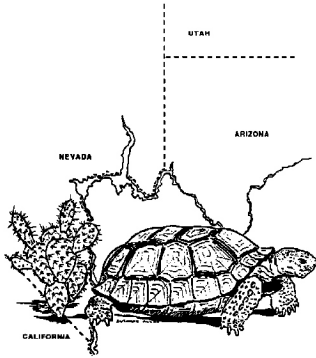


THE DESERT TORTOISE COUNCIL NEWSLETTER



FALL 2005
OUR 31ST YEAR

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

2006 ANNUAL SYMPOSIUM - TUCSON

The Desert Tortoise Council Symposium is in Tucson again. It will be held downtown again from February 17 to 20, 2006 at the same hotel. The hotel used to be the Radisson, but is now The Hotel Arizona (181 West Broadway).

The 31st Anniversary Symposium will have special sessions, featured speakers, mixers, awards, the raffle and auction, and field trips. So far for the raffle and auction we have: a large Hamil Ma framed pencil and charcoal drawing of Joshua Tree National Park, *Life on the Edge*, the huge picture-laden book about California's rare and endangered species, and a large, framed print of the large photo of fighting tortoises featured in *Life on the Edge*.

We should also have items from South Africa, and some Native American Art. If you have items to donate for the raffle and auction, please bring them along!

Dr. Walter Whitford, author of numerous articles on southwestern deserts, will be chairing a special session on desert ecology. He will also be signing his new and highly rated book, *Ecology of Desert Systems*.

Dr. Valentine Lance, co-editor of a newly published book on *Temperature-Dependent Sex Determination in Vertebrates*, will be presenting a paper and signing his new book.

Dr. Brian Henen, who recently returned from South Africa, will be a featured speaker on one or more aspects of his research on physiology and reproduction in the Namaqualand speckled padloper. He will also give a presentation on his work with four other species of South African tortoises and two species in Madagascar.

There will be papers on genetics of Mojave and Sonoran desert tortoises and paternity, on ecology, social behavior, health and disease. There will also be another group of presentations by government officials on their management efforts to recover the tortoise.

Dr. Stebbins has expressed an interest in attending again. He is 90!! Amazing! He was in the field every day at the 2005 symposium. There will be books, shirts, and other items on sale.

www.deserttortoise.org

Presentations must be on a compact disc or flash drive and must be PowerPoint 2000 compatible and presented at registration. All Power Point presentations will be given on computers provided specifically for that purpose. No personal laptops and no zip disks! Slide presentations (35 mm) are still acceptable, but overhead projections are not. PowerPoint is the preferable presentation format. These rules will help the presentations flow smoothly and keep the sessions on time.

The Symposium begins Friday, February 17 with the Annual Business Meeting in the morning. Sessions will begin Friday morning after the Business Meeting and continue until Sunday afternoon. Field trips will occur on Monday. Current plans include a mixer and book signing Friday evening, continental breakfast Saturday morning; mixer, speaker, and awards Saturday evening; and continental breakfast Sunday morning. As something new, we are replacing the banquet with a mixer. This will allow more people to attend the awards, the speaker, and the raffle and auction. It also allows more time for networking and socializing in a relaxed atmosphere. Cost of the mixer is included with registration.

Registration fee structure has changed slightly. The fee structure makes it even more attractive to be a member, and to register early. Student registration remains the same.

A block of rooms at The Hotel Arizona is reserved for February 16 to 20. The room rate for single and doubles is \$85 a night. All rates are European Plan and with taxes of 11.5% plus a \$1.00 per room per night City Surcharge. Your rate includes full fitness privileges to the YMCA located just blocks from the hotel, wireless high speed internet access, free local phone calls, daily newspaper delivery, and in-room complimentary water. When making reservations (1-800-845-4596 or 520-

624-8711), ask for reservations and state that you are with the Desert Tortoise Council. Rooms should be reserved before January 17, 2006 as the remaining unused rooms will be released into hotel inventory. Refer to The Hotel Arizona web page for additional information:

<http://www.thehotelarizona.com>

and information on Tucson can be found at:

<http://www.visittucson.org>

If any individual or group is interested in making a donation for the symposium, please contact Doug Duncan, local host chair, at fldhcky@cox.net.

For vendor information, contact Eric Stitt at stitt@cox.net.

