



Meeting: Southeast PARC Meeting

Date: August 16-18, 2001

Location: Solon Dixon Education Center - Andalusia, AL

Proceedings

Thursday, 16 August

- **11:00 am:** Check-in (pre-registration required to guarantee on-site housing and meals)
- **1:00 pm:** Welcome, housekeeping and introductions
Rhett Johnson (Solon Dixon Forestry Education Center)
Erin Clark (Savannah River Ecology Laboratory)
- **1:30 pm:** **PARC** overview/update (John Jensen, Georgia Department of Natural Resources)
- **1:45 pm:** **PARC** education update (George L. Heinrich, City of St. Petersburg Parks Department)
- **2:00 pm:** Status of existing action items (Erin Clark); includes preview of **PARC** kit with CD (David Scott, Savannah River Ecology Laboratory)
- **3:30 pm:** Break
- **3:45 pm:** Status of existing action items (continued)
- **5:30 pm:** Dinner
- **7:00 pm:** "Forty Years of Mindless Meanderings Among the Reptiles and Amphibians of the Mid-South" (slide presentation by George Folkerts, Auburn University)
- Social (immediately after slide presentation)

Friday, 17 August

- **7:30 am:** Breakfast
- **9:00 am:** Presentations on regional/state education programs (examples of what is working in each state; Erin Clark)

Forever Wild's Contributions to Herpetofaunal Conservation and Educational Outreach in Alabama (Eric C. Soehren, Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources)

Educational Efforts of Georgia DNR (John Jensen and Kitty Esco, Georgia Department of Natural Resources)

Boyd Hill Nature Park's Florida Turtle Workshops for Educators (George L. Heinrich, City of St. Petersburg Parks Department)

Herpetofaunal Education Efforts at the Montgomery Zoo (Debbi McCollum and Sal Scibetta, Montgomery Zoo)

SPARC (Student Partners in Amphibian and Reptile Conservation) Program (David Scott,

Savannah River Ecology Laboratory)

Educational Outreach Associated with the Auburn University Museum (Craig Guyer, Auburn University)

- **10:30 am:** Break
- **10:45 am:** Presentations on regional/state education programs (continued)

Touchstone Energy Environmental Education Program (Jeff Hohman and Mark Gumbert; East Kentucky Power Cooperative)

Herp Habitat Conservation and Education Efforts of The Longleaf Alliance (Rhett Johnson, Solon Dixon Forestry Education Center)

Gopher Tortoise Conservation Initiative and Gopher Tortoise Reserve Program (Ray Ashton, Ashton Biodiversity Research and Preservation Institute)

- **12:30 pm:** Lunch
- **1:30 pm:** Reports from SE PARC Education/Outreach SWG state representatives (brief reports to include updates on efforts to spread the PARC message, overview of herpetological education efforts and summary of high priority needs in each state; George Heinrich)

Alabama (Mark Bailey, Conservation Services Southeast)

Arkansas (Pat Knighten, Arkansas Game and Fish Commission)

Florida (Karen Moody, Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission)

Georgia (Mark Patterson, Lanier Museum of Natural History)

Kentucky (Jeff Hohman, East Kentucky Power Cooperative)

Louisiana (Avis C. Evans, Louisiana Turtle Farmers)

Mississippi (Heather Sullivan, Mississippi Museum of Natural Science)

North Carolina (Chris McGrath, North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission)

South Carolina (Tony Mills and David Scott, Savannah River Ecology Laboratory)

Tennessee (Lisa Powers, Tennessee Herpetological Society)

Virginia (Dennis Desmond, Northern Virginia Reptile Rescue)

- **3:30 pm:** Break
- **3:45 pm:** Discussion of ways to spread the PARC message, interface with existing successful herpetological education efforts and address high priority needs throughout the region
- **4:30 pm:** Review of Gopher Tortoise Council's new slide presentation (Lora Smith, U.S. Geological Survey)
- **5:30 pm:** Dinner

Saturday, 18 August

- **7:00 am:** Breakfast
- **8:00 am:** Field trips (car-pooling required, bring your own lunches, canoe rentals required for field trip #3):

Field Trip #1: Explore sandhill ridges and Conecuh River bottomland forest at the Solon Dixon Forestry Education Center and gopher frog and pine barrens treefrog habitat at the Conecuh National Forest (leaders: Craig Guyer, Auburn University and John Jensen)

Specific location: 1) Salt Pond on the Conecuh National Forest, 2) gopher tortoise research site on the Conecuh National Forest, and 3) pitcher plant bog on the Conecuh National Forest

Distance to be traveled: about 30 miles round-trip

Length of time (including travel): four hours

Level of difficulty: not difficult, but be prepared to get wet up to your knees

Ending point: Solon Dixon Forestry Education Center

Field Trip #2: Explore red hills salamander habitat (leader: Mark Bailey)

Specific location: U.S. Hwy 31 at Persimmon Creek north of McKenzie, Butler County, Alabama

Distance to be traveled: 45 miles one-way

Length of time (including travel): maximum of four hours

Level of difficulty: easy to moderate; from parking location, we'll walk about a quarter mile to the site on a dirt (or, depending on weather, mud) road; some clambering around on fairly steep slopes will be optional; mid-August heat and humidity will probably be the roughest part.

Ending point: at field trip site; about 15 minutes from Interstate 65 at the Georgianna exit and from there it's another 45 minutes to Montgomery, Alabama

Additional info: This is just across the road from the type locality. Leslie Hubricht found the species here in 1960. Participants should bring a flashlight for peering into burrows. Bug spray (mainly for chiggers) might come in handy. Optional but almost essential pre-trip reading is Whit Gibbons' account of his 1963 experience at this very spot in Chapter 6 of his book, "Their Blood Runs Cold." The site is now protected under International Paper Company's Habitat Conservation Plan for the species. Spectacular mesic beech-magnolia forest with high bluffs. We MAY actually see salamanders, but it's about a 50-50 chance during daylight hours. We can find a place to eat lunch on the banks of Persimmon Creek.

Field Trip #3: Canoe on the Chipola River and search for Barbour's map turtles (leader: George L. Heinrich)

Specific location: Marianna, Florida

Distance to be traveled: ~125 miles one-way

Length of time (including travel): 6 hours

Level of difficulty: easy to moderate

Ending point: at canoe outfitter near Marianna

Additional info: bring your own canoe or rent one from the outfitter at our starting point; no food or restroom facilities on the river; we will eat lunch on the river; bring binoculars; opportunity to swim and snorkel in spring creeks