



Gulf Coast Turtle & Tortoise Society

Newsletter Fall 2004

Upcoming GCTTS Events

Mark your calendars for the GCTTS Picnic!

The picnic will be at Bob Smither's home in Friendswood starting at 3PM on October 9th. Bring your chelonians, lawn chairs and picnic blankets, and food and drinks.

Plan now to see old friends, meet new ones, and share our love for turtles and tortoises. The address is:

**2600 Ware Dairy Road
Friendswood, Texas 77546**

Or you can check the link at www.gctts.org for a map.

Rain date is October 23rd

The Bayou City Breeders Expo and Sale Nov 20 & 21

Now in its fifth year, the Bayou City Breeders' Expo (BCBE) is held at the Clarion Inn, located at 500 North Belt East, between Imperial Valley Dr. and the Hardy Toll Road. Show times are from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. both days.

For more information, or to see a map to the Clarion, please visit the official web site at:

[http://www.houstonherp.com/
BCBEInfo.htm](http://www.houstonherp.com/BCBEInfo.htm)

Volunteers will be needed to operate our booth at the event. Please call the hotline at (281)443-3383 or you can e-mail to: info@gctts.org if you are able to volunteer.

New T-Shirts!

GCTTS is pleased to offer our new, high-quality t-shirts! We asking for a donation of \$15 per shirt. The shirts are readily available in any adult size from small up to 2X. Please visit the website for a picture of the shirt and for ordering details.

Or, you can avoid the additional shipping fees by planning on acquiring one at the upcoming picnic. Help support GCTTS by ordering a shirt for every member of your family! Kids sizes can be custom ordered upon special request.

Buchanan's Event

On Saturday, November 6th, we will participate in the Historic Heights 1st Saturday at Buchanan's Native Plants. GCTTS will be hosting a booth inside. We will display our turtles and tortoises in addition to passing out information and talking to attendees. Our theme will be native plants that can be used in outside habitats. Buchanan's has many of the plants that we will be discussing.

Set up time should be around 11:00 AM, and the event lasts until around 4:00 PM. Anyone who wishes to participate is welcome to help with the booth.

Please send items for the newsletter to the editor, Kimberley Herrera at:
info@gctts.org

Growing Up Loving Turtles

*Judy Meschwitz
GCTTS Member*

Often times we do not regard the “kid” that does not have the typical kind of pets, a dog, cat, fish or bird, as normal. I was one of those kids. I have always loved dogs and cats, but as a child I could walk into the room where one had been and my eyes would swell close. My parents felt so badly for me, but there was not much I could eat... much less have a pet... allergies.

One day my Dad picked up an old ornate box turtle when I was about seven years old. I fell in love with Noodle, and the rest

is history. I had three in all, almost a half century ago. Noodle, Doodle and Baby. I pushed them in the baby buggy, tied ribbons around them and would have slept with them if I could have. They lived a long and happy life as I grew older and cared for them.

The point is the love affair has never ended. I have outgrown the allergies for the most part and have my cats and dogs, but the turtles are still very much a part of my life. They moved from Texas to Kansas and back home to Texas again. I think they are the most unique creature in the world. This is my story of how I came to love turtles and be part of the GCTTS.

Does the Herp Hobby Breed Conservationists?

*Michael Smith
GCTTS Associate*

One widely accepted idea about the captive breeding and sale of pet reptiles has been that it makes people care about reptile species and thus encourages conservation. People only care about that which they know, we have said. Seeing and holding a hognose snake, a wood turtle, a veiled chameleon, a carpet python these experiences allow a person to get to know these animals and want to see them survive.

Personal experiences with reptiles are a great way to make lasting impressions, I will agree. However, I want to challenge the idea that holding or keeping a pet reptile makes the person more supportive of conservation. I also acknowledge that I don't know whether it does or not. In the last decade or so, the interest in reptiles has given rise to an industry that includes magazines and pet care books for reptile keepers, captive-breeding entrepreneurs, caging and supply dealers, and reptile expos where hundreds of people sift through deli cups looking for the best color and pattern. A person could buy a carpet python and think that the py-

