned lizards.

These are just a few of the ideas that I think will help get information out to people. These things should also help in raising funds needed for conservation projects and research. Your ideas

are also welcome, so please let us know what they are.

Lee Stone, the former HLCS President, has addressed relocation and repatriation as conservation strategies that still need extensive long term study. To some degree, these are fine tools for politicians and developers. Scientifically, there needs to be considerable work done to gather the necessary data to not just help a population survive, but to promote its growth, viability and self-sustaining natural balance, one of our primary goals.

I would like to thank you all again for your vote of confidence and urge every member to be active in the society. Where ever you may be, if you see horned lizards, observe them, photograph them, record their location on a map and keep us informed of your findings. Every piece of information helps. If you see horned lizards offered

for sale by pet stores, let us know and we will let them know that they are adding to a problem that has helped with the loss of these unique reptiles.

I have established some good lines of communication with the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the California Department Fish and Game, and I am still busy getting the word out about horned lizards. I have been able to get horned lizards in the San Diego Zoo to educate the public, and other projects are in the works. I will keep you updated as things happen.

If you have any questions or comments, please let me know. I will answer you as best as I can.

Phrynosomatically Yours,
Lester G. Milroy III
HLCS President

USFWS Considers Alternative to Listing *Phrynosoma mcallii* (Flat-tailed Horned Lizard) as Threatened

An alternative to federal listing of *Phrynosoma mcallii* as a threatened species according to the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended, the United States Fish and Wildlife Service may instead try to protect flat-tailed horned lizards by entering into a Conservation Agreement with the Bureau of Land Management. A Conservation Agreement is a formal written agreement between USFWS and another federal agency, tribe, state agency, local government, or the private sector to achieve the conservation of candidate species through voluntary cooperation. It documents the specific actions and responsibilities for which each party agrees to be accountable. The objective of a Conservation Agreement is to reduce threats to a candidate species and/or its habitat. An effective Conservation Agreement may lower listing priority or eliminate the need to list a species." (from Memorandum of Understanding, 94-SMU-058) USFWS was supposed to decide whether or not to list *P. mcallii* by 29 November 1994. As of printing, no decision has been published.

Who Shall We Blame?

By Jane Manaster

Just why don't horned lizards scuttle around like they did in the old days? Everyone remembers them as kids, especially as a regular feature of school playgrounds. Should we blame urban encroachment in its various guises, or hold fire ants responsible? How about pointing a finger at radiation damage that curbs their fertility, or "off roaders" whipping up a storm in the Californian deserts? We could frown at youngsters who keep them as pets until the inevitable day when they have to dig a tiny grave and set up an RIP sign. And while we're holding the innocent responsible, let's not forget the lizards' own masochistic tendency to bask on the blacktop highways.

The horned lizard story has always had its villains. Over eighty years ago Harold Bryant declared that rattle-

snakes and roadrunners were the two greatest enemies of the horned lizard. Then he added that "with the coming of civilization the domestic cat becomes a formidable enemy second only to the curio collector, who has practically exterminated the horned lizards in some localities."

Curio collectors collected weird and wonderful objects and found a market for *Phrynosoma*. Believing the supply was endless, they paid a few cents for every specimen collected and set in motion unmentionable processes that resulted in a stuffed horned lizard curio. At the turn of the century, the trade flourished in southern California. In 1941, the New Mexico legislature passed a law forbidding the killing of horned toads (a popular tourist item whether alive or dead), and anticipated Arizona and Texas would soon follow suit. (Editor's note: Texas outlawed this activity in 1967.)

Curio shops were the precursors of flea markets, not exactly the same but attracting a similar clientele. They were the embodiment of Ripley's "Believe It or Not," filled with ships in bottles and other relicts of the past, all coated with a layer of dust to provide atmosphere. The shops sold celluloid dolls with squashed noses, cottage teapots, trophies of the hunt, sentimental sheet music, vintage hats, and the kind of unidentifiable metal objects that always find a buyer at garage sales.

Today, we don't kill animals to sell them at flea markets, we keep hold of everything we can. So how much were the curio collectors to blame for today's reduced horned lizard population? It's impossible to say. Perhaps they're yet another defenseless target, dating back to the days before sensitivity found an environmental niche.

