

DESERT TORTOISE COUNCIL NEWSLETTER

THE
DESERT TORTOISE COUNCIL



WINTER 2000

OUR 25TH YEAR

Our Goal: To assure the continued survival of viable populations of the desert tortoise throughout its range.

SILVER ANNIVERSARY SYMPOSIUM APRIL 21 - 23, 2000 AT THE ORLEANS IN LAS VEGAS

The 25th Desert Tortoise Council Symposium promises to be as diverse, stimulating, and provocative as ever.

Registration begins at 8:00 a.m. Friday, April 21st, 2000, with the first presentation beginning at 10:00 a.m. The following are a few highlights:

Dr. Kurt Buhlmann, Program Officer for the SSC Freshwater Turtle and Tortoise Specialist Group and Conservation International, will be a guest speaker and will address the Asian turtle crisis.

John Behler will represent the SSC Freshwater Turtle and Tortoise Specialist Group, and Joan Diemer-Berish will present the latest work on upper respiratory tract disease in three populations of gopher tortoises in Florida.

One session will focus on the several desert tortoise translocation projects in Nevada currently being conducted by Phil Medica and Drs. C. Richard Tracy, Ron Marlow, and Dawn Wilson. Phil Medica will present the results of a multi-year research project on effects of livestock grazing on perennial grasses.

Dr. Brian Henen and others will discuss results of several research projects on tortoise reproduction. Ann McLuckie has organized a session on distance sampling and other research projects on demography.

Peter Woodman will present the long-awaited results of surveys from the Chocolate Mountains and Twenty-Nine Palms military bases. Dr. Kristin Berry, Tracy and Glenn Goodlett will describe tortoise behavior and use of cover sites in the remote parts of Fort Irwin.

Drs. Elliott Jacobson and Bruce Homer from the University of Florida will contribute their latest work on diseases and toxicology.

Graduate student Francesco Orteggi will discuss herpes viruses. Other sessions will feature conservation programs to protect and restore habitat and government reports on the status of several land use plans.

Due to the success of last year's multiple field trips, several field trips are currently being planned for Monday, April 24, 2000. Potential field trips include looks at proposed developments in southern Nevada, translocation research areas, and nearby critical habitat.

Saturday evening we will hold our Silver Anniversary Banquet, Awards Ceremony, and Raffle / Auction.

We have reserved **The Orleans** for Friday, April 21st, through Sunday, April 23rd, 2000. **The Orleans** is a very nice, two year old hotel with a tremendous variety in their restaurants. Shuttles are available to and from the airport and other hotels.

Rooms are small suites with separate sitting areas. A block of rooms has been reserved for this event. Room rates range from \$49.00 (plus tax) for Thursday and Sunday nights to \$85.00 (plus tax) for rooms on Friday and Saturday nights.

The special block of rooms is limited and will not be available after March 21. Make your reservations now! DON'T PROCRASTINATE!

Mention you are with the Desert Tortoise Council for these rates. For more information call Tim Duck at 435 628-7231. **The Orleans:** located in Las Vegas, Nevada, at 4500 W. Tropicana Avenue, just across I-15 from the Strip; Reservations 1-800-ORLEANS (675-3267); (702) 365-7111; Fax (702) 365-7535.

Please join us in Las Vegas in April of 2000 and help us celebrate 25 years of tortoise science, advocacy, and conservation, and learn more about the desert tortoise.