

AFRICAN HERP NEWS

No. 30 December 1999

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African Herp News

Newsletter of the
Herpetological Association of Africa



No. 30

December 1999

HERPETOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION OF AFRICA

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, short communications and book reviews - subject to peer review) and newsletter, *African Herp News* (which includes short communications, life history notes, geographical distribution notes, venom and snakebite notes, short book reviews, bibliographies, husbandry hints, announcements and news items).

NEWSLETTER EDITOR'S NOTE:

Articles will be considered for publication provided they are original and have not been published elsewhere.

Articles may be submitted for peer review (at least two reviewers) at the Editor's discretion. Lists of reviewers will be published in the newsletter from time to time.

Authors are requested to submit long manuscripts on disc or by e-mail in Word 6.0 format.

The views and opinions expressed in articles are not necessarily those of the Editor.

Articles and news items appearing in *African Herp News* may be reprinted, provided the author's name and newsletter reference are given.

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Dr. Angelo Lambiris.

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EDITORIAL

Members of the Association must be wondering what has happened to the Journal—we apologise for the fact that there was no issue in 1999, but this was the result of matters beyond our control. The problems have been addressed and dealt with. We shall in future meet our commitment to producing two Journals per year.

You will notice with this issue of the Newsletter that we have found another printer—the previous one could not produce anything acceptable. We are currently getting enough contributions to produce two issues of the Newsletter per year, but can only give value to members by producing three or four issues if you send in more articles! Our hearty thanks to those who have contributed this year, and also to the referees who commented on some of the articles. Two wish to remain anonymous, but thanks are due to Prof. John Poynton and Ms. Kate Richardson.

The last two years have eaten heavily into the Association's financial reserves, and it is clear that subscriptions will have to be increased if we are to keep going. Because no Journal was issued this year, we shall not increase the subscription in the year 2000 as originally intended, but shall have to do so in 2001. Hopefully, with increased Journal and Newsletter production members will feel that they are still getting value for money—to the best of my knowledge, our Association has the lowest subscription anywhere for a society that produces a peer-reviewed professional journal as well as a newsletter.

We had hoped to hold another symposium in September next year, but again a series of unforeseen and largely uncontrollable events have effectively demolished Geraldine Pieterse's heroic attempts to get things under way. One of the less creditable obstacles was the unbelievable tariffs charged by an organisation which seems to have changed its mission statement from conservation to fleecing tourists.

Turning to other matters, it is time for a new Committee to be elected. All but one of the present committee members have indicated their willingness to stand for re-election though of course other full Association members may be nominated as well.

The exception is Frank Farquharson, who has carried out the Herculean task of Secretary/Treasurer since 1992, with great competence and distinction. He feels that a break would be welcome, as well as giving some of our younger blood a chance to take up the reins. Frank will be a hard act to follow, and we thank him for his efficiency and his dedication to the interests of the Association. Who would like to follow in his footsteps?

Finally, on behalf of the Committee, I would like to wish you all well over the festive season and in the new year.

Angelo Lambiris

Chairman and Newsletter Editor.

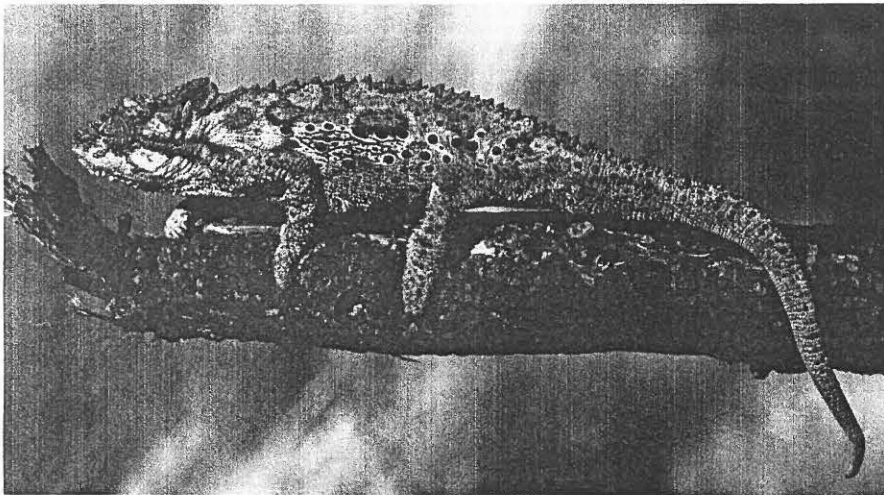
COVER ILLUSTRATION:

Nile Crocodile, *Crocodylus niloticus*. Lake Chivero, Zimbabwe. Sketch by A.J.L. Lambiris

Assoc. Prof. Jens B. Rasmussen (Zoological Museum, Copenhagen) for commenting on the manuscript.

Submitted by

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Karoo Dwarf Chamaeleon, *Bradypodion karrooicum*. Queenstown, Eastern Cape. Photo: A.J.L. Lambiris.

GEOGRAPHICAL DISTRIBUTION

African Herp News publishes brief notes of new geographical distributions (preferably at least 100 km from the nearest published record) of amphibians and reptiles on the African continent and adjacent regions, including the Arabian peninsula, Madagascar, and other islands in the Indian Ocean.

A standard format is to be used, as follows: **SCIENTIFIC NAME**; **Common name** (for sources, see Life History Notes); **Locality** (country, province or state, quarter-degree unit, location, and latitude and longitude if available; elevation above sea level; use metric units); **Date** (day, month, year); **Collector(s)**; **Place of deposition and museum accession number** (required); **Comments** (including data on size, colour and taxonomic characters, e.g. scalation, webbing, especially for taxonomically problematic taxa; and nearest published locality record(s) in km; references to be quoted in the text). Submitted by: **NAME**, Address (in parentheses).

Records submitted should be based on specimens deposited in a recognised collection. New South African province names must be used.

Notes submitted in an incorrect format or style will be returned to the authors.

**AMPHIBIA
ANURA**

RANIDAE

***PTYCHADENA MAPACHA* Channing, 1993; Mapacha Grass Frog**

Namibia; Rundu district, Ojmatako River near tar road bridge (1720CD, 17°58'S, 20°28'E); 21 April 1998; Dr. N.H.G. Jacobsen and W.D. Haacke. Four juvenile to adult specimens (TM 82265 - 82268) deposited in the Natural History Museum (Transvaal Museum) of the Northern Flagship Institution, in Pretoria, of which TM 82267 and 82269 have been transferred to the National Museum of Namibia in Windhoek. The only previous records are from the surroundings of Katima Molilo (1724CB) in the Eastern Caprivi Strip, Mukwe district, Namibia. This sample extends the range by just over 3½° or about 370 km to the west into the main part of Namibia. It also confirms the occurrence in the Okavango system and therefore the probability exists that it will be present in the Okavango Delta in Botswana, as well as in Angola.

The frogs were found during the day along the shallow vegetated marshy edge of the Omaramba Omatako at a point where the water of the Okavango River pushes up its bed of the otherwise dry Omaramba to a point just beyond the bridge of the tar road which runs parallel to the Okavango.

We are indebted to the Ministry of Wildlife, Conservation and Tourism of Namibia for providing us with a collecting permit. A special word of thanks is due to Professor Alan Channing, University of the Western Cape, for correcting our initial identification attempts.

Submitted by

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