Media about Horny Toads

Compiled by Sandra Holland

-Walt Disney's *The Living Desert* (educational video) has a segment with a horned lizard eating ants. I don't think this video is new, but this is the first we knew of it.

-"Beep Beep! Varooooommm!" article about roadrunner in *National Wildlife*, Feb.-Mar 94, mentions horny toads in a couple of places, but no pictures of them. The photographer is Wyman Meinzer. Wade Sherbrooke is featured in it as "a roadrunner researcher".

Disney Adventures, Aug. 94, has an article on travel, called "And We're

Off..." featuring unusual places. It includes reference to Eastland's Old Rip "the embalmed horned toad".

Many Hands, the newspaper of the Children's Alliance for Protection of the Environment, combined essays by Abraham and Noah Holland about the horned lizard into one essay for its "My Endangered Species" essay contest, June 94. It included mention of the Society.

The current Boy Scout Handbook has a picture of a horny toad in its "animals of the desert" section.

The Traveling Toads have been mentioned 23 times in publications,

TV and radio. In all, with the State Reptile publicity and local census announcements, letter writing to publications, etc., they have had 50 mentions. This includes a training video they made at the request of The Phoenix Zoo for planning its Zoo Teens project. They also responded to requests from a Texas summer camp and a Seattle wildlife writer for information about horned lizards and the State Reptile project.



Young PHD CLUB Young People's Herpetocultural Dialog

by Jane Bowden

Of thirteen living species of Horned Lizards, seven live in the arid and semi-arid regions of the U.S. Two species shown here are native to California. (See the Range Map on back) Their horns and flattened body make them distinct among their iguanid relatives. ▲ These lizards are from 2½ to 4" long. Their color resembles the soil they live on. The Coast Horned Lizard has two rows of pointed fringe scales on each side of its body, while the Desert Horned Lizard has just one row of scales and a blunt snout. ▲ To avoid the heat of the day and hide over night, they burrow into the soil by wriggling head first, legs flattened back against the body. They can burrow 2 to 3" in loose soil in less than 1 minute. They hibernate underground during winter months, surviving on their reserves of fat. ▲ Horned Lizards' favorite food is ants. They pick them up with a flick of the tongue and swallow them whole, their digestive tract being immune to the bites and stings of ants. The diet of the Desert Horned Lizard is made up of 90% ants, while the Coast variety has a more varied diet; in addition to ants, it eats beetles, flies, grasshoppers and moth larvae. Because of this specialized diet, Horned Lizards do not make suitable pets and do not survive long in captivity. ▲ Horned lizards escape predators, (such as birds and other reptiles), by being difficult to see and hard to swallow. They are not designed as runners. Three species, including the Coast Horned Lizard, have developed a startling defense tactic. They have the ability to squirt blood, up to 4 feet, from a pore in the lower eyelids. This acts as a repellent to dogs, coyotes or foxes. By far, the greatest threat to the survival of Horned Lizards is the destruction of suitable habitat by humans. ▲▲▲



DESERT HORNED LIZARD
Phrynosoma platyrhinos

COAST HORNED LIZARD
Phrynosoma coronatum

TEXAS CHAPTER NEWS

PUBLIC INFO REPORT

by Sandra Holland

PUBLIC DAY. The Texas Chapter held a Horned Lizard Appreciation Day for the public at 2:00 PM, after the Chapter meeting on Sunday, October 16th, at the Lower Colorado River Authority board room on Lake Austin Blvd. Activities included live ants (for comparison of diet and non-diet ants) and a horny toad research specimen. The Traveling Toads (Noah and Abraham Holland) also made an appearance.

