

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 22, Issue No. 2

MAY 2017

## **HLCS Biennial Meeting July 28-29, 2017**

*By Jared Fuller*

It is my great pleasure to announce our next biennial meeting, which will occur in historic downtown Goliad, TX on July 28 - 29. Saturday will be filled with a series of lectures, followed by an evening social. On Sunday, we will abscond to nearby Kenedy, TX, the proclaimed



*Downtown Goliad. (Photo by James Fuller)*

horned lizard capital of the world, to look for lizards! If you are interested in presenting a paper or a poster, please contact me as

soon as possible: Jared Fuller (jaredansley@gmail.com).

In addition, we are considering putting together an auction for this event. If you have a horned lizard or nature-themed item that you would be willing to donate, then please let me know!

Additional details will be announced shortly via email and on Facebook! Looking forward to seeing everyone!



**JOIN US and Help Protect the Texas  
State Reptile**



www.hornedlizards.org

**HORNED  
LIZARD  
CONSERVATION SOCIETY**

# National Board of Directors

## President

Jared A. Fuller  
jfuller@unr.edu

## Secretary

Leslie Nossaman  
poppies14@comcast.net

## Member Services

Lynn Seman  
rlynnseman@gmail.com

## President-Elect

*This position is open.*

## Treasurer

Tanya Phillips (*interim*)  
tanya@austin.rr.com

## Director At Large

Monty Criswell  
mcrisw1@gmail.com.

---

on the web at — [www.hornedlizards.org](http://www.hornedlizards.org)

---

## Colorado Contact

Danny Martin  
Natural Resource Ecology Lab  
Colorado State University  
1499 Campus Delivery  
Fort Collins CO 80523  
dannym77@lamar.colostate.edu

## Texas Contact

Bill Brooks  
108 Cactus Cove  
Paige TX 78659  
512-581-0377  
b.brooks@utexas.edu

## *Phrynosomatics*

### Copy Editor

Leslie Nossaman  
poppies14@comcast.net

## New Mexico Contact

Tom McCain  
PO Box 53095  
Albuquerque NM 87112  
tom@httom.com

## Nevada Contact

Jared A. Fuller  
jfuller@unr.edu

## *Phrynosomatics*

### Design Editor

Fannie Messec (*interim*)  
fmessec@me.com

## California Contact

*This position is open.*

## Mexico Contact

Wade Sherbrooke  
wcs@amnh.org

## **GOT NEWS? FOR THE PHRYNOSOMATICS NEWSLETTER THAT IS...**

*Send your photos (with captions),  
cartoon, artwork, poems, or articles  
for the newsletter to Leslie Nossaman  
at poppies14@comcast.net today!*



# 2017 Grant Recipient Research Summary

In 2017 HLCS awarded a grant to support conservation and ecology-based research to Cecilia Aguilar from the University of Sonora in northern Mexico. The following article describes the plans for her interesting research. We look forward to hearing the final results of this worthwhile project by this researcher!

## Horned Lizards of Ajos-Bavispe, Sonora, Mexico

*By Cecilia Aguilar Morales, Department of Scientific and Technological Research, Universidad de Sonora*

The Ajos-Bavispe National Forest Reserve and Wildlife Refuge in northeastern Sonora, México contains seven Sky Island mountain ranges and/or mountain complexes connected by oak woodland. The goals of this national protected natural area are resource management, monitoring, and protection of priority wildlife species, forest fire management, and environmental education.

Sonora with eight species has the greatest diversity of *Phrynosoma* of any state in Mexico or the United States. Six of them occur in the Ajos-Bavispe Reserve area: *P. cornutum*, *P. ditmarsii*, *P. hernandesi*, *P. modestum*, *P. orbiculare*, and *P. solare* (Rorabaugh and Lemos-E. 2016). Two of these species are only found in Mexico. *P. orbiculare* is widely distributed in the highlands of Mexico (Van Devender et al. 2015). *P. ditmarsii* is a very distinctive species that is endemic to the Sonora state (Sherbrooke 2003, Hodges 1995). The distribution, behavior, and ecology

of the latter species are poorly known, and it should be nominated for protection under the NOM-059 Mexican endangered species law (T. R. Van Devender, pers. com. 2016).

