

A Hudsonia Workshop for Professionals: *Reptile and Amphibian Survey Methods*

Thursday May 21 and Friday May 22, 2009

In and near Staatsburg, Dutchess County, New York

Two full days of indoor presentations, discussions, and field survey exercises.



A workshop for consultants, biologists, students, teachers, environmental professionals, regulators, policy-makers, preserve and park managers, restorationists, and others who want to conduct field surveys for amphibians and reptiles, or understand and interpret surveys conducted by others.

Reptiles and amphibians (the herpetofauna) are attracting attention as vulnerable and declining species, indicators of ecological integrity, and subjects of educational and aesthetic interest. Environmental professionals, naturalists, and researchers increasingly are expected to survey, assess, and consider the herpetofauna in planning, especially those species listed as endangered, threatened, or special concern (there are 22 E, T, and SC species in New York, exclusive of sea turtles). Most amphibians and reptiles are cryptic and secretive in their appearance and behavior, and surveys require background research, experience, and special skills as well as intensive effort.

Hudsonia biologists have worked with turtles, snakes, lizards, frogs, and salamanders in the Hudson Valley and around the U.S. for many years. We have performed surveys, conducted research, analyzed the literature and environmental documents, and planned conservation for common and rare amphibians and reptiles in a variety of habitats, localities, and land use situations. These include analyses of mining impacts on timber rattlesnake and power plant expansion on Pine Barrens treefrog; studies of bog turtle habitats in relationship to surrounding land use; surveys for northern cricket frog; research on the ecology and behavior of snapping turtle, painted turtle, red-bellied turtle, wood turtle, musk turtle, mud turtle in tidal wetlands and box turtle and painted turtle on former farmland; general herpetofaunal surveys of research preserves, barrier islands, dredge spoil disposal areas, invasive plant stands, industrial sites, parks, and the Hudson River estuary; surveys of mole salamander breeding in woodland pools; and thirteen years of research on Blanding's turtle response to created habitats.

LEARN which species of reptiles and amphibians occur in the Hudson Valley and neighboring regions, how to identify their habitats, how to select appropriate survey methods for the



Turtle Trap



Photo © E. Kiviat 2009

planning or research questions at hand, and what survey results mean and don't mean.

PARTICIPATE in field exercises using several survey techniques (e.g., cover objects, visual encounter, hoop traps, box traps, minnow traps, dipnetting, seining).

SEE AND DISCUSS the results of studies of the Hudson Valley herpetofauna.

SCAN the regional (Hudson Valley and nearby) herpetofaunal literature.

REVIEW the species occurring in our region, their identification and habitats, and the threats to their populations.

VIEW preserved specimens representative of the regional herpetofauna, and learn how to preserve specimens of road-killed animals.

Instructors: Erik Kiviat, PhD, is a herpetologist and wetland ecologist, and is a co-founder and Executive Director of Hudsonia Ltd. Erik began participating in herpetological surveys in 1962, and has studied Blanding's turtle in Dutchess County for 30 years. Erik is author or coauthor of papers on several species of reptiles and amphibians as well as articles on the Hudson River herpetofauna. He is also coauthor of the *Biodiversity Assessment Manual for the Hudson River Estuary Corridor*, author of a regional conservation book *The Northern Shawangunks: An Ecological Survey*, a principal in Hudsonia's award-winning habitat restoration project for the threatened Blanding's turtle, and author or coauthor of scientific papers, nontechnical articles, and technical assistance reports on other aspects of biodiversity, wetlands, rare species, urban environments, and ecological restoration.

Tanessa Hartwig, MS, will be co-leading the workshop. Tanessa's graduate research was on microhabitat selection by Blanding's turtles; she has been managing Hudsonia's long-term Blanding's turtle research project for 8 years and participates in a variety of other herpetological surveys, biodiversity assessments, habitat mapping projects, and training exercises in the Hudson Valley. Herpetologist Jason Tesauro, MS will teach a portion of the workshop. Jason has considerable experience with bog turtle studies and surveys for other reptiles and amphibians.

Painted Turtle



Photo © S. Mitchell 2009

Participation is limited and by application only, to ensure that the workshop is offered to conservationists, managers, regulators, policy-makers, and other professionals who can make the best use of the information. Please fill out the application below.

Fee: \$550 per person, payable in full by check (to Hudsonia) or credit card (call 845-758-0600) by April 20. Cost includes two lunches, course materials (reprints and handouts), and a certificate of participation. Please send your application and check to: Hudsonia/Herp Workshop, PO Box 66, Red Hook, NY 12571.

Wood Frog



Photo © K. Bell 2009

Hudsonia Application

Reptile and Amphibian Survey Methods – May 21 & 22, 2009

Name: _____

E-mail address: _____

Telephone: Day: _____ Evening: _____ Cell: _____

Affiliation(s)/Employer(s): _____

Mailing address: _____

Primary interest(s) in workshop as a:

Consulting Biologist _____ Land Manager _____ Restorationist _____

Regulatory Agency Staff _____ Policy-maker _____ Researcher _____

Engineer _____ Student _____ Educator _____ Other _____

Primary Activities: Field _____ Office _____ Other _____

Geographic area of professional activity: _____

Environment(s) working in:

Wildland _____ Rural _____ Suburban/Urban _____

Experience with amphibians and reptiles:

Professional workshops or conferences attended recently:

Why I want to take this workshop and how I will apply what I learn:

How I found out about this workshop: Web _____ *News from Hudsonia* _____

Email from Hudsonia _____ Mailing from Hudsonia _____

Professional Society _____ Friend or Colleague _____

- I would like to be on the mailing list to receive *News from Hudsonia*
(Hudsonia does not give, sell, or trade personal information.)

Please send your check and application to: Hudsonia/Herp Workshop, PO Box 66, Red Hook, NY 12571. If you would like to pay by credit card, please call (845) 758-0600. Please inquire about a discount if you truly need one.