

## WISCONSIN HERPETOLOGICAL NOTES

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In order that our knowledge of the herpetological fauna of Wisconsin may be maintained up to date, there is submitted herewith a detailed list of such information on this subject as has come to the attention of the writer during the past year.

This list of reptiles and amphibians represents chiefly additional distributional data acquired since our recent publication (Pope and Dickinson 1928, Pope 1928 and 1930).

The items composing this list comprise principally specimens collected or received during the year 1929 as well as certain species indicated in publications or observed in that year. A few items representing localities inadvertently omitted in the previous bulletin and some withheld pending positive identification or reidentification have also been inserted in this article. The observations cited are principally those made by Dr. A. I. Ortenburger while he was connected with the Wisconsin Geological and Natural History Survey in 1918.

The following species of Wisconsin amphibians and reptiles are hereby reported from counties not indicated in the publications mentioned above. It is believed that these records constitute new distributional data:

*A. Species that are represented by actual preserved specimens in the possession of the Milwaukee Museum.*

### AMPHIBIA

**Mudpuppy (*Necturus maculosus*).**

Jefferson County. Milwaukee Museum. Cat. No. 2319.

Collected by Haywood Rose at Lake Palmyra on May 5, 1929. Living when received on May 7.

**Common Newt (*Triturus viridescens viridescens*).**

Vernon County. Milwaukee Museum. Cat. No. 2330.

Collected by W. R. Spellum at Bad Axe River on June 2, 1929. Length  $2\frac{1}{2}$  inches.

Spotted Salamander (*Ambystoma maculatum*).

Milwaukee County. Milwaukee Museum. Cat. No. 2341  
(2 spec.).

Collected by W. V. Tyrrell while digging a well at North Milwaukee. Living when received by museum Dec. 6, 1929 and held in captivity until March 1 and March 16, 1930. Museum photograph No. 405277.

American Toad (*Bufo americanus*).

Marquette County. Milwaukee Museum. Cat. No. 1831.

A dried and inflated skin received from William Menge Aug. 31, 1920.

Swamp Cricket Frog (*Pseudacris feriarum*).

Vernon County. Milwaukee Museum. Cat. No. 2331.

Collected by T. E. B. Pope at Stoddard on June 5, 1929.

Spring-peeper (*Hyla crucifer*).

Dane County. Milwaukee Museum. Cat. No. 2340.

Collected by W. E. Dickinson at Madison on Sept. 30, 1929.

REPTILIA

Eastern Ring-necked Snake (*Diadophis punctatus edwardsii*).

Langlade County. Milwaukee Museum. Cat. No. 2334.

Collected by Ulrich Dernehl at Elcho. Received Aug. 19, 1929. Museum photographs 405268-405269.

Hog-nosed Snake (*Heterodon contortrix*).

Waushara County. Milwaukee Museum. Cat. No. 2322.

Collected by Dr. G. H. Bush of Ripon at White River and received alive on May 29, 1929. Young specimen. This species was previously cited from this county by observation only.

Smooth Green Snake (*Liopeltis vernalis*).

Sauk County. Milwaukee Museum. Cat. No. 2337.

Collected by E. D. Ochsner at Prairie du Sac on Aug. 23, 1929.

Fox Snake (*Elaphe vulpina*).

Forest County. Milwaukee Museum., Cat., No., 2336.

Collected by Norman Seeger at Stone Lake. Received Sept. 3, 1929.

Yellow-bellied King Snake (*Lampropeltis calligaster*).

Milwaukee County. Milwaukee Museum. Cat. No. 1833.

Collected by Miss Ruth Ward at Milwaukee on July 20,

1920. Kept alive at the museum on exhibition until Oct. 10, 1920, then killed and skinned. A cast skin of this specimen also on hand. Length 51 inches. This is the first record we have of the species within the state although it had been anticipated.

De Kay's Snake (*Storeria dekayi*).

Washington County. Milwaukee Museum. Cat. No. 1671.

Collected by Rose Miller at West Bend in August 1911.  
Length 105 mm.

Red-bellied Snake (*Storeria occipitomaculata*).

Wood County. Milwaukee Museum. Cat. No. 2318.

Collected by Guy Nash at Wisconsin Rapids on April 23, 1929.

