

# *African Herp News*

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## HERPETOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION OF AFRICA

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### FOUNDED 1965

The HAA is dedicated to the study and conservation of African reptiles and amphibians. Membership is open to anyone with an interest in the African herpetofauna. Members receive the Association's journal, *African Journal of Herpetology* (which publishes review papers, research articles, and short communications – subject to peer review) and *African Herp News*, the Newsletter (which includes short communications, natural history notes, geographical distribution notes, herpetological survey reports, venom and snakebite notes, book reviews, bibliographies, husbandry hints, announcements and news items).

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Articles shall be considered for publication provided that they are original and have not been published elsewhere. Articles will be submitted for peer review at the Editor's discretion. Authors are requested to submit manuscripts by e-mail in MS Word '.doc' or '.docx' format.

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**Aaron Bauer**, Department of Biology, Villanova University, 800 Lancaster Avenue, Villanova, Pennsylvania 19085, USA. [aaron.bauer@villanova.edu](mailto:aaron.bauer@villanova.edu)

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**Jeanne Tarrant**, African Amphibian Conservation Research Group, NWU. 40A Hilltop Road, Hillcrest 3610, South Africa. [jeannetarrant@ymail.com](mailto:jeannetarrant@ymail.com)

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**Abeda Dawood**, National Zoological Gardens, Corner of Boom and Paul Kruger Streets, Pretoria 0002, South Africa. [abeda@nzg.ac.za](mailto:abeda@nzg.ac.za)

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#### *NEWSLETTER EDITOR*

**Bryan Maritz**, Department of Ecology & Evolutionary Biology, Cornell University, Corson Hall, Ithaca, NY 14853, USA. [bryanmaritz@gmail.com](mailto:bryanmaritz@gmail.com)

#### *ADDITIONAL MEMBERS*

**Graham Alexander**, School of Animal, Plant and Environmental Sciences, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg 2050, South Africa. [graham.alexander@wits.ac.za](mailto:graham.alexander@wits.ac.za)

**Michael Bates**, Department of Herpetology, National Museum, P.O. Box 266, Bloemfontein 9300, South Africa. [herp@nasmus.co.za](mailto:herp@nasmus.co.za)

**William Branch**, Curator of Herpetology, Bayworld, P.O.Box 13147, Humewood 6013, South Africa. [wrbranch@bayworld.co.za](mailto:wrbranch@bayworld.co.za)

**Andrew Turner**, Scientific Services, Western Cape Nature Conservation Board, Private Bag 5014, Stellenbosch, 7600, South Africa. [aaturner@capenature.co.za](mailto:aaturner@capenature.co.za)

**COVER PHOTOGRAPH:** *Nucras taeniolata* from Groendal Wilderness Area, Eastern Cape Province, South Africa. Photograph by: Werner Conradie. Canon EOS 450D (1/160, F32, ISO 100).

decades. The number of species occurring on the west bank was greater than on the east bank presumably due to greater variety of habitat, increased urbanization and huge web of irrigation canals which have allowed several species to move from the River Nile to the Canal zone. This study suggests the Suez Canal acts as passage for herpetofauna from west to east, but in parallel with the creation of new suitable habitat on the east side for invasive species. Several species such as *A. regularis*, *P. mascareniensis*, *H. flaviviridis*, and *N. tessellata* were transported via the Suez Canal and colonized on the east bank. On the west bank, the subspecies of chameleon was *Chamaeleo chamaeleon chamaeleon*, whereas on the east bank, *Chamaeleo chamaeleon musae*. *Trapelus savignyi* recorded on the west bank with smooth ventrals was not previously known for the species.

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**Jackman, Todd** (Villanova University); Rocha, Nicole; Bauer, Aaron; Koolpe, Rachel (Villanova University)

### **Multilocus phylogeography of the *Pachydactylus serval* and *Pachydactylus weberi* complexes**

Once considered to be subspecies of *Pachydactylus serval*, *Pachydactylus montanus* and *Pachydactylus purcelli* have only been recently described. Both gecko species have a relatively wide distribution, spanning the Cape Province of South Africa up into the southern half of Namibia, with their ranges overlapping in the northern end of the distribution of *P. purcelli*. Representative samples of these species as well as all species that are members of the *P. serval/weberi* clade were taken from an array of localities across their ranges. Patterns of genetic variation were analyzed by obtaining molecular data for the mitochondrial gene ND2 as well as five nuclear protein coding loci. Results from mitochondrial DNA data for *P. purcelli* showed significant geographical substructure, with northern populations being fairly distinct from the more southern localities. *P. montanus* also showed a fair amount of geographical substructure, although the correlation was not as obvious as for *P. purcelli*. In comparing mitochondrial and nuclear genes, there is clear evidence of either deep coalescence or introgression between *P. carinatus* and nearby and sympatric *P. montanus* populations. Results indicate that the Orange River appears to present a geographical barrier, which can be seen by the division between *P. montanus* populations north and south of the river and the distinctiveness of the sole *P. purcelli* population sampled north of the river. Species tree approaches are compared to various concatenation configurations.

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