### Goal of the study

This project will summarize the distribution, ecology, and importance of *Phrynosoma* in the Ajos-Bavispe Reserve. A database and distribution maps of the six species will be created using the records in the Madrean Archipelago Biodiversity Assessment and Madrean Discovery Expeditions databases (madrean.org, madrean-discovery.org). The respective habitats where they are found and the general aspects of their ecology will be described.

### Justification

The distribution and habitats of the horned lizard species in the Sonoran Sky Islands are poorly known. This project will be an important contribution to the Ajos Bavispe Reserve and understanding the biology of the species found there. This will serve as an information base for reserve managers and landowners to help in the conservation of horned lizards and other reptiles and their habi-

tats. In Texas, *P. cornutum* has disappeared from large parts of its range and is threatened. Since 2013, juvenile *P. ditmarsii* individuals have been found in the Sierras de la Madera and la Púrica.

This project will also serve as a reference for future work and in the monitoring of their populations. Horned lizard populations are impacted by human activities including cattle grazing, buffelgrass planting, and disturbance near rural towns within the Ajos-Bavispe Reserve. In towns such as Bacerac, where people keep *los camaleones* as pets, there is a need for environmental education programs in the schools to inform the general public that they are poor pets that are difficult to keep alive in captivity, and the conservation efforts need to protect the species.

### Duration

The project will last approximately six months, from January to June 2017, resulting in a summary publication in the journal **Mesoamerican Herpetology** (<http://mesoamericanherpetology.com/index.html>).



# New Exhibits for the HLCS

*By Bill Brooks*

On January 18<sup>th</sup> the HLCS received a very exciting email. Rebecca Bennett, the granddaughter of Larry Wisdom contacted the society to see if we would like to use six more displays Larry Wisdom had made.

Larry was a long time supporter and life member of the HLCS. Back in the days when the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department would host their huge outdoor festival EXPO, Larry would be there manning the booth, collecting sighting reports, and showing his horned lizard exhibits and models, the best rubber models I've ever seen.

He'd also be at our booth at Eastland's Old Rip Festival honoring the most famous horned lizard in the world. Larry and Bette Armstrong would host epic remote controlled horny toad races.

Larry had given to HLCS three exhibits featuring his model horned lizards. These exhibits have been front and center at our HLCS booths for years.

The remarkable Larry Wisdom worked as a food chemist for the Frito-Lay Company. (He invented nacho cheese Doritos.) After he retired he devoted much of his time to his family, his church, building his remarkable home, the Texas Native Plant Society and the Horned Lizard Conservation Society.



*From left to right Beth and Billy Bennet and Bette and Jim Armstrong*

It was a sad day when we lost Larry Wisdom back on July 27, 2015. Larry was my friend and all around great talented guy.

But back to the January email. After Rebecca contacted us, our president Tim Tristan replied with an enthusiastic yes, we would love for the Wisdom family to loan us more of Larry's exhibits for our outreach. Rebecca turned us over to her mom and Larry's daughter, Beth and her Husband Billy Bennett. Tim turned to me to drive to Blooming Grove, TX to retrieve the displays.

They wanted to meet Bette Armstrong so I asked Bette and Jim to meet me there on January 31<sup>st</sup>. At 1 pm we all rendezvoused at the amazing house Larry built. Occupying the house was the delightful Beth and Billy Bennett. We spent 4 hours chatting like long

time friends. We toured the house, looked over the beautiful grounds, and explored Larry's astounding workshop.

This is where Larry made rubber molds of preserved horned lizard specimens from museums all over the state. Here he built the wooden cases for his exhibits. We also got to see the delicately intricate flower models made for BRIT and NPSOT.

At the end of the day we reluctantly left the warm company of Beth and Billy to return with Larry's treasures. We now have museum quality exhibits on the Horned Lizards of Texas, the Horned Lizards of North America, the Horned Lizards of Mexico, Horned Lizard Defenses, and the Horned Lizard Life Cycle.