CALL FOR PAPERS, REGISTRATION, PHOTO CONTEST INSIDE THIS ISSUE

You must register to attend. Preregistration as a member is the best value. The deadline for early registration is January 15, 2006. Note that the deadline for papers is December 1.

DTC'S HANDLING, MONITORING & SURVEYING WORKSHOP

October 22-23, 2005, Ridgecrest, California

The Desert Tortoise Council Workshops are held once a year in the fall. Our next workshop is scheduled for October 22 to 23, 2005, in Ridgecrest, California.

www.deserttortoise.org

CALL FOR PAPERS AND POSTERS
31st ANNUAL MEETING AND SYMPOSIUM
Friday, Saturday, Sunday, and Monday, February 17-20, 2006

The Desert Tortoise Council will host its Thirty-first Annual Symposium on Friday, Saturday, Sunday, and Monday, February 17 to 20, 2006 at The Hotel Arizona, Tucson, Arizona. **Titles and abstracts for sessions or contributed papers and posters are hereby invited.** The Council welcomes pertinent papers on turtle and tortoise biology and conservation, especially regarding the Sonoran Desert and Mexico.

Please return the form below with abstract by **December 1, 2005** (If necessary, abstracts can be submitted by January 1, 2006, but the form below must be submitted by December 1, 2005).

Abstracts

Content: They should be substantive, focused on findings and implications of findings (not methods). Abstracts for 15 minute papers should be limited to 250 words (body, not title and addresses) and double-spaced. Capitalize and center the title; underneath the title, list and center all authors (include first names) with affiliations and addresses. Italicize all scientific names and statistical notations. Authors need to follow the [Guidelines for Authors](#).

Submission: Send a virus-free file by e-mail or on a 3.5 inch disk (WordPerfect 9.0 or Word 2000 for Windows, or more recent versions) by surface mail. ALL e-mail transmissions must include all the information requested below, including author's address, phone, e-mail address, and fax numbers. E-mail transmissions must include the abstract as an attachment in WordPerfect 9.0 or Word 2000 (or more recent versions), not in the body of the text. The Program Chair must be informed immediately if a cancellation or substitution is necessary.

Papers

Speakers: should be prepared to give professional papers. Most papers will be scheduled at 15-minute intervals (12 minutes for presentation, three minutes for questions), unless other arrangements are made.

Featured Speakers: The Keynote and Invited or Featured Speakers will be allotted additional time, to be arranged with the Program Chair.

Posters

Posters will be displayed throughout the meeting. Poster presentations may be offered at specific times. If you have questions about your paper or need assistance, please contact the Program Chair, Dr. Kristin Berry, at the address below.

Information should be exact, because the program copy will be prepared from this sheet. If your title and the speaker list are tentative, say so.

Paper _____ Student Paper _____ Poster _____
Author(s) and Affiliations(s). Indicate speaker with an asterisk _____

Title of Paper _____

Address of Speaker _____

Work phone _____ Home phone _____ E-mail _____

Special needs (e.g., AV equipment): _____ Time: _____

Submission

Mail to: Dr. Kristin H. Berry, Program Chair; USGS; 22835 Calle San Juan De Los Lagos, Moreno Valley, CA 92553. E-mail to: kristin_berry@usgs.gov and to fldhcky@cox.net (send copies to both).

PHOTO CONTEST

The Council sponsors the annual Photo Contest to honor and encourage our members to participate in educating the public through photography. Mike Bailey is managing the 2006 Photo Contest.

FORMAT. For 2006, the format is mounted print and digital photographs either in black and white or color (no slides). All prints must be matted, NO GLASS FRAMES please. All prints must be labeled with the following information placed on the back of the PRINT: common and scientific names of subject; location; date PRINT was taken; contestant's name, address, and phone number; and entry category. No names on the front, please, but titles and date are acceptable. This year, the Council encourages contest entrants to also submit electronic copies (in jpg format) of their entries so that they can be posted on the website before the Symposium.

AWARDS. Qualified winners will be awarded first, second, and third place ribbons in each of the eight categories. First Place awards will be \$50; second and third place winners will receive ribbons. The Best of Show will receive \$100.

CATEGORIES.