Milwaukee County. Milwaukee Museum. Cat. No. 2339.

Collected by Harry A. Miller at Whitefish Bay on Nov. 10, 1929 and received alive by the museum.

Milwaukee County. Milwaukee Museum. Cat. Nos. 738-1594  
1667-1668-1669-1672-1782-1783 (8 spec.) collected by various persons.

Butler's Garter Snake (*Thamnophis butleri*).

Washington County. Milwaukee Museum. Cat. No. 996.

Collected by Dr. S. Graenicher at Cedar Lake in August 1909.

Common Garter Snake (*Thamnophis sirtalis sirtalis*).

Sauk County. Milwaukee Museum. Cat. No. 2022.

Collected by W. E. Dickinson at Prairie du Sac on July 11, 1926. Length 19 inches.

Sauk County. Milwaukee Museum. Cat. No. 2110.

Collected by E. C. Keitel at Merrimack. Received Sept. 18, 1926. Length 36 inches.

Sauk County. Milwaukee Museum. Cat. Nos. 2144-2151 (8 spec.).

Collected by E. C. Keitel at Merrimack and received alive by the museum on June 15, 1927. Lengths ranging from 27 to 39 inches.

Bell's Turtle (*Chrysemys marginata bellii*).

Vernon County. Milwaukee Museum. Cat. Nos. 2323-2324  
(2 spec.).

Collected by T. E. B. Pope at Stoddard on June 5, 1929.

*B. Species that are listed or mentioned in recognized scientific publications. It is assumed that actual specimens to support such data are deposited in institutions.*

These consist of a list of amphibians and reptiles of Waukesha County by Alvin R. Cahn (Cahn 1929). Only those species not indicated in the Milwaukee Museum bulletin as occurring in this county are included in the following:

#### AMPHIBIA

Common Newt (*Triturus viridescens viridescens*).  
Spotted Salamander (*Ambystoma maculatum*).  
Marbled Salamander (*Ambystoma opacum*).  
Tiger Salamander (*Ambystoma tigrinum*).  
Four-toed Salamander (*Hemidactylium scutatum*).  
Red-backed Salamander (*Plethodon cinereus*).  
Slimy Salamander (*Plethodon glutinosus*).  
Swamp Tree Frog (*Pseudacris triseriata*).  
Spring-peeper (*Hyla crucifer*).  
Northern Wood Frog (*Rana cantabrigensis*).  
Pickerel Frog (*Rana palustris*).

#### REPTILIA

Blue-tailed Skink (*Eumeces fasciatus*).  
Eastern Ring-necked Snake (*Diadophis punctatus edwardsii*).  
Hog-nosed Snake (*Heterodon contortrix*).  
Blue Racer (*Coluber constrictor flaviventris*).  
Fox Snake (*Elaphe vulpina*).  
Bull Snake (*Pituophis sayi*).  
Kirtland's Water Snake (*Natrix kirtlandii*).  
Queen Snake (*Natrix septemvittata*).  
Common Water Snake (*Natrix sipedon sipedon*).  
Western Ribbon Snake (*Thamnophis proximus*).  
Plains Garter Snake (*Thamnophis radix*).  
Spotted Turtle (*Clemmys guttata*).  
Common Box Turtle (*Terrapene carolina carolina*).

C. Species that have been observed by reliable persons.

AMPHIBIA

American Toad (*Bufo americanus*).

Portage County. Observed by Dr. A. I. Ortenburger at Stevens Point on July 17, 18, 19, 1918.

Winnebago County. Observed by T. E. B. Pope and W. E. Dickinson on low swampy land adjoining the state fish hatchery at Oshkosh on May 25, 1927. Many specimens were mating.

Swamp Tree Frog (*Pseudacris triseriata*).

Dunn County. Observed by Dr. A. I. Ortenburger at Meridean on Aug. 14, 1918.

Northern Wood Frog (*Rana cantabrigensis*).

Sauk County. Observed by Dr. A. I. Ortenburger at Kilbourn on Aug. 23, 1918. (7 spec.).

Mink Frog (*Rana septentrionalis*).

Marathon County. Observed by Dr. A. I. Ortenburger at Rib Hill on July 3, 1918.

