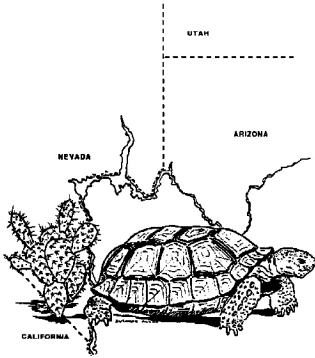


THE DESERT TORTOISE COUNCIL NEWSLETTER



WINTER 2008
OUR 32nd YEAR

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

SYMPOSIUM! SYMPOSIUM!

This is an abbreviated electronic newsletter for the 2008 symposium only; and while we transition to a new newsletter editor.

2008 ANNUAL SYMPOSIUM LAS VEGAS

The upcoming Desert Tortoise Council's 33rd Annual Symposium, starting Friday morning, February 22, 2008, offers a timely and diverse program. The Symposium begins on Friday morning at 10:00 a.m. One of the first presentations will be by the winners of the Annual Research Award. Dr. Robert Murphy of the Royal Ontario Museum, Canada, will summarize his work and that of colleagues, including Taylor Edwards and Ann McLuckie, on the past, current, future research directions on genetics of the desert tortoise complex. Dr. Steve Schwarzbach will give the Keynote Address on the U. S. Geological Survey's (USGS) current and future research programs related to desert tortoises, their habitat, and the arid Southwest. His keynote will initiate government presentations on efforts to recover the tortoise that were undertaken during 2007 and are also scheduled for 2008. Attendees will have an opportunity to question Dr. Schwarzbach and

speakers from other state and federal agencies during a panel discussion later in the afternoon.

Another highlight of the meeting will be a session on climate change. The most recent information will be summarized by an outstanding array of national experts in a half-day session assembled by ecologist Dr. Erik Beever of the USGS for Saturday morning. Speakers include climatologist Dr. Kelly Redmond of Desert Research Institute, geologist Dr. David Miller of the USGS, biologist Dr. Felisa Smith of the University of New Mexico, wildlife biologist Dr. Curt Flather of the Rocky Mountain Forest and Range Experimental Station, and Dr. Beever.

Other featured speakers include Chuck Schaffer, editor of the IUCN Turtle and Tortoise Newsletter and organizer of the last international Turtle Survival Alliance meeting. Chuck will give a presentation on "The Search for Linnaeus' Sources: A Chelonian Odyssey." Rick Schaffer, Chuck's son, will give the Saturday night address

after the Saturday buffet: “A Chelonologist in Eden.” Rick is 15 years old and in the International Baccalaureate Program. Last year, while in 8th grade, he placed first in zoology at the Florida State Science Fair, and received the Discovery Channel Young Scientist Award at both the regional and state competitions. He was among the top winners in the Discovery Channel Young Scientist Challenge in Washington, D.C. He has been interested in turtles and tortoises for most of his life and has found inspiration in the Desert Tortoise Council.

Invited and contributed sessions, interspersed throughout the meeting, will focus on desert tortoise translocation projects at Ft. Irwin and elsewhere; the head starting projects sponsored by the Department of Defense at Edwards Air Force Base and Twentynine Palms; activities of non-profit conservation and education groups (e.g., Center for Biological Diversity, Defenders of Wildlife, Desert Tortoise Preserve Committee, Inc., Desert Tortoise Council); recovery efforts for the bolson tortoise; research on health and diseases of tortoises; plant invasions in the Mojave Desert; fire effects on seedbanks; restoration of tortoise habitat; and ecology and anthropogenic impacts. Field trips are being planned for the Las Vegas and surrounding areas, with special opportunities for photographers on Monday, February 25, 2008.

We recommend that you register early and take advantage of the lower rates. **If your registration is postmarked after January 21, rates are higher. We recommend that you reserve your room at Sam’s Town Hotel and Casino before January 31,** when the special rates no longer apply. Call Sam’s Town at 800-897-8696 or 702-456-7777, mention the Desert Tortoise Council and ask for the special rates.