Information about the Gulf Coast Turtle and Tortoise Society

*Mailing address:
1227 Whitestone
Houston, TX 77073*

*e-mail: info@gctts.org
web site: www.gctts.org
hotline: (281)443-3383*

The **Gulf Coast Turtle and Tortoise Society** is an all-volunteer, non-profit organization dedicated to the welfare and conservation of all species of turtles and tortoises. The members of GCTTS offer services such as rescue, rehabilitation, and adoption of turtles and tortoises. Because of the volume of turtles that we receive and the lack of available ponds, we have no choice but to release some. We release turtles only after they have been thoroughly checked for health as careless releasing of turtles may introduce new pathogens to existing populations. We look for release sites that have year round water and no fishing. We maintain a telephone hotline and e-mail address to answer questions and handle emergencies. We also maintain a web site with information about turtle and tortoise care with a forum where questions can be posted and answered. Newsletters are mailed to members. Education is one of the central focuses of our group. We are active year round giving seminars and participating in expositions, and we provide care sheets and presentations on turtle care at no charge. Correspondence, inquiries, and donations may be sent to the above addresses.



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thons natural habitat is shredded aspen and Rubbermaid boxes.

Some people buy baby turtles at expos with only marginally better knowledge and planning than when baby red-eared sliders came from the dime store with a plastic pond and a palm tree. A reptile dealer once became self-righteous and irate that our herp society would not raffle off live animals, our reasoning being that the winner gets an animal that they may not have wanted or been prepared to care for. You insult the intelligence of these people, he huffed. Just then a young buyer walked through and looked at a garter snake on display and said, Is that one poisonous? I rested my case.

Of course there are many well-informed people in the reptile trade, people who could tell you precisely the range and habitat of the carpet python or exactly where hognose snakes live. And there are people who might come to an expo and buy a hatchling spotted turtle with a great deal of knowledge of their natural history and their shrinking populations in the northeastern U.S. The question is whether the pet reptile trade helped nurture and direct their curiosity about the animals in the wild, or did that interest and thirst for learning come from somewhere else?

Just to be clear, I'm not saying that the pet reptile trade has

to promote conservation or knowledge of natural history. The trade could have as its aim the pure enjoyment of the animal itself, completely divorced from its place in the wild. That is certainly one way that the reptile trade works. A pastel, motley, caramel-with-a-cherry-on-top corn snake has little more connection with its wild cousins than a Pomeranian dog has with its wild ancestors. That's OK, it does not have to be a poster child for wildlife.

Years before there was a pet reptile industry (notice that grandpa is being careful not to say, why, in my day) people became interested in reptiles largely as a result of seeing them in the field, as wildlife. To find them, you had to know something about places where streams meandered through woodlands or prairies, or where rock formations offered refuges and prey. Experiencing a particular reptile meant getting out on a moonless night on the prairie, or walking a creek on a summer morning.

Most of us who learned that way feel that we gained something irreplaceable. We found a connection to something that was fascinating and complex and beautiful. Seeing the bulldozer at work in those places creates a hurt that is like the loss of an old friend. Do people who buy kingsnakes in deli cups come to care about wild kingsnakes and

the places where they live? Does the expo shopper driving home with a baby spotted turtle think about the connection between the life in the deli cup and the lives in the marshland by the highway? I don't know. However, I think that walking down aisles of reptilian merchandise is not nearly so direct a way of experiencing nature as walking through a marsh or prairie or woods. Those of us who care about herpetofauna as wildlife and threatened wildlife at that ought to do what we can to make sure that the deli cup is not the only habitat in which new generations of herpers get to experience a snake or turtle.

GCTTS NOTE:

While we have always been welcome at the ETHS and BCBE Breeder Sales, the Texas Reptile Expo was very unhappy with our presence. I was called outside by them and told we were being accused of slowing down turtle sales. We were never invited back by them and would not have gone if we had been. At these events, we do tell people the positive and negative side of turtle ownership and recommend species that do well in our area. And we exhibit adults to make sure people realize what they will have to accommodate. If this slows turtle sales it is only by the people that did not realize the extent of what they would have to provide for the turtles they were thinking of purchasing. While ETHS and BCBE is clearly concerned about the welfare of the turtles sold, it was apparent to me that the Texas Reptile Expo group was not.

