

## Herpetological Notes from Central Kansas

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The following notes were made while the writer was stationed as Commandant of R.O.T.C. at the University of Wichita. He was also Curator of the Arkansas Valley Museum and Historical Society from 1926 to 1930. The specimens, unless otherwise noted, were donated to this Museum. The snakes were for the most part exhibited in glass tubes. A note on the method of exhibition appeared in *Copeia* No. 162, p. 21, Jan. 1927. Observations which were made on *Eumeces obsoletus*, appeared in *Copeia* No. 164, pp. 67-69, July 1927. Many more observations were made than appear in these notes, but few were recorded.

*Heterodon contortrix*. On Oct. 25, ten miles north of Wichita, a small specimen was captured. This was kept under observation in captivity for over a year and was then sent to Mrs. Grace Wiley. This species was frequently seen dead on the roads of Sedgwick Co. Farther west, in Pratt Co., *H. nasicus* seemed to replace the former.

*Coluber constrictor flaviventris*. On Sept. 1, 1926, two miles east of Wichita, one female was taken. Scale rows, 17-15; gastros., 176; uros., 71; labials, 7, 9; 7, 9; length, 21 inches. Underside cream yellow, throat ivory; anterior quarter of body with indistinct blotches; next quarter, blotches more indistinct; whole upper surface covered with a bloom which rubs off. On Nov. 30, 1926 near Langdon, Reno Co. a second specimen was taken. Scale rows, 17-15; gastros., 170; uros., 92; labials, 8, 9; 7, 9; length, 14 $\frac{1}{8}$  inches. Sixty saddle marks on body. A third individual was taken Dec. 1926, three miles northwest of Wichita. Scale rows, 17-15; gastros., 175; uros., 78; labials, 8, 9; 8, 9; length, 40 $\frac{1}{8}$  inches. A male was captured on May 1, 1927 five miles northwest of Wichita. Scale rows, 17-15; gastros., 175; uros., 85; labials 7, 8; 7, 9; length 32 inches; throat orange. A specimen captured 20 miles south of Wichita on Sept. 6, 1926, passed shells of crickets, grasshoppers and beetles. On Oct. 21, 1926 a young specimen in captivity partly swallowed a young *Tropidoclonion lineatum* head first. The latter was rescued, but subsequently was partly swallowed and rescued several times, no worse for wear. Finally on Nov. 30, 1926, a large specimen was taken five miles north of Wichita.

*Pituophis* sp. An 18 inch specimen collected April 3, 1927, 30 miles east of Wichita in Butler Co., had swallowed a small rodent. This species was numerous in Sedgwick, Kingman and Pratt Counties. The specimens were sent to Mrs. Olive Griffith Stull at Purdue, who was monographing the genus at the time.

*Lampropeltis* sp. On April 5, 1927 a specimen was found killed by a grass fire in the city of Wichita. On Aug. 30, 1926 a decapitated specimen was found in the road 20 miles east of Wichita in Butler Co.

*Natrix grahamii*. On April 17, 1927 specimens were taken from a pond in Woodlawn Cemetery, Wichita:

Sex	Rows	Gastros.	Uros.	Labials	Length	Ventral Line
F	21, 19, 17	166	61	7, 9; 7, 9	22 $\frac{1}{2}$	35th gastro. to vent
F	21, 19, 17	161	58	7, 9; 7, 9	28 $\frac{1}{4}$	last half, dim
F	21, 19, 17	166	57	7, 9; 7, 9	27	last third, dim
M	21, 19, 17	174	62	7, 9; 8, 10	22 $\frac{3}{4}$	last 32 gastros.
M	19, 17	177	68	7, 9; 7, 9	24 $\frac{3}{8}$	last half, dim
M	21, 19, 17	172	66	8, 7; 10, 9	23	last half, plain
?	21, 19, 17	163	?	7, 9; 7, 9	10 $\frac{3}{8}$	last third, dim

The second female listed above had three posterior and three anterior orbitals on the left side. The most noticeable peculiarity of this species is the chestnut brown eye with very small pupil. On April 29, 1927, from a pond in the Roe Cloud Indian School, Wichita, a specimen was observed on a dirt shelf at the edge of a pond with a *Cambarus* in its mouth. Three other shelves were found, covered with snake droppings and *Cambarus* shells which appeared to have been eaten by snakes.