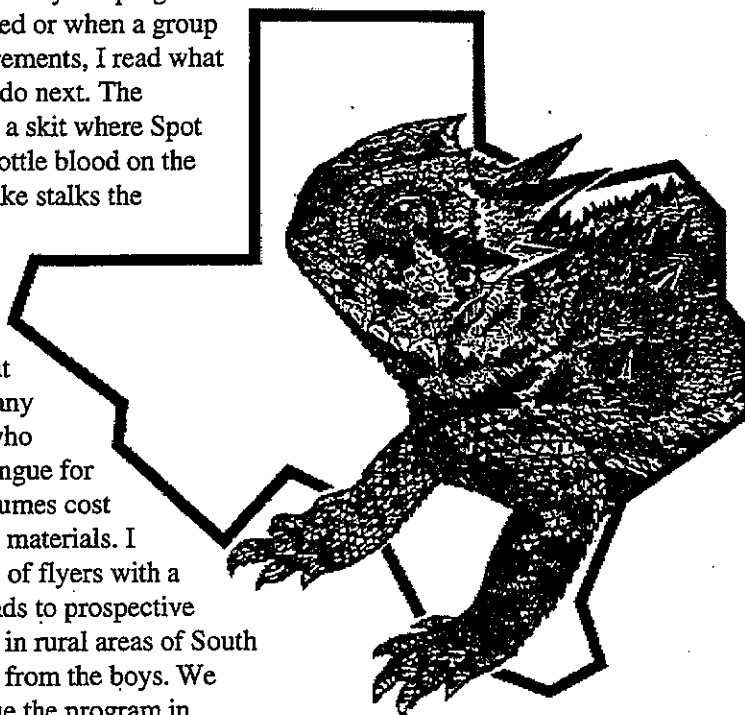
CHILDREN'S CENSUS. The Texas Chapter agreed with the idea of a Children's Census for the Horned Lizard, but gave no direction at its first meeting. This project was started by Abraham and Noah. Contact the Hollands for details.

STAMP AND STATE INSECT. Noah has asked our state representative to sponsor a resolution naming the harvester ant the State Insect. He also asked the Postal Service to include the horned lizard in a future stamp series. Both projects have better survival chances if you also respond. Please write to your representative (Ours is Richard Raymond, who sponsored the State Reptile resolution, but so far hasn't responded to this one.). Write the Postal Service at: Stamp Management, U. S. Postal Service, 475 L'Enfant Plaza, SW, Room 5301, Washington, DC 20260.

THE TRAVELING TOADS. Since I am now Public Relations Chair of the Texas Chapter, my sons' program is officially a part of the HLCS. People have asked about how The Traveling Toads do their program in case others want to follow suit. They have an extemporaneous program because clubs, festivals and schools have different requirements. When the boys

are on a roll, they carry the program. When they are tired or when a group has several requirements, I read what they are going to do next. The program includes a skit where Spot squirts ketchup-bottle blood on the audience, and Spike stalks the audience with a knife and fork while searching for ants. At the end, they hand out gum or candy to any "horned lizard" who will stick out a tongue for an ant. Their costumes cost \$50, not counting materials. I sent out hundreds of flyers with a picture of the Toads to prospective bookings (mostly in rural areas of South Texas), with help from the boys. We plan to discontinue the program in December because they are outgrowing their costumes. I am contacting the last prospects, all public elementary schools in San Antonio. We had 12 public appearances Aug.-Dec. 1993, and this year, we are scheduled for 16 programs already.

One program was included in an endangered and threatened species program I gave for "Be Kind to Earth Day" at a Peter Piper Pizza Educational Kids' Day Luncheon. Two of the appearances were two back-to-back programs for different audiences at the same location. Activities also included a Halloween Costume Contest (no prizes), wearing their costumes to the Zoo Boo on Halloween, and a club meeting at a national historical park while it was open to the public. There has been quite a variety of places for appearances. Festivals provide tough environments for talking programs, and I don't recommend them. We have been to six. Two included parades. In one, the Toads rode on a convertible provided by the Chamber of Commerce, but for another our family made an ant-



hill float out of Styrofoam ants and brown paper over a garden cart. Some organizations, such as public schools and 4-H clubs, can not help us with expenses. Generally, the festivals reimburse our mileage and private organizations pay a stipend, feed us, or take up a collection. One 4-H club gave The Traveling Toads a Certificate of Appreciation.

By the time of our 4-H Record Book, due in June, we had spent \$931.79 of our own money and recovered \$385.10. Our family usually does not spend this kind of money on anything but basic needs, but the horny toad has become a part of our family identity, and The Traveling Toads became a family project. Part of the reason for the cost is the high postal expense (I don't overlook an opportunity to tell someone about the horny toad), and photocopies of our flyer that we distribute at each meeting. We also give HLCS brochures out at programs. We don't know how many people saw the publicity, but approximately 8,710 people have seen

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TEXAS CHAPTER NEWS

the boys in costume, excluding the Zoo Boo where some thought they were dinosaurs. This is just a little amateur country program, but it made the boys' day when they overheard Headstart children saying they were "better than Barney" because "all Barney does is talk, but they tell us about them". Fashing 4-H reported in the newspaper that The Traveling Toads program was "intensive." The DAR, in its newspaper report, called it "interesting".

