

EDITORIALS and ANNOUNCEMENTS
Non-Peer Review Section

***PIONEER OF HERPETOLOGY AT HIS CENTURY MARK:
HOBART M. SMITH***

R. BRUCE BURY¹ AND STANLEY E. TRAUTH²

¹ Editor-in-Chief, *Herpetological Conservation and Biology*
e-mail: clemmys@gmail.com

² Department of Biological Sciences, Arkansas State University, P.O. Box 599, State University, AR 72467-0599,
e-mail: strauth@astate.edu

In this issue of *Herpetological Conservation and Biology*, we honor Dr. Hobart M. Smith (Fig. 1), an icon in the world of herpetology, as he turns 100 years of age. He was born on September 26, 1912, in Stanwood, Iowa. His stellar career was summarized earlier (Chiszar et al. 2004) but we wish to point out a few highlights.

What probably strikes most herpetologists as absolutely phenomenal is Hobart's extraordinary publication record, which numbered over 1,600 articles and books back in 2006 (see Hobart M. Smith biography—*Herpetological Conservation and Biology* 1[1], page 9), surpassing all contemporaries. He remains the most published herpetologist of all time (Anonymous 2012). Of his 29 books, some notable ones include the following: Handbook of Lizards (Fig. 2; Smith 1946), seven volumes on the

Herpetology of Mexico (e.g., Smith and Smith 1979), and a text book on comparative anatomy (Smith 1960). He has also encouraged students and the science of herpetology over many decades.

He previously graced our journal by co-authoring the second paper in our inaugural volume in 2006 with David Chiszar (Smith and Chiszar 2006). Moreover, he had profound influence on many of us at *HCB* at a personal level:

During several years in the 1990s, one us (Trauth) corresponded with Hobart in regards to loaning snakes to him and once in regards to obtaining support of his nomination of the late Ernie Liner for an honorary doctoral degree. His characteristic calligraphic-like, hand-writing style is unmistakable (Fig. 3). On occasion, we still crack



FIGURE 1. Hobart M. Smith at the Joint Meeting of Ichthyologists and Herpetologists in July 1996. (Photographed by Stan Trauth).

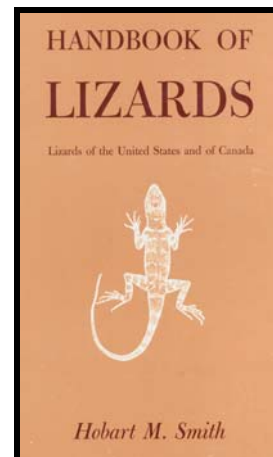


FIGURE 2. The front cover of "Handbook of Lizards," major work in herpetology.

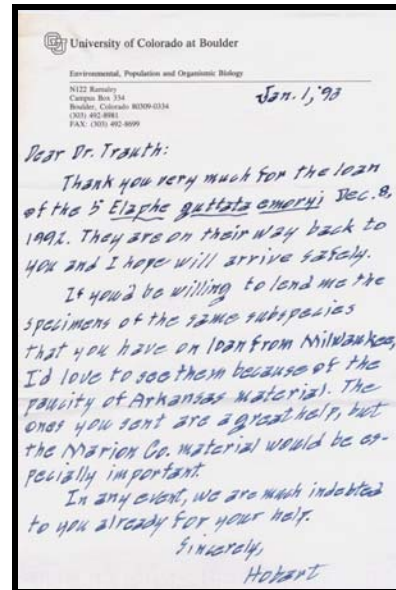
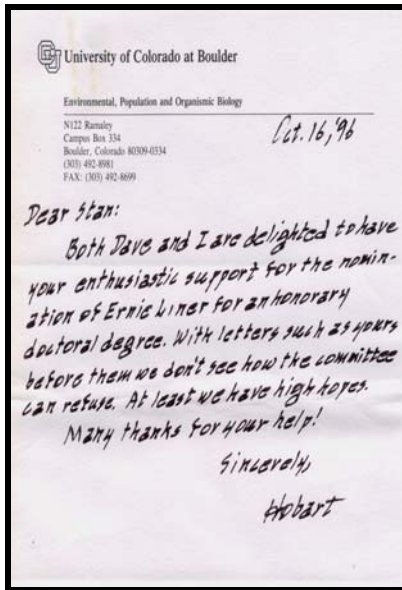


FIGURE 3. Letters sent to Stan Trauth from Hobart Smith.

open a copy of the fifth edition (1971) of Hobart's "Handbook of Lizards."

In the far past, one of us (Bury) still recalls doing what you are not suppose to do. He wrote Dr. Hobart M. Smith and asked for all his reprints. A week later, a 2-inch thick envelope showed at his door chock full of reprints. This left a mark on a budding herpetologist (this happened when the neophyte was age 14). Despite the apparent age difference even then, Hobart was polite to this upstart and almost apologetic for not being able to send more reprints. It left a lasting impression: scientists publish papers as a major means of communication and that means being a herpetologist is being able to author manuscripts (and design studies) and not just go out and catch animals in the wild for fun or profit. That provided an impetus to do better in school and think of going to college. Lesson learned.

We wish to honor the long and highly productive career of Hobart M. Smith with two short tributes to Hobart Smith. First, David Chiszar interviewed Hobart this last spring and organized the material into an article for *HCB* (this issue): Some Notes on the Last Hundred Years and the Next Stages in the Evolution of Herpetology. Although authored by Hobart M. Smith, we know that David Chiszar shepherded it through to completion. Next, and while ill with own issues, David insisted that he finish a piece about his good friend: "Hobart M. Smith Turns 100." We attempted to do minimal editing on these papers and include them here for your enjoyment.

After being on the faculty at the University of Illinois, Hobart M. Smith served as the Chair of the Department of

Ecology and Evolutionary Biology, University of Colorado, from 1972–1983. He is now retired and resides in Boulder, Colorado. We wish him all our best.

Acknowledgments.—We thank Malcolm L. McCallum for first suggesting that we recognize the 100th birthday of Hobart M. Smith. And, we deeply appreciate the efforts of David Chiszar for his personal interviews with Hobart.

LITERATURE CITED

- Anonymous. 2012. Hobart Muir Smith. Available on-line: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hobart_Muir_Smith (Accessed on: 3 August 2012).
- David Chiszar, Edwin McConkey, and Margaret M. Stewart. 2004. Hobart Muir Smith. *Copeia* 2:418–424.
- Smith, H.M. 1946. *Handbook of Lizards*. Cornell University Press, Ithaca, New York. 557 p. (re-released in 1995).
- Smith, H.M. 1960. *Evolution of Chordate Structure: An Introduction to Comparative Anatomy*. Holt, Rinehart and Winston, New York. 529 p.
- Smith, H.M., and D. Chiszar. 2006. Dilemma of name-recognition: Why and when to use new combinations of scientific names. *Herpetological Conservation and Biology* 1:6–8.
- Smith, H.M., and R.B. Smith. 1979. *Synopsis of the Herpetofauna of Mexico: Vol. 6, Guide to Mexican Turtles; Bibliographic Addendum III*. John Johnson, Vermont.