- Marlaina Barr



Plight of the Texas Tortoise

Compiled by Anita Peddicord
GCTTS Member & State &
Federal Permitted Wildlife
Rehabilitator

There are three tortoises native to North America. All are in the genus *Gopherus* and sometimes all three are referred to as the Gopher Tortoises. Their scientific names along with their commonly used individual names and their home ranges are as follows:

1) **Desert Tortoise**, *Gopherus agassizii*, also known as the California Tortoise ranges from southeastern California to southern Nevada and western Arizona.

2) **Gopher Tortoise**, *Gopherus polyphemus*, also known as the Florida Tortoise ranges from eastern Louisiana across the southern parts of Mississippi, Alabama, Georgia and throughout most of Florida.

3) **Texas Tortoise**, *Gopherus berlandieri*, sometimes called Berlandier's Tortoise (named after the French naturalist who did extensive studies in northern Mexico) is the smallest of the three and the one that is the focus of this article. Its home range is south Texas into the northeastern Mexican states of Coahuila, Nuevo Leon and Tamaulipas.

As with most tortoises, the Texas tortoise is a vegetarian.

Their natural diet consists of mostly grasses, weeds, cactus pads and their fruit. They are a hibernating species during the winter. They are not as apt to burrow as other tortoises. They usually scrape out a depression in the ground called a pallet that is at the base of a cactus or scrub. In the summer they lie in their pallet during the heat of the day and venture out to graze during the cooler hours. Most of the water they intake is from the plants they eat.

When two males meet in a territory, battles can lead to the death of one. Males try to turn each other over. If an over turned loser can not right himself, he can roast in the desert and die from hyperthermia. Males have long gular scutes that assist them in these battles. Mature males can be sexed by their concave plastron (lower shell). Females are usually flat on the plastron. This concavity in the males allows them better access to a female during mating. The males are usually bigger than the females and can reach over 8 inches in length. Females can lay eggs from about April to September. Young tortoises take 3-5 years to mature.

According to Texas Parks and Wildlife the Texas Tortoise is state listed as a threatened species. It is not listed federally. Being a threatened species means

it is illegal to have one in your possession unless you have certain permits issued by TP&W. Permits can be obtained by zoos for educational display, state permitted wildlife rehabilitators can have the Texas Tortoise listed on their permits for temporary rehabilitation purposes and also for permanent educational purposes. Other scientific permits may be issued by TP&W for the purpose of doing studies. At this time, the general public can not obtain permits to keep one as a pet.

Contributing to the threatened status of the Texas Tortoise is thought by some to be habitat loss, due partially to over grazing by cattle and over collection by eager people finding them near a road in their native range, who take them home for pets. This latter practice has caused the death of many countless tortoises. More often than not, when a traveler picks up a tortoise from a road, they take it back to their home which is so often to a climate that the tortoise is unaccustomed to. The Texas Tortoise is a desert species needing a dry climate to survive long term. When brought to more humid climates (such as the Gulf Coast), these tortoises quite often develop respiratory infections. If left untreated, these infections can be fatal. Tortoises are good at masking symptoms especially to untrained eyes. Sometimes they are



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Doctors save turtle with spear in its neck

Bill Montgomery, GCTTS member and Chronicle Business Copy Desk Chief, posted this to our forum:

From Star-Bulletin in Honolulu: Associated Press

MAKENA, Hawaii: A green sea turtle found off Maui was unable to eat for at least three weeks before a rusty 6 inch spear was surgically extracted from its neck. The 140 pound turtle was flown to Oahu for the procedure Friday after state wildlife officials rescued it off Puu Olai.

The turtle was lucky because the spear missed its brain, other vital structures and even blood vessels, said Robert Morris, a veterinarian with the National Marine Fisheries Service who performed the surgery. However, the spear pinned the turtle's jaws shut, making it impossible to eat. Fortunately, turtles are able to go for several weeks without food, Morris said.

Officials first heard of a turtle with a spear sticking out of its neck July 31. There was a possibility the turtle could be returned to Maui and set free off Puu Olai, state aquatic biologist Skippy Hau said.

On Aug. 8 a 100 pound green sea turtle with a noose around its neck was found dead

on a beach in Lahaina, Maui. The length of rope was tied to a metal spike in the sand. Green sea turtles are a threatened species, protected by state and federal laws.

Anyone found guilty of committing a criminal act against a turtle could face fines of up to \$5,000 per violation and administrative fees as high as \$10,000. Investigations into both cases are continuing, officials said.