Noah and Abraham are very active in other activities and clubs, but none to the extent of The Traveling Toads. Noah designed his Cub Scout Pinewood Derby car to look like a horny toad this year, much to the delight of the other contestants. Abraham entered the San Antonio Express-News Youth Columnist Contest with an essay about the horned lizard. The boys put up a display about horny toads at our local museum last winter, and hope to do so at the public library after they finish with The Traveling Toads. You know about Abraham's letter to Ranger Rick, mentioning HLCS. He and Noah also wrote essays for the newspaper, Children's Alliance for Protection of the Environment, the essays were combined and published. Their essays were also published by the Homeschool News for local families. The boys have been recommended for several environmental awards.

Last year, with the State Reptile and census projects, Abraham received Blue Awards at State and District for his 4-H Record Book. This year, adding The Traveling Toads, both he and Noah

Texas Chapter Officers

Members of HLCS living in Texas officially formed their own chapter. The following people serve as the Texas Chapter Officers.

Melisa Montemayor	President
Carolyn Tod	Vice President for Education
Sandra Holland	Vice President for Public Affairs
Clare Freeman	Vice President for Communication
Steve Austin	Fundraiser and Graphic Artist
Bill Davis	Catalog Sales
Joyce Snodgrass	Secretary and Historian
Barri Cox*	Treasurer* *position is now vacant

received Blue Awards for their books at both levels. Their major project is Wildlife, but each Record Book must include other projects. The boys entered the 4-H Roundup with an illustrated talk in the "Natural Resources" category. They dressed as Spike and Spot and gave a poster talk. They received Blue Awards at County and District. At their ages, they cannot compete beyond District.

Around our town, the Holland boys are known as "the horny toad boys", and often are greeted not with "Hello" but with "Seen any horny toads lately?" Thanks again for all that the Society's members have done to help us. Our family has never had an experience like this before. You have made it all worthwhile.

The Texas Chapter raises funds by selling a wonderful array of items by catalog. Recent additions to the inventory include ceramic horned toads and a notecard. Contact HLCS for the items you can purchase to brighten someones day and support your favorite organization.

WRITE: HLCS
PO Box 122
Austin, TX 78767



THE TRAVELING TOADS:

An educational program on the Texas State Reptile

On the following two pages is a tribute to the Holland Family, You will see the work of the Traveling Toads, Abraham and Noah Holland, and their mother Sandra Holland. Sandra Holland compiled and wrote all the information contained herein. The Holland Family have contributed more to educating the public about horned lizards than any other family in the Horned Lizard Conservation Society. They are truly remarkable!

Media Coverage of the Traveling Toads

"How Many 'Horny Toads' Are There?" letter from Abraham Holland about citywide horned lizard census. March 24, 1993, Pleasanton Express

Radio station KBOP announced horned lizard census, March, 1993

"To The Children of Pleasanton" (letter to editor from Abraham Holland about horned lizard census)—April 1, 1993, Brush Country News

Interviewed by radio station KBOP for "South Texas Viewpoint" ref. State Reptile Project—May, 1993

"Boy Thinks Horned Toad Should Represent Texas"—May 6, 1993, Brush Country News

Boy Thinks Horny Toad Should Represent Texas. May 12, 1993, Pleasanton Express

"Boy Thinks Horned Toad Should Represent Texas"—May 26, 1993, Wilson County News

"Pleasanton Youth Thinks Horny Toad Should Represent Texas"—May 27, 1993, Floresville Chronicle-Journal

"Local Student Spurs Legislation: Texas horned lizard official State Reptile" (with photo of Abraham, Noah and Rep. Raymond)—June 9, 1993, Pleasanton Express, Lifestyles section

"Horned Lizard Soon to Be Texas' State Reptile," June 9, 1993, Wilson CO. News

"To Whom It May Concern: Horned Lizard Official State Reptile" (letter to editor from Abraham Holland about governor signing resolution)—June 10, 1993, Floresville Chronicle-Journal