It is very important that we use these exhibits and get them in



# The Horned Lizard and the Horned Lizard Conservation Society as a School Project

By Leslie Nossaman

On January 26, HLCS Editor Leslie Nossaman interviewed Khalil Hanif-Norris. Khalil participated in a project at The Canterbury Episcopal School that was started by his teacher, Robin Lage. The assignment was to write a grant application for a nonprofit and Khalil won the project. His subject was the horned lizard and his nonprofit was the Horned Lizard Conservation Society. Here is his interview. His grant letter and grant illustration are also included in this article.

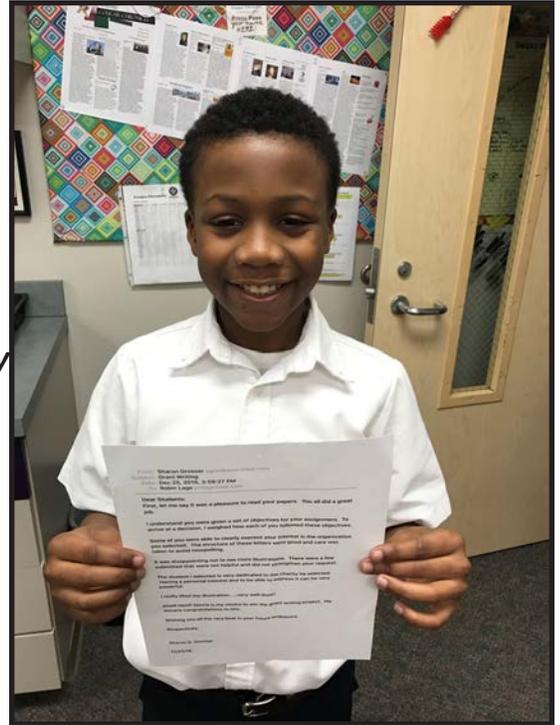
***I understand that you had a class assignment where you wrote a grant application for a nonprofit organization which was reviewed by a grant expert that you won. And that you selected the horned lizard and the Horned Lizard Conservation Society. Tell me about what the project objectives were.***

The objectives for the Grant Writing Project at my school were to research a non-profit organization and fill out a grant application, draw a picture, and write a persuasive letter on their behalf in order to get money to help their cause.

***The Horned Lizard Conservation Society is so excited that you selected the horned lizard as your grant subject. I also understand that the***

***Horned Lizard Conservation Society was not on the original list of potential nonprofit organizations to choose from. Can you let us know why you choose the horned lizard as your animal and the Horned Lizard Conservation Society and any experience you have had with horned lizards?***

My teacher wanted me to pick an organization that I'm passionate about... well...I love lizards. They are fascinating creatures, and not a lot of people know about them. I love the way Horned Lizards look, so I began researching organizations that educate and inform people about them. I found HLCS online and began researching your organization



Khalil holding his Grant Writing Project award letter.

and what you do.

I have been wanting a lizard for a long time. I recently got a Bearded Dragon, and I love



Khalil (in the middle) and his class with the masks that HLCS sent as a thank you.



*Khalil's Horned Lizard Drawing as part of his grant application.*

taking care of a him. I feed him crickets, kale, and bananas. I want other people to know that lizards are wonderful creatures that should be protected. Lizards can make great additions to your family (better than a cat or dog). *<Editor's note: Horned lizards are a type of lizard that do not work as a pet as they have very delicate systems. But there are wonderful alternatives such as the Bearded Dragon!>*

### **What references did you use for your research on the horned lizard?**

I used your website to research information about my grant application and paper.

### **Is there anything else you might like to add?**

If I could have any say in how the money that was donated to your organization on my behalf should be used, I would want the money to help rescue and care for Horned Lizards that are in danger, not cared for properly, or are ill. Thank you for all that you do. It's nice knowing there are other people in the world like me...people who really love lizards!!