*Natrix rhombifera*. On Aug. 28, 1926 two specimens were taken on an islet in Little Salt Marsh, Reno Co. Scale rows 25, 23, 21, 19 in each; gastros., 143 and 138; uros., 68 and 75; labials, 8, 11; 8, 11 and 8, 10; 8, 10; length 29 $\frac{1}{2}$  and 23 inches; oculars, 1, 3; 1, 3 and 1, 3; 2, 3. One large specimen lived in the Woodlawn Cemetery pond in Wichita. After several attempts it was captured and sent to Mrs. Grace Wiley of the Public Museum, Minneapolis, who kept it alive eight years.

*Natrix sipedon sipedon*. A female was captured on Aug. 29, 1926 at Langdon, Reno Co.; scale rows, 23, 21, 19; gastros., 138; uros., 69; labials, 8, 10 with a rudimentary sixth; 8, 11; length, 19 $\frac{1}{2}$  inches. Three other specimens escaped from under the same board which was lying partly under water.

*Tropidoclonion lineatum*. Between Oct. 15 and Nov. 8, 1926, nine crushed specimens were seen on the streets of Wichita. On the latter date a live one was found basking on the sidewalk. It was kept alive for a year during which time it had adventures with a blue racer which were mentioned above. It was then sent to Mrs. Wiley. Another crushed specimen was noted on April 8, 1927.

*Thamnophis radix radix*. A female was collected on Aug. 30, 1926 at Little Salt Marsh, Reno Co. Scale rows, 21, 19, 17; 29 $\frac{1}{4}$  inches; gastros., 164; uros., 79. This and many other specimens had fallen into sunken duck blinds. These were thin to emaciation and were taken home where they ate raw hamburger and were regaining their flesh. They were then fed some frogs and thereafter would not touch hamburger and became as emaciated as when captured. Shortly thereafter they all died at the same time, probably from

too much sun. Several were seen by flashlight which apparently were hunting food along the edge of the grass on the shore of Little Salt Marsh. I had supposed this species to be diurnal. On Nov. 30, 1926, in northern Barber Co., another individual was taken near permanent water. Scale rows, 21, 19, 17; gastros., 158; uros., 60; labials, 7, 10; 7, 10; length 31½ inches. A female was collected on Nov. 26, 1927 at Little Salt Marsh. Scale rows, 21, 19, 17; gastros., 151; uros., 74; labials, 7, 10; 7, 10; length 32 inches. No red was observed on this specimen.

*Thamnophis sauritus proximus*. A male was captured near a permanent pond on Aug. 29, 1926 at Langdon, Reno Co. Scale rows, 19, 17; gastros., 171; uros., 104; labials, 9, 10; 8, 10.

*Thamnophis sirtalis parietalis*. Four specimens are here recorded. The first was taken on Aug. 29, 1926 at Langdon, Reno Co. Scale rows, 19, 17; gastros., 157; uros., 88; labials, 7, 10; 7, 10. The second was caught on Nov. 26, 1926, near Langdon, Reno Co. Scale rows, 19, 17; gastros., 156; uros., 72; labials, 7, 10; 7, 10; length 27 inches. A third was taken on April 25, 1927 at Wichita. Scale rows, 19, 17; gastros., 156; labials, 7, 10; 7, 10; red shows on the gastros. of this specimen; tail broken. A fourth individual was likewise taken at Wichita on May 3, 1927. Scale rows, 19, 17; gastros., 158; uros., 66; labials, 7, 10; 7, 10; length 30 inches. It was noted that the ribs are progressively dilated just anterior to the point where the skin is peeled back to facilitate the process of shedding.

*Sternotherus odoratus*. At the State Fish Hatchery at Pratt on Aug. 29, 1926, numbers of these turtles were observed in the turtle traps. Again on Sept. 6, 1927 many dead ones were noted on the road near the Arkansas River south of Wichita.

*Chelydra serpentina*. This species was abundant in the traps at Pratt on Aug. 29, 1926. On Sept. 6, 1927 a number of dead ones were seen on the road near the Arkansas River south of Wichita. Many also were seen in Sedgwick, Reno, Kingman and Pratt counties, but no records were kept.

*Terrapene ornata*. This species is quite common near the Little Salt Marsh in Reno County. Many were seen dead on the road and others were found hiding during the heat of the day under the edges of logs. They seem to occur in colonies. Several specimens were observed in captivity where they mated in September. They will chase after black beetles which they crunch down with apparent relish. A green sphingid caterpillar is also eagerly sought. Almost any kind of fruit is eaten, but meat is greatly preferred.

*Chrysemys picta belli*. This species is frequently taken in the turtle traps at the Pratt fish hatchery. Many specimens were seen dead on the road near the Arkansas River early in September, south of Wichita.