"Local Student Spurs Legislation—Texas Horned Lizard: Official State Reptile" (reprint of State Reptile article, with corrections)—June 17, 1993, Pleasanton Express

Letter from Abraham Holland asking people to contact Governor Richards about signing the State Reptile resolution—June, 1993, Pleasanton Express

Report on State Reptile—sometime in June, 1993, Fort Worth Star-Telegram

"Boy Helps Make Lizard Texas Reptile"—August 4, 1993, Star-Tribune, Chatham, Virginia

Letter to Editor from Abraham and Noah Holland (thanking people for helping with horned lizard projects)—September, 1993, Pleasanton Express

"Horned Toad Named Official State Reptile" (with front-page photo of The Traveling Toads Abraham and Noah Holland), September 9, 1993, Eastland Telegram

"Students Promote Horned Lizard—State Reptile of Texas"—September 9, 1993, The Schulenburg Sticker

"Old Rip Fest & Parade"—September 19, 1993, Eastland County Roundup.

"Toads take flying leap in Eastland"—September 29, 1993, Pleasanton Express

"Traveling Toads to be at Fallfest" (with photo on front page), September 15, 1993, Three Rivers Progress.

"State Reptile Visits FEAST Office", Manna Flyer "Upcoming Events".

Photo and caption on Spike and Spot in "People & Places", Wilson County News, 10/13/1993.

"Boys impersonate the state reptile—the horny toad" with photo and caption in Castroville News Bulletin, p. 11, October 28, 1993.

"I Toad You So...", Manna: Quarterly Publication of the Family Educators Alliance of South Texas, 4th quarter, 1993.

"Boys Impersonate the State Reptile" with photo of The Traveling Toads in The Cowboy Capital Music & Entertainment Guide for the Heart of the Texas Hills, Bandera, TX, Oct. 22-Nov. 5, 1993, p. 11.

"Horned toads get a boost from fans for state reptile" with photo, captioned "Spot (Abraham) and Spike (Noah) travel the state spreading the horned lizard message.", in Hill Country Recorder, December 29, 1993, p. 12.

KBOP radio reports of 2/25, 2/28, 3/2-3, & 3/9 for The Traveling Toads' appearance at the Daughters of the American Revolution meeting: 2/25/1994

"Traveling Toads speak at DAR meeting", Pleasanton Express, p. 12-B, March 23, 1994.

Letter to editor, "Dear Ranger Rick," in Ranger Rick, April, 1994. Reader response from more than two dozen children.

"Texas Horned Lizards" by Abraham and Noah Holland in "My Endangered Species" Contest, Many Hands (newspaper of the Children's Alliance for the Protection of the Environment), p. 5, June 1994.

The Traveling Toads' video use for training Zoo Teens mentioned in employee newsletter of The Phoenix Zoo, ca. 7/1994.

Traveling Toads' visit in "Fashing 4-H News", Pleasanton Express, July 6, 1994.

HORNY TOADS WRAP UP YEAR

Thanks to the residents of South Texas who love that little reptile called the horny toad, The Traveling Toads have had an enjoyable twelve months, and met a lot of kind and wonderful people.

The Traveling Toads, a costumed horned lizard conservation education program, began giving entertaining and educational programs to clubs and schools in August 1993. The horned lizard is known all over the western United States as the "horny toad" or "horned frog". One species, the Texas horned lizard, became the official Texas State Reptile in May of that year largely due to a letter written by Abraham Holland to Rep. Raymond. Abraham and his brother Noah also held a children's census in Pleasanton in spring 1993, but many adults volunteered as well. They hope to do another census soon.

They both have had essays and letters about the horny toad published in various publications; and Abraham's letter to a children's nature magazine, Ranger Rick, resulted in correspondence with over 30 children from all over North America, much to his delight. There are 13 species of horned lizard, with ranges from Mexico to southwestern Canada.

Abraham, 11, and Noah, 9, have had over two dozen public appearances as Spike and Spot The Traveling Toads in six counties since then, including those at festivals, parades, and a TV current events show. Now the boys

are about to outgrow their costumes. They just wanted to let everyone know that they will discontinue the program by December. They are hoping to get several more appearances in by then. The program is free, but donations to help defer the travel expenses are appreciated. To schedule The Traveling Toads, please call 569-4821.