1. WILD DESERT TORTOISES
2. CAPTIVE (PET) DESERT TORTOISES
3. OTHER DESERT REPTILES
4. DESERT MAMMALS
5. OTHER DESERT WILDLIFE
6. WILD DESERT PLANTS
7. DESERT SCENICS
8. TORTOISE CONSERVATION. This category covers a range of subjects, but must depict activities or subject matter important to the perpetuation of the species. Examples are research, impacts (i.e., raven predation), improvements (i.e., fencing), and environmental education.

OTHER RULES. With the exception of Captive (Pet) Tortoises, all PRINTS must be taken of WILD (i.e., unrestrained and photographed in its natural habitat) subjects occurring within the geographic range of the desert tortoise. Each contestant may submit a maximum of two PRINTS per category. Photos must have been taken by the contestant.

SUBMISSION OF PRINTS. PRINTS must be available for viewing no later than 3:00 p.m. on Friday afternoon, February 17. You may either bring your prints and provide them to Mike Bailey at the Symposium early on Friday or mail them to him at: 619 Pinon Court, Ridgecrest, CA 93555. PRINTS must arrive at this address by Friday, February 10, 2006. Photographers do not need to be present to win. To ensure that your entries are posted on the website before the Symposium, submit electronic copies (in jpg format) to the [DTC webmaster](#).

JUDGING. Prints will be judged at the Symposium by the attendees. Attendees will pick up ballots at the registration table and voting will be from 3:00 p.m. Friday to Saturday until 3:00 p.m. Winners will be announced at the Awards on Saturday night.

PRINTS will not be returned, except upon advance request, and will become the property of the Desert Tortoise Council. The Council will have the right to use these photographs in its publications and educational programs, as well as to assign such permission to others, with full credit given to the photographer.

REGISTRATION FORM

Desert Tortoise Council 31st Annual Meeting and Symposium February 17-20, 2006

Return to
Desert Tortoise Council
P.O. Box 331
Tucson, AZ 85702-331

Please complete a SEPARATE form for each attendee.
Please print or type

Name: _____ **Organization:** _____
(First, Last) (Name to be used on ID badge)

Address: _____ **City:** _____ **State:** _____ **Zip:** _____

E-mail: _____ **Daytime Phone:** _____ **Fax:** _____

SYMPOSIUM FEES

		ENTER AMOUNT
Member Registration	\$90.00 (\$125.00 if postmarked after 1/14/2006)	_____
Student Member Registration	\$40.00 (verification required) (\$60.00 if postmarked after 1/14/2006)	_____
Non-member Registration	\$115.00 (\$140.00 if postmarked after 1/14/2006)	_____
One-day Registration	\$60 Day _____	_____
Regular Membership Dues	\$15.00 (see dues schedule in newsletter)	_____
Raffle Ticket(s)	@ \$1.00 each	_____

TOTAL ENCLOSED _____

Make check payable to **Desert Tortoise Council**
Only checks or fully executed purchase orders are accepted

Monday Field Trip
I would like to attend one of several Monday, February 20, 2006, field trips
Yes: _____ No: _____

www.deserttortoise.org

The Desert Tortoise Council's two-day workshops are structured to provide information on the handling, monitoring, surveying, and biology of desert tortoises.

Instructors include: Desert Tortoise Council officers, public and private sector biologists, and personnel from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), Bureau of Land Management (BLM), California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG), and Arizona Game and Fish Department.

The DTC Tortoise Handling Workshops are recognized by the USFWS and CDFG, but a certificate of attendance and participation **does not guarantee** a USFWS or CDFG permit. However, completion of the Workshop should help with the permitting process.

If you would like to attend, please contact us via e-mail at Bailey0714@earthlink.net. THE WORKSHOP IS FULL. We will now be taking names for the waiting list. **THERE WILL BE ABSOLUTELY NO WALK-INS AT REGISTRATION.** You need to be registered before you make the trip to Ridgecrest. Remember, we are a nonprofit organization that is trying to make the registration process fair and easy for everyone involved.

FUTURE ANNUAL SYMPOSIA

The symposia location for 2007 and beyond has not been set. Suggestions or bids for future symposia locations and venues will be gratefully accepted. The Board of Directors is researching several locations: Las Vegas, St. George, and Laughlin.