Khalil Hanif-Norris  
The Canterbury Episcopal School  
1708 N, Westmoreland Rd.  
Desoto, TX 75115

Sharon G. Grosser

12/15/2016

Dear Ms.Grosser,

My name is Khalil Hanif-Norris, and I am in the fifth grade at The Canterbury Episcopal School. I really like my school. My favorite subjects are math and science. I love math because it really shows how smart I am. The reason I like science is because I love learning about new animal facts, and it's the reason I chose The Horned Lizard Conservation Society. The H.L.C.S knows almost every thing about horned lizards. I want other people to know more about horned lizards too.

H.L.C.S is an organization that helps Horned lizards who are endangered or in risk of endangerment. They also help injured lizards. The reason they help them is because numbers are decreasing. Also, the reason I am helping them is because I love lizards so much, and I don't want them to be endangered. This organization has helped many lizards. The headquarters is located in Austin Texas. I'm hoping that with your help, I will be able to help lizards too.

I love lizards, and I am really passionate about them. This is why I chose this organization. I would love having my own pet lizard someday. My favorite lizard is the green iguana this lizard can grow up to 6 feet in length. I have picked up a green iguana before in Jamaica. I also have seen a Texas Fence Lizard that was two feet in length, and lived in my backyard.

We need the H.L.C.S, otherwise, all of these super cute lizards would not be alive. This organization does not just help one lizard, it helps all lizards. If we don't do something now there will be no more horned lizards left because they will be extinct. I love all lizards, not just super cute ones. Please just help them!

Sincerely, *Khalil Hanif-Norris*

Khalil Hanif-Norris  
The Canterbury Episcopal school

*Khalil Hanif Grant-Letter.pdf*

## Looking for HLCS Leaders

*By Leslie Nossaman*

We are still looking for volunteers for President-Elect and Treasurer. Tanya Phillips has graciously agreed to continue in the Treasurer role until we find someone else to fill the position and we are very grateful! We are also looking for a new Newsletter Design Editor.



Fannie Messer has also graciously agreed to continue in this role for now but we would like to find someone soon to replace her. Please contact Jared (jaredansley@gmail.com) if you or if you know of someone who might be interested in helping by joining the Board of Directors or the Newsletter Design Editor.

# West Texas HLCS Survey 2016

By Bill Brooks

May 27th, the Friday before Memorial Day weekend I left my home in Bastrop at the blazingly early hour of 10:30 am. I just can't quite get away early...ever.

Tanya Phillips and Chuck Reburn only left an hour before I did. We texted a few times but I couldn't catch up with them. Chuck and Tanya invited the HLCS back to their vacation home in Terlingua Villages, just north of Big Bend National Park. For the third time the society was searching for horned lizards in the area.

As I turned into the subdivision about 8:45 pm (just about dark) a Javelina and long eared Jack Rabbits greeted me. Tanya drove their 4 -wheeler out to guide me through the maze of roads. HLCS member Bruce Edley and his friend Mason Hyland had arrived earlier from California. They work for the Colorado Desert District for California State Parks. Bruce is an ESI and Mason is an environmental scientist. The two of them were already off night time herping (looking for amphibians and reptiles). They repeated this every evening of the trip.

Please note: no animals were collected on this trip. All animals were photographed and left where we found them.

May 28th we toured Tanya's family's properties in the area. We found a Black-necked

Gartersnake in a pond, a beehive in a shallow cave (and got stung several times), and really ugly little arachnid called a Solifugid. We also searched the area where we had seen Round-tailed Horned Lizards in the past but didn't find any. It was a little hot for them (and us) at the time.

May 29th we toured some local mines and a lake. This evening Chuck made us his famous mac and cheese. Chuck made wonderful meals for our little group every evening at the vacation home.

After dinner we all took off for a little bit of night herping. We met up with a friend of Bruce's and local herper, Daryl. We searched a large road-cut. Tanya, Chuck, and I then returned to the cabin while the others drove the roads for another 5 hours.

May 30th we all went to Big



Bruce Edley with a lovely pink Coachwhip snake (Photo by Mason Hyland).

Bend National Park and hiked to Cattail Springs. While we were there at this lovely watering hole we met another couple of herpers from Houston, Mike and Carly. They hung around with us the rest of the day and I randomly ran into them the next week. On the hike back to the cars we saw a lovely green Western Collared Lizard.