Portage County. Observed by Dr. A. I. Ortenburger at Plover River near Stevens Point on July 19, 1918.

Bullfrog (*Rana catesbeiana*).

Marathon County. Observed by Dr. A. I. Ortenburger at Rib Hill on July 10, 1918.

Portage County. Observed by Dr. A. I. Ortenburger at Plover River near Stevens Point on July 17, 18, 1918. (10 spec.).

Clark County. Observed by Dr. A. I. Ortenburger at Withee, Black River, on July 22, 1918 (2 spec., male and female), also on July 24, 1918.

Washburn County. Observed by Dr. A. I. Ortenburger at Long Lake on Aug. 3, 1918 (male spec.).

Walworth County. Observed by Dr. A. I. Ortenburger at Whitewater on Sept. 7, 1918.

REPTILIA

Smooth Green Snake (*Liopeltis vernalis*).

Portage County. Observed by Dr. A. I. Ortenburger at Stevens Point on July 20, 1918 on a sandy road; female.

Plains Garter Snake (*Thamnophis radix*).

Columbia County. Observed by Dr. A. I. Ortenburger at Lodi on Sept. 5, 1918. (3 spec.).

Sauk County. Observed by Dr. A. I. Ortenburger at Devils Lake on Aug. 25, 1918. (2 spec.).

Vilas County. Observed by Dr. A. I. Ortenburger at St. Germain Creek, Sayner, on June 23-24, 1918. (3 spec.).

Blanding's Turtle (*Emys blandingii*).

Kenosha County. Observed by W. E. Dickinson on road, April 7, 1929. Specimen badly damaged.

Western Painted Turtle (*Chrysemys marginata marginata*).

Dunn County. Observed by Dr. A. I. Ortenburger at Chippewa River, Meridean, on Aug. 15, 1918.

Bell's Turtle (*Chrysemys marginata bellii*).

Kenosha County. Observed by W. E. Dickinson on road, April 7, 1929. Specimen badly crushed by auto.

Special mention may now be made of certain species in the possession of the Milwaukee Museum that represent new localities, are rather uncommon, or are entirely new additions to the state fauna.

Four-toed Salamander (*Hemidactylium scutatum*). In the article published last year on the herpetology of the state it was shown that this small salamander was taken in Vernon County where it was reported by W. R. Spellum to be "common and widely spread over the county." Heretofore, it had only been taken at Racine in early days by Dr. P. R. Hoy and recently in Winnebago County by Howard E. Reed. Of interest then may be the collecting by Mr. Spellum and the writer of fully a dozen more specimens in the valley of the Bad Axe River, Vernon County, on June 2, 1929. Five of these specimens are preserved at the Milwaukee Museum as Cat. No. 2329. These specimens were easily found under both boulders and logs on rather dry hillsides. This fact is noted because the species has been claimed also to inhabit sphagnum swamps. Cahn now reports it from Waukesha County. Thus the prophecy of the probable state-wide distribution of this formerly little-known amphibian is now being slowly realized.

Swamp Cricket Frog (*Pseudacris feriarum*). As shown by the above records, the Milwaukee Museum specimen, Cat. No. 2331, represents a new distributional area for the species. This

specimen was taken on the bank of the Mississippi River while the only other known specimens are those listed by the University of Wisconsin from Adams County in the central part of the state in the same general latitude.

Yellow-bellied King Snake (*Lampropeltis calligaster*). The inclusion of this snake in the ophidian fauna of Wisconsin has been based on the recorded range of the species by Stejneger and Barbour (1923) and which has been cited as, "Illinois and Wisconsin to Texas". The recent reidentification of the Milwaukee Museum specimen, Cat. No. 1833, thus definitely affirms the existence of this serpent within the state. In this connection it may be stated that this specimen was compared with a specimen of the same species, identified and donated by Dr. F. N. Blanchard of the University of Michigan, collected at Haverhill, Kansas, and now deposited in the Milwaukee Museum as Cat. No. 2167. On August 29, 1929 another specimen, Milwaukee Museum Cat. No. 2335, was found on a box car of lumber at Milwaukee consigned to the Pagel Lumber Company.