BIG THANKS!

GCTTS would like to thank Walter Palmisano for donating hatchling turtles for our educational programs again this year.

Every year he donates some we are interested in at the ETHS sale.

Steps to Adoption

1. Adoption is only available to GCTTS members in good standing.
2. Members may e-mail info@gctts.org or call our hotline at 281-443-3383 and request that an adoption form be mailed to them.
3. Application forms must include clear photos demonstrating a secure, suitable outdoor habitat appropriate for the species being requested.
4. Application forms are carefully reviewed for appropriate information related to the well-being of the turtle. We want to make sure that your habitat is of adequate size, can house the requested turtle(s) safely, and that you have adequate knowledge of the turtle's requirements.
5. Note that beginners are welcome to apply for many species, as GCTTS can offer advice and guidance in quality turtle care.
6. Once your application is approved, turtles will be selected which most closely match your request.
7. You will need to schedule a pick up from a designated GCTTS member.
8. Processing time varies, most requests are processed and completed within four weeks.
9. Adoption requests are accepted at any time.
10. Turtles may not be available during hibernation months.
11. GCTTS reserves the right to decline membership and / or adoption applications.



Q and A about Water Turtle Release

Q: *I have had my Red-Eared Slider turtle for several years and would like to release him into the wild. How can I go about releasing my captive water turtle?*

A: First - thanks for caring. Returning a captive water turtle to a natural wild habitat may sound like the best thing for you to do, but please carefully consider the following information:

- A captive turtle may harbor diseases (respiratory infections, shell rot, etc.) that are not recognized by the owner. When released, the former captive can make other turtles sick. Undiagnosed and untreated illness can lead to the death of your turtle as well as others that it may come in contact with.

- Captive turtles, especially ones that have been kept indoors in aquariums, do not have an immune system as strong as turtles that have been kept outside. Your turtle may not survive being suddenly thrust into an environment where it does not have the immunity to fight off naturally occurring disease causing organisms.

- It is best that turtles that have been kept indoors and have never been allowed to hibernate should be allowed to hibernate naturally, outside, at least one winter before release.

- Some turtles may not recognize natural foods found in the wild.

- The GCTTS has a native water turtle release program that will take captive water turtles that are no longer wanted by their owners. GCTTS members with the proper experience and facilities can care for your turtle temporarily and will:

- evaluate its health and treat any illnesses (vet care is available if needed)

- help it to recognize natural foods

- allow it to hibernate naturally in an outdoor in ground backyard pond for at least one winter.

- By doing these things under qualified supervision, your turtle will develop the strong immune system it needs to live a happy, healthy life in the wild.

- We only release water turtles into environments that are appropriate for that particular species and safe from humans, roads and vehicles. If your water turtle, for some reason, can not be released, it will be adopted by an experienced GCTTS member who has proper outdoor facilities that can allow it to live a quality life in a natural backyard pond-type setting.



Rescue, Rehab & Adoption Report

For the 6 months ended 8-31-2004

Key: *male, female, unknown*
first number is males, second is females, and third is unknown

In: 95

7,5,0 Adult 3-Toed Box
 0,0,2 Juvenile 3-Toed Box
 1,0,0 Adult Florida Box
 1,1,0 Adult Ornate Box
 0,0,8 Juvenile Redfoot Tortoise
 1,0,0 Adult Russian Tortoise
 1,0,0 Adult Sulcata Tortoise
 0,0,5 Hatchling Podocnemis unifilis
 0,0,5 Juvenile Podocnemis unifilis
 0,0,1 Juvenile Native Cooter
 4,8,0 Adult RES
 8,4,5 Juvenile RES
 0,0,17 Hatchling RES
 0,1,0 Juvenile Snapper
 0,0,10 hatchling Western chicken

Adopted: 44

0,0,5 hatchling Western chicken
 0,0,1 juvenile Common musk
 0,0,6 hatchling Podocnemis unifilis
 0,0,2 juvenile Mississippi mud
 1,1,0 adult Mississippi mud
 0,1,0 adult Diamondback
 1,1 0 juvenile Rhinoclemmys pulcherrima
 0,1,0 adult Greek tortoise
 1,0,0 adult Sulcata tortoise
 0,0,8 juvenile Redfoot tortoises
 1,1,0 adult Eastern Box
 1,0,0 juvenile 3-Toed Box
 5,7,0 adult 3-Toed Box