On another day Mike and Carly hiked the Lost Mine Trail in the Basin without us. On this trip they saw a mother bear with her two cubs.

After Cattail Springs, Chuck and Tanya headed for home while the rest of us went to the Basin. The others trekked out to the window while I bought a not very good \$10.00 hamburger at the Basin restaurant. I perused the gift shops, read, and filled our water bottles while they were hiking. While I was reading in the car, it started hailing. It got up to fingernail-size, not large enough to really hurt anyone but it did sting a little.

All during the trip we occasionally had light evening showers. (Heavy rains flooded parts of Austin while we were out west.) The dampness allowed us to see some local amphibians that most people don't get to see.

We also got to see bright red velvet mites. These tiny red specks spotted the landscape.

Chuck made us a wonderful spaghetti dinner. It made me



The survey scenery.

want to sleep. It made Bruce and Mason want to hit the roads searching for more animals. While they were out they spotted a couple of Ringtails.

May 31 after a breakfast of bacon and eggs we said goodbye to Chuck and Tanya. They returned to Austin while Bruce, Mason, and I toured Terlingua and then went back to Big Bend National Park. After a quick visit they started their long 2-day drive back to California. I, on the other hand, stayed in Big Bend until Friday June 3rd. I camped at Cottonwood, the Rio Grande Village, and in the Basin. I explored all points in between and even made it to the Barton Warnock Center, the headquarters of the Big Bend Ranch State Park.

On Friday I drove part way back to Bastrop for the Sander-son Snake Days (in Sander-son, Texas). This is a day of programs for field herpetolo-gists and Texas Parks and Wildlife Department staff. This was the 6th year of Snake Days and my second to at-tend. For me it was a won-derful gather-ing of good friends and great talks.

Although we didn't see any horned lizards (in West Texas) this year, we

did see a lot of good reptiles and amphibians. Most were seen by Bruce and Mason on their nightly excursions.

Here is our total reptile and amphibian list for our four days of searching.

#### LIZARDS:

- Texas Banded Gecko  
(*Coleonyx reticulatus*) 1
- Reticulated Gecko (*Coleonyx reticulatus*) 3
- Greater Earless Lizard  
(*Cophosaurus texanus*) many
- Lesser Earless Lizard (*Holbrookia maculate*)
- Crevice Spiny Lizard (*Sceloporus poinsettia p.*) 2
- Western Collard Lizard (*Crotaphytus collaris*) 1
- Ornate Tree Lizard (*Urosaurus ornatus*)
- Eastern Fence Lizard (*Sceloporus undulates*)
- Big Bend Canyon Lizard  
(*Sceloporus m. annultus*)
- Side-blotched Lizard (*Uta stansburiana stejnegeri*)
- Rusty-rumped Whiptail (*Aspidoscelis septemvittata*)



Spotted Chirping Frog (Photo by Bruce Edley).

continued on next page

continued from previous page

Trans-Pecos Striped Whiptail (*Aspidoscelis inornata*)  
Common Checkered Whiptail (*Aspidoscelis tesselatus*)  
Chihuahuan Spotted Whiptail (*Aspidoscelis exsanguis*)  
Texas Spotted Whiptail (*Aspidoscelis gularis*)  
Four-lined Skink (*Plestiodon tetragrammus*)  
Eastern Collared Lizard (*Crotaphytus collaris*)

#### **SNAKES:**

Texas Night Snake (*Hypsiglena torquata jeni*)  
3 (1 DOR-Dead on Road)  
Kansas Glossy Snake (*Arizona e. elegans*) 1  
DOR  
Black-tailed Rattlesnake (*Crotalus molossus*) 1  
Western Diamond-backed Rattlesnake (*C. atrox*)  
1 DOR  
Western Coachwhip (*Masticophis flagellum tectatus*) 1

Black-necked Gartersnake (*Thamnophis c. cyrtopsis*) 3  
Central TX Whipsnake (*Masticophis taenatus ornatus*) 1  
Trans-pecos Ratsnakes (*Bogertophis s. subocularis*) 2  
Blind Snake 1 (Species ?)  
Texas Lyre Snake (*Trimorphodon vilkinsoni*)