<http://www.samstownlv.com/main.cfm>

CHANGES IN SYMPOSIUM REGISTRATION COSTS AND OTHER COSTS

The Board of Directors for the Desert Tortoise Council has been discussing recent financial commitments and income at quarterly meetings during the last two years. While the Council’s bank account has grown appreciably over the years, so have expenses and commitments. As of this time, the Council has made major commitments (>\$20,000) to buy land for the endangered bolson tortoise in Mexico, and the legal evaluation of the process is underway. During the last three years, the Council financially supported research on the desert tortoise in Mexico and attendance of our Mexican counterparts at the Symposia. The Council still has pending commitments to support research of colleagues in Mexico. The Council arranged to have all the past Proceedings and Council publications scanned, so that they will be available on the website. Limited commitments were made to assist the most endangered group of turtles in Madagascar, at the request of Dr. Anders Rhodin of the IUCN's Tortoise and Freshwater Turtle Group, and this latter commitment is a very small part of the budget. The budget for awards for the best paper has been increased.

The Board decided that it was necessary to raise the rates of the symposia and workshop to meet expenditures. The costs of the symposia have escalated in the last few years, including travel expenses of invited speakers, the refreshment breaks during the meeting, Saturday and Sunday breakfasts, the Friday night mixer and Saturday evening buffet. All costs of the meals and refreshment breaks are included in the registration fees. The meals and refreshment breaks contribute to the professional and social interactions of people attending the meeting and are an important part of each symposium. In addition, the Board is discussing and planning for mini-regional or specialized workshops at each

of the future symposia, starting with the Annual Meeting and Symposium in St. George, Utah, in 2009. The Board has recognized that it does not have sufficient funds to continue operations for a year in the event of unusual expenditures or brief periods of no income. Therefore, the Board voted to develop and keep the equivalent of funds necessary to run Council operations for a year in the treasury, in the event that no income was available from the workshop or symposium. The time required to meet this financial objective will be several years. For those members interested in a discussion of costs, please join Board members at the Annual Meeting, beginning at 8:00 a.m. on Friday, February 22.

Both individual or group donations for the symposium are greatly appreciated and can be made by contacting Bob Turner, local host chair, at KKBK@cox.net.

REGISTRATION INSIDE THIS ISSUE

You must register to attend. Preregistration as a member is the best value. The deadline for early registration is January 15, 2008.

FUTURE ANNUAL SYMPOSIA

The symposium's location for 2009 will be the Dixie Center in St. George, Utah.

<http://www.dixiecenter.com/index.html>

Suggestions or bids for future symposia locations and venues will be gratefully accepted.

THE CURRENT BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE DESERT TORTOISE COUNCIL

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Webmaster	Michael Connor



REGISTRATION FORM

Desert Tortoise Council 32nd Annual Meeting and Symposium February 22-25, 2008

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	\$150.00 (\$200.00 if postmarked after 1/21/2008)	_____
Student Member Registration	\$60.00 (verification required) (\$85.00 if postmarked after 1/21/2008)	_____
Non-member Registration	\$200.00 (\$250.00 if postmarked after 1/21/2008)	_____
One-day Registration	\$100 (\$140 if postmarked after 1/21/2008)	_____
Spouse (inc. breakfasts/socials)	\$50	_____
Regular Membership Dues	\$30.00 (see dues schedule in newsletter)	_____
Vendors	\$100.00 goods, minimum	_____
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 25, 2008, field trips

Yes: _____ No: _____

www.deserttortoise.org

PHOTO CONTEST

The Council sponsors the annual Photo Contest to honor and encourage our members to participate in educating the public through photography. Cari Ronning is managing the 2008 Photo Contest.

FORMAT. For 2008, 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. **The contestant must be a registered attendee of the 2008 Symposium.** 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 1:30 p.m. on Friday afternoon, February 22. You may either bring your prints and provide them to Cari Ronning at the Symposium early on Friday or mail them to her at: 2214 Little River Court, Las Vegas, NV 89156. **PRINTS** must arrive at this address by Friday, February 15, 2008. 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.

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

Check one: Membership Application: Membership Renewal Change of Address

DATE: _____ EMAIL ADDRESS: _____

NAME: _____ PHONE: _____

(Please Print)

(Include Area Code)

ADDRESS: _____

CITY: _____ STATE: _____ ZIP CODE: _____

_____ Regular (\$30.00 per year) _____ Organization (\$125.00 per year)

_____ Contributing (min \$100.00 per year) _____ Lifetime (\$300 or more)

_____ Student (\$20.00 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