The Traveling Toads developed from a 4-H project to study the horny toad through membership in the Horned Lizard Conservation Society. The brothers give a program informing people about the legal protection status of this reptile, its position as one of the state symbols, habitat, diet, and its unique characteristics. Their project has been a very enjoyable and educational one for them, which also has garnered them blue ribbons in 4-H illustrated talks and Wildlife record books through District competition. In addition, they have had several interesting field trips to places where horny toads are studied.

After 1994, the Toads hope to continue helping the Texas horned lizard, which is listed by Texas as a threatened species, through other kinds of projects. Noah has recently asked the US postal service to feature the horny toad on a future stamp, and he is working on a project to help the horny toad's favorite dish, the Harvester ant, get more appreciation for its role in the food chain.



Put Horned Lizards on a Postage Stamp!

Nine-year-old Noah Holland of Pleasanton, Texas, has asked the postal service to depict the horned lizard on an upcoming postage stamp.

The postal service will use items on stamps if they have more than regional significance. Noah explained in his May 23rd letter that the horned lizard could be used in a set of four with "other reptiles, other unique animals such as the Gila monster, or other kinds of animals".

The stamp selection process can take as long as three years. The postal service does not use anything on a stamp that has been used previously.

Noah has received acknowledgment of his letter from the Citizens' Stamp Advisory Committee of the United States Postal Service.

When he heard about Noah's request, the local postmaster speculated that the horned lizard paperwork goes in a folder with similar requests for future consideration, and if other requests are made for a "popular subject", then the postal service will take that into consideration.

If you would like to see a horned lizard species on a future U.S. postage stamp, please write to the committee at the following address:

Stamp Management
U. S. Postal Service
475 L'Enfant Plaza, SW, Room 5301
Washington, D. C. 20260

LETTERS

The Following letter is reprinted from Ranger Rick, April 1994, p. 10.

CRAZY ABOUT LIZARDS

Thank you for printing the interesting article about horned lizards in your June 1993 issue. Some other magazines had articles about them this past year, but yours was the best that I saw.

I'm 10 years old, and last spring I started a horned lizard study for kids in my town. A lot of adults helped too. We weighed, measured, and photographed horned lizards for the project.

Then I worked with my state lawmakers to try and make the Texas horned lizard the official Texas State Reptile. And now it is!

I also went to a conference on the horned lizard. Many scientists gave talks, and I learned a lot.

The horned lizard is a threatened species in Texas. That means it could be wiped out unless something is done to help it. My brother Noah is going to help me teach people about the horned lizard. We plan to give programs to groups and make exhibits for libraries and museums. And during our programs, we'll wear horned lizard costumes!

We'll also talk to news people about the horned lizard. I have already been interviewed in the newspaper and on the radio about my horned lizard projects.

I'm a member of the Horned Lizard Conservation Society. Anyone who is interested in information about the society can write to: P.O. Box 122; Austin, TX, 78767.

Abraham Holland; Pleasanton, TX

Wow, you're a great organizer, Abraham! And you're a true friend to the horned lizard. Keep up the good work! R.R.

Dear HLCS:

The attached article in our recent paper prompts me to write. I have been a friend of the little critters for many years, providing them a safe haven on my property and only moving them when they are in the lawnmower path. Pleasantly, several show little reluctance in being picked up and moved to a safe place. I and my family enjoy them and would appreciate more information about them.

Leonard A. Seitz, San Angelo, TX

Enclosed article (publisher info. unknown):

My fellow West Texans, did you know that horned lizards - or, horny toads - are a Texas threatened species? It is against the law to transport or keep a horny toad. It is so important that these unique and interesting creatures remain in their natural habitat so that they may flourish and continue to help keep ants and other annoying insects from overrunning all of Texas.

If you'd like more information, please contact the Horned Lizard Conservation Society.. Please do not break the law, and let's make sure our little lizard friends are around for a long time. And long live the horny toad.

Becca Lovett, San Angelo, TX

Dear Lizard Lovers,

I began my career as a naturalist many years ago as an 8 yr. old kid catching "horny toads" in the vacant lots of Amarillo (we all knew the ones with a yellowish belly were poisonous). My mother was very indulgent of my collection and had no idea that some day I would be in my mid-40's and still looking at Horned Lizards. I guess it's time to pay something back by supporting your group. In Arizona, we have 4 species nearby and I still get a kick out of watching them. Good luck!