Western Diamond-back Rattlesnake (*Crotalus atrox atrox*). Adverting to Milwaukee Museum specimen, Cat. No. 2293, of this species, which was announced and discussed in both the Milwaukee Museum Yearbook and Wisconsin Academy Transactions (Pope 1928 and 1930) it will be recalled that, concerning the method of its introduction into the state, the following was stated, "In answer to such inquiries——we can only conjecture, hoping that later investigations may reveal definite information. Its migration into Wisconsin probably followed up the Mississippi River——. Then again, it is not at all improbable that the first specimen, or specimens, in the State may have been brought into Wisconsin and escaped from captivity."

This latter theory (that of the escape of introduced specimens) appears at present writing to be our best solution of the problem. On Oct. 4, 1929, Mr. L. C. Stuart of the Museum of Zoology of the University of Michigan, wrote the writer as follows: "While working there (Wisconsin) several summers ago I heard of another report which might prove of interest to you. It seems that a number of years ago several specimens escaped from a circus in the vicinity of Pittsville in Wood County. It is still rumored that a colony of them have become established along a creek (Babcock Creek, I believe) a few miles to the

west". Dr. L. M. Klauber of the Zoological Society of San Diego, California, says in a letter of Sept 30, 1929, "I cannot but believe that the introduction of these snakes into Wisconsin must have been accidental rather than a natural extension of the range." And again, on Nov. 26, 1929, after learning of the statement of Mr. Stuart cited above, "I do not at all question the presence of this species in your state, for your description and the photographs are quite definite on this point. I think the explanation that the nucleus of this colony escaped from a circus is quite probably correct. We hear of specimens escaping in this manner rather frequently, although it is of course true that seldom do a sufficient number get away to form a new colony."

While no actual specimens of the Western Diamond-back Rattlesnake have been acquired by the Milwaukee Museum since the acquisition of Cat. No. 2293, it may be of interest to state that the writer has heard several more rumors concerning their presence in the state. Furthermore, Mr. Huron H. Smith, Curator of Botany in the Milwaukee Museum, has submitted notes to the effect that while engaged in field-work that Tenus Tuttrup (formerly his assistant) and himself saw a Diamond-back rattler near Monument Rock south of Liberty Pole, Vernon County, U. S. Highway No. 61, on July 14, 1922. It will be noted that Monument Rock is within a mile of Hogback Hill where three specimens, including a young one, were reported under affidavit as killed in the latter part of August 1928. Still more interesting, it will be noted that this observation by Mr. Smith was made on a date six years previously, thus confirming the assertion that this serpent had become established in this state and for a longer period of time than perhaps we realized. Mr. Smith says that this specimen of snake was only about fifteen feet distant from him at the time of observation and that he plainly saw the prominent white stripes on the side of the snake's head that distinguishes this species at sight from the common Banded Rattlesnake (*Crotalus horridus*). This specimen was about six feet long.

Now as to the statement of Mr. Stuart mentioned above. Babcock Creek is in the vicinity of Babcock in the southwestern part of Wood County, about sixty miles distant airline from Viroqua and northeast from the same. Quoting Mr. Smith again we find the Winnebago Indians familiar with this ser-



pent in this locality when he says, "During the latter part of August 1928, I heard a rumor of the appearance of the Diamond-back Rattler from some Winnebago Indian friends of mine who were also informants in my field work done among them that summer. It came about thru a trip when I took George Monegar, a chief and medicine man and his wife over to collect a few remedies that did not grow near their home. We went to Nekoosa and south of there to some sand hills. Among these remedies was one for a certain kind of rattlesnake, which they called the 'King of the Rattlesnakes' and which was different from the usual small kind said to infest Rabbit Hill in northern Adams County. They told me that this kind was found around Babcock Creek, in the vicinity of Babcock, in the southwestern part of Wood County. I was often around Babcock, but did not get to see the snakes. Further confirmation was given to the presence of this snake by Ray White and Fred Mallory, both Winnebago Indians. Their opinion was that the snakes were not common and had come in possibly eight years ago."

Thus it appears that, if the escape of the snakes from a circus near Pittsville be confirmed, some members of the Babcock Creek colony must have found their way to Vernon County by passing southwesterly through the northern portion of Juneau County and diagonally through Monroe County.

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