#### **AMPHIBIANS:**

Red-spotted Toad (*Anaxyrus punctatus*)  
Green Toad (*Bufo debilis insidiator*)  
Texas Toad (*Bufo speciosus*)  
Great Plains Narrow-mouth Toad (*Gastrophryne olivacea*)  
Rio Grand Leopard Frog (*Rana berlandieri*)  
Spotted Chirping Frog (*Syrrophus guttillatus*)  
Canyon Treefrog tadpole (*Hyla arenicolor*) 1  
Couch's Spadefoot Toad (*Scaphiopus couchii*)



## HLCS Booth Sitting

By Bill Brooks

Back on September 17, 2016 the Horned Lizard Conservation Society had a booth at the Austin Zoo for their Nature Festival. The HLCS has about 6 or 8 booths a year for various

festivals and nature events. These booth sitting opportunities are great opportunities for outreach and a chance to get new members. It is important to keep our name in the public and let people know of our mission. It's an easy thing to do.

Everyone loves horned lizards.

If you would like to help with a booth or host one of your own at your local nature festival, please get in touch with Bill Brooks, 512-581-0377 <b.brooks@utexas.edu>



Wade Phelps and Bill Brooks with the horny toad costume.



The HLCS Booth (photo by Bill Brooks, Sept. 17, 2016).

# Horned Lizard Research Grant 2018 Application

The Horned Lizard Conservation Society is dedicated to protecting horned lizards by documenting and publicizing the values and conservation needs of horned lizards, promoting horned lizard conservation projects, and assisting with horned lizard management initiatives. Towards those ends, the HLCS annually sponsors research that has direct conservation applications. To learn more about the society and past grants, go to

<http://www.hornedlizards.org/>.

We will be offering grants again in 2018. In the past, priority has been given to projects that have direct conservation implications, including public education.

To apply, send a proposal detailing the goal of the study, the rationale for it including relevance to conservation of horned lizards, and how your work would benefit from this opportunity. The pro-

posal may not exceed 1000 words, excluding up to ten references. Also include a preliminary budget with any other funding sources available or received for your project. In addition, send a short resume or CV (up to 3 pages) for the lead applicant and have a single letter of reference sent to Monty Criswell: [mcrisw1@gmail.com](mailto:mcrisw1@gmail.com). The deadline is January 1, 2018. The decision will be announced by January 31, 2018.



## HLCS Booth Sitting continued



Two pictures of the HLCS booth at the Austin Zoo (photo by Bill Brooks, September 17, 2016)



Kids with masks (photo by Bill Brooks, Sept. 17, 2016)

## New HLCS Member Services Officer

By Leslie Nossaman

HLCS Board of Directors would like to announce a new officer, Lynn Seman! Lynn has volunteered to be the Member Services Officer. She was appointed by the Board as this is an appointed position and will serve for the rest of this election cycle. Welcome to Lynn!



**Return Service Requested**

---

PLEASE JOIN US! Students/Seniors: \$10; Regular: \$25; Contributing: \$50; Corporate: \$250; Lifetime: \$300  
 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.

---

*Printed on Recycled Paper*

**Table of Contents**

HLCS Biennial Meeting: July 28-29, 2017.....p 1  
*Jared Fuller*

2017 Grant Recipient Research Summary..... p 3

Horned Lizards of Ajos-Bavispe, Sonora, Mexico..... p 3  
*Cecilia Aguilar Morales*

New Exhibits for the HLCS..... pp 4 - 5  
*Bill Brooks*

The Horned Lizard and the Horned Lizard Conservation Society as a School Project..... pp 6 - 7  
*Leslie Nossaman*

Looking for HLCS Leaders.....p 7  
*Leslie Nossaman*

West Texas HLCS Survey 2016.....pp 9 - 10  
*Bill Brooks*

HLCS Booth Sitting..... pp 10 - 11  
*Bill Brooks*

Horned Lizard Research Grant 2018 Application..... p 11

New HLCS Member Services Officer..... p 11  
*Leslie Nossaman*

***Phrynosomatics is now sent electronically.***