NEW DTC ADDRESS

The DTC has a new address. **All** mail correspondence should be sent to this address:

www.deserttortoise.org

Desert Tortoise Council
P.O. Box 3273
Beaumont, CA 92223

DAVID J. MORAFKA MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP

DUE November 1, 2005!!

In honor and memory of Dr. David J. Morafka, distinguished herpetologist and authority on North American gopher tortoises, the Desert Tortoise Council, with the aid of several donors, has established a scholarship to help support graduate student research that contributes to the understanding, management, and conservation of the desert tortoise, *Gopherus agassizii*.

The scholarship amount of \$2,000 will be awarded at the Desert Tortoise Council's Annual Symposium, depending on the availability of funding and an appropriate recipient.

To be eligible, applicants must be graduate students enrolled in a Master's or Doctoral program at an accredited university. They must agree to present a report on the results of the research in which scholarship funds were used at a future symposium of the Desert Tortoise Council.

Applications will be evaluated on the potential of the research to contribute to the biological knowledge of the desert tortoise, and to its management and conservation. Essential conditions are the importance and originality of the research problem, design of sampling and analysis, preliminary data supporting the feasibility of the research, and the likelihood of success.

Application Procedure:

1. Download an application form. <http://deserttortoise.org/awards/morafkascholarship.pdf>

2. Provide all information requested on the application, including a description of the research project in no more than 1,200 words.

3. Applications must be accompanied by three letters of recommendation, one of which must be from the applicant’s major professor or research advisor. The letters must be in sealed envelopes addressed to the “Morafka Scholarship Selection Committee” with the recommenders’ signatures across the flaps.

4. Completed application materials must be submitted by **November 1, 2005**, to the Desert Tortoise Council, P.O. Box 3273, Beaumont, CA 92223.

5. A scholarship recipient will be selected by a committee of Desert Tortoise biologists appointed by the Desert Tortoise Council Board of Directors.

6. The scholarship recipient will be notified of their award by February 1, 2006, and the award will be presented at the 2006 Desert Tortoise Council Symposium.

**The Current Board of Directors of the
Desert Tortoise Council**

Senior Co-Chair	Doug Duncan
Junior Co-Chair	Pete Woodman
Co-Chair Elect	Dan Pearson
Recording Secretary	Lori Rose
Corresponding Secretary	Pat von Helf
Treasurer	Mike Coffeen
Products Manager	Tom Egan
Immediate Past Co-Chair	Bob Turner
Board Member	Tracy Bailey
Board Member	Kristin Berry
Board Member	Becky Jones
Board Member	Kristen Murphy
Board Member	Cari Ronning
Board Member	Glenn Stewart

Newsletter Editor/Membership	Doug Duncan
Webmaster	Michael Connor

CONSERVATION NEWS

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**BLM to Prepare Supplemental
Environmental Impact Statement
On Proposed New Grazing Regulations**

The Bureau of Land Management announced that it will prepare a supplement to the final Environmental Impact Statement on proposed changes to its grazing regulations.

The BLM proposed these grazing regulation changes in December 2003 and published a final Environmental Impact Statement on the proposed changes on June 17, 2005. The Bureau plans to publish its supplemental impact statement in the near future.

BLM Director Kathleen Clarke said, “This decision reflects the BLM’s desire to go the extra mile to ensure that the agency has fully considered all comments and views on the proposed changes.”

The BLM’s grazing regulatory proposal – known as a “rule” – will change the agency’s management of grazing on 160 million acres of public lands. More specifically, the proposed rule seeks to:

- * change the agency’s working relationships with public land ranchers,
- * conserve rangeland resources, and
- * enhance administrative efficiency.

The Bureau claimed they undertook this regulatory initiative in recognition of the economic and social benefits of public lands grazing, as well as the role of ranching in preserving open space and wildlife habitat in the rapidly growing West.

Details on the BLM’s proposed grazing regulations can be accessed on the agency’s national Website at www.blm.gov/grazing.

U.S. House of Representatives Votes to Drastically Alter the Endangered Species Act

The U.S. House of Representatives passed a bill that would significantly weaken protections for the nation's fish, plants, wildlife, and the places they call home and dismantle the Endangered Species Act. The bill was opposed by 158 Democrats and 34 Republicans.