Tom Wood, Hereford, AZ

Dear HLCS:

My family is very interested in saving the Texas Horned Lizard ("horny toad" as we called them when I was a boy). I returned to Waco three years ago and have looked diligently for these little guys, and I have not found any. No one I talk to has seen any in many years. When I was a small boy in Waco, horny toads were everywhere and it was nothing for most small boys to have several as pets. I am a very concerned longtime amateur naturalist and would like very much to be involved in saving the Texas Horned Lizard. I think it is very possible to do so.

Marc Smith, Waco, TX

Dear HLCS:

Enclosed is a copy of an article that appeared this month in our TCU Bulletin. It seems the horned lizards haven't completely deserted us after all! I hope this one was taken care of properly.

Carolyn Martini, Mansfield, TX

Reprinted from TCUBULLETIN/5, 7/12/94
**HORNED FROG FOUND ON
CAMPUS**

A horned frog narrowly escaped a flattening experience in a campus parking lot recently before being rescued by Dorothy Morris of development information services. Longtime employees of the University say a live horned frog-which is actually a lizard-has not been sighted on campus in many years.

The frog-dubbed "Pete"-resided in an unused aquarium in Pete Wright Hall for a few days after Fort Worth Zoo officials were consulted. It was later released in a safer location.

Robert Sulak, assistant physical plant director, said TCU groundskeepers have cut back on their use of herbicides and pesticides in recent years, which

may have given "Pete" a better chance for survival. According to O Ye Legendary Texas Horned Frog! by June Rayfield Welch, the horned frog is threatened largely because insecticides have decimated the red ants it lives on. Horned frogs are protected by the Texas Parks and Wildlife Commission.

The Horned Frog has been TCU's mascot since 1896, when the University was located in Waco, where the little lizards were plentiful on campus. Members of the first football team (in 1897) were Horned Frogs, and the first yearbook (in 1897-98) was the Horned Frog. The name is said to have been selected by Addison Clark Jr., son and nephew of the founders of TCU, Addison and Randolph Clark. Many TCU students from other parts of the country have never seen a living example of their mascot. (ed's emphasis)

Dear HLCS:

This letter is in reference to an article in the June/July 1994 issue "Genetics Study Pending on Texas Horned Lizards." In the first paragraph is the statement, "lizards do not seem to be bothered [by toe clipping] and there was no bleeding." That clipped toe is an open wound. This is an open wound for possible infection, bacteria, or something that could later kill the very thing you are trying to save.

On page 13 "Ranger Rick" is mentioned. How could you mutilate this small harmless creature in the name of conservation and place it in a children's magazine? Are we not appalled at the violence we see and hear about and say to cut off the toes of this helpless horned lizard is all right. You are saying the end justifies the means

How do we know how much they feel that their toes are used for balance. If they didn't need them they wouldn't have them. A dot of harmless color would be enough to identify them.

How can you mutilate this little horned lizard? I am deeply hurt with this method of identification.

Anonymous, Dublin, TX

editor's reply: To my knowledge, no mention of toe clipping was made in the Ranger Rick article. Toe clipping is a scientifically accepted method used for permanently identifying lizards. A "dot of harmless color" would be lost as soon as a lizard sheds its skin. The open wound tends to cauterize upon contact with a hot substrate, minimizing infection. If this ID method had a significant impact on the lizard, it would not be used. Using toe tissue for genetic analyses is less detrimental to horned lizard populations than an alternative which would require sacrifice of whole individuals.

Fellow Phrynosomaphiles:

Greetings! I have been looking for others who love these lizards and that I could share info and experiences with. Phrynosoma Phorever!

Mathias Jensen, Riverside, CA

Dear HLCS:

My grandchildren were excited to see their names in the *Phrynosomatics*, June/July 1994 issue. Don and I had given a horned lizard show for 5 and 6 year old students at a Baptist Vacation Bible school. On our way home, we stopped at the supermarket, when a young woman approached us. Her son had been in our class and told her, "Look, Mother, there's the Lizard People in the fruit!"

Joann Merritt, Midland, TX

Thank you readers for your letters! Please send any correspondence or news worthy item to: HLCS, PO BOX 122, Austin, Texas, 78767

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