"The Endangered Species Act is a safety net for wildlife, plants and fish that are on the brink of extinction. This bill will cut a large hole in that safety net," said Liz Godfrey, Program Director for the Endangered Species Coalition. "The Endangered Species Act has been successful in preventing the extinction of the American Bald Eagle, California condor, Pacific Northwest salmon, gray wolf, and American alligator, as well as many other species. We owe it to our children and grandchildren to be good stewards of the environment and leave behind a legacy of protecting endangered species and the special places they call home."

"The American public supports the Endangered Species Act and wants it to remain strong," said Godfrey. "It is critically important that the American public recognize that Mr. Pombo is masking his true intentions with soft sounding words like 'update,' 'enhance,' and 'modernize,' however, his true intentions are to dismantle the protections of one of our nation's strongest conservation laws."

"The Pombo bill is the dream of every irresponsible developer out there," said Defenders of Wildlife President Rodger Schlickeisen. "Not only does this bill gut the Endangered Species Act, but it creates a government give away program to greedy developers and provides new loop holes to make it easier to use deadly pesticides that will impact not only wildlife but our children, by polluting our lands and waters," said Schlickeisen.

The safety net of the Endangered Species Act is designed to prevent extinction. Its core principle

is to ensure no species is lost forever on our watch. Judged by this standard the Endangered Species Act is an unqualified success. The National Research Council cites that the Endangered Species Act has saved about one thousand species from extinction. According to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the Endangered Species Act has saved 99.3% of its listed species from extinction and the longer a species enjoys the Act's protection, the more likely its condition will stabilize or improve.

HR 3824- Rep. Pombo's deceptively titled "Threatened and Endangered Species Recovery Act" will:

- * Eliminate Habitat Protections
- * Repeal Protections Against Hazardous Pesticides
- * Politicize Scientific Decision-Making
- * Eliminate the Vital Check and Balance of Consultation
- * allows federal agencies to avoid consultation, resulting in agencies with little to no experience in wildlife issues deciding if projects will harm wildlife;
- * Require Taxpayers to Pay Developers, Oil & Gas Companies, and other Industries for Complying with the Law

"The Endangered Species Coalition calls on the United States Senate to save the Endangered Species Act," said Brock Evans, President, Endangered Species Coalition. "We have a responsibility to prevent the extinction of fish, plants and wildlife because once they are gone, we cannot bring them back."

ADVERTISING GUIDELINES

This newsletter includes the first advertisement in recent memory. It is DTC policy that appropriate advertising be accepted for the newsletter. If anyone is interested in advertising in the DTC newsletter, please contact the newsletter editor.

**NO
TRIANGULATION
REQUIRED!**

GPS DATA SENT REAL-TIME VIA VHF

- Bundled GPS data Downloads.
- Up to 100,000 data events stored.
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Better than -150dBm over 2 or 4 MHz bandwidth.
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animal transmitted
20 km to OSPREY receiver.

Frequency 218.894MHz
S19 17%
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(2) Volume 82%
(3) Scan OFF 7.9U
48 26.44N 22
123 22.31W 05/02/07
2004/03/30 18:24:12

H.A.B.I.T.
RESEARCH

692 Sumas Street, Victoria, BC, Canada V8T 4S6 Tel: 250-381-9425
Toll Free: 1-866-863-5155 info@habitresearch.com www.habitresearch.com

Desert Tortoise Council
c/o Doug Duncan
P.O. Box 331
Tucson, AZ 85702

Check one: _____ MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION/RENEWAL _____ CHANGE OF ADDRESS
DATE: _____ EMAIL ADDRESS: _____
NAME: _____ PHONE: _____
(Please Print) (Include Area Code)
ADDRESS: _____
CITY: _____ STATE: _____ ZIP CODE: _____

_____ Regular (**\$15.00** per year) _____ Organization (\$55.00 per year)
_____ Contributing (\$50.00 per year) _____ Lifetime (\$300 or more)
_____ Student (**\$10.00** per year- Requires endorsement of student's advisor or Major Professor)

NEWSLETTER FORMAT:
_____ Mailed paper copy _____ Pdf file via e-mail _____ E-mail notice for web page viewing

Make check or money order payable to the Desert Tortoise Council
and **send** with this application

to: **Desert Tortoise Council, P.O. Box 3273**
Beaumont, CA 92223

The Desert Tortoise Council does not release its membership list

www.deserttortoise.org