Released: 30

11,3,7 juvenile RES
 4,4,0 adult RES
 0,1,0 Spiny Softshell

Available for Adoption: 38

16,2,0 adult 3-Toed Box *
 1,0,3 juvenile 3-Toed Box
 1,0,0 Adult Florida Box
 1,0,0 Adult Russian Tortoise
 0,0,4 juvenile Mississippi mud **

0,0,5 hatchling RES
0,0,1 juvenile Map Turtle

**some have special needs such as not being hibernated or housing without males*
*** Require a land area*

Living with Gulf Coast Box Turtles

Terrapin carolina major
Beverly Logan
GCTTS Member

The most fascinating comment I hear is, "I have a Gulf Coast box turtle." When the description is made that a Gulf Coast box turtle has four toes on each hind foot, the person usually realizes they have another common native species to Texas, with only three toes on each hind leg.

The Gulf Coast box turtle is one of the most unusual looking and the largest four-toed box turtle with a six inch or more elongated oval carapace with the rear margin strongly flared outward. Native range is along the Gulf Coastal plain from the Florida Panhandle to eastern Texas. Their carapace color is tan to dark black with very little or faint markings. Gulf Coast Box turtles have been exploited in the pet trade within the past ten years or more. But trade laws for Louisiana have stopped sales, helping these areas with wild caught terrapins.

As a keeper of Gulf Coast box turtles now for 12 years, I have made some interesting ob-

servations. I own a male Gulf Coast, who is the father of my many hatchlings now. I realized within a year that separation of male and female is necessary because of the male's constant desire to breed. Consequently I have several mixed juvenile terrapins now. I have also heard that male Gulf Coast box turtles tend to hold females in water during mating, and that drowning has actually caused death to the female mate.

With the male Gulf Coast interbreeding with the few female three toe box turtles I keep, I have



seen the predominate Gulf characteristics of four toes on all the hatchlings, and the very dark carapace trait. I do find it interesting that there is more coloration in the carapace of some and the plain pale tan coloration in others. The 12 year kept male Gulf Coast described has a tan color carapace. With the many grown hatchlings coming to maturity for breeding, I am keeping a watchful eye out for more male sub adults.

I find Gulf coast box turtles beautiful in size and appearance, and I love the way they hold their



necks high in an enchanting day dream basking in the sun. Because of their love for water, they are tolerant of Houston's three day rains or more. As a matter of fact, it is a Gulf Coast box turtle's dream, as they love soaking in water for long lengths of time. But it can be a challenge to keep the marsh-like moist conditions with water and plants in their pen which is an imperatively required environment for them. But I have found that a continual water drip system beats the drought problems we have in this area at times.

Living with Gulf Coast box turtle sub-adults is a big concern for this keeper because I am aware of the male Gulf Coast box turtle traits. I do notice however that some native female species I keep bury themselves under the dirt more often than they would like to, finding this as their only opportunity to stay out of the male's way. Some even completely lock themselves up in their shells. The responsibility lies with the owner to separate and build more turtle pens. The dread of my keeping more male Gulf Coast box turtles has already been seen and started at their age of four.

Electronic Newsletter

If you would be willing to receive your GCTTS Newsletter via e-mail as a PDF document, let us know at:

info@gctts.org

PDF readers are freely available for all popular computing platforms from:

www.adobe.com

Is it a Snapping Turtle?

Ann Smylie

GCTTS Member

The most frequently asked question whenever GCTTS members attend any event is "Is it a snapping turtle?" People are fascinated by these prehistoric-looking turtles and everyone has heard stories of their vicious personalities and their painful bites.

There are two genera of snapping turtles: The Alligator Snapping Turtle and the Common Snapping Turtle. The Latin name for Common Snapping Turtles, *Chelydra serpentina* means serpent turtle. This probably refers to their long snakelike necks and their fast strikes.

Common Snapping Turtles are found in many different bodies of fresh water. They prefer muddy, well-vegetated shallows where camouflaged as logs or algae-covered rocks they wait for anything that they can overpower and eat. This includes other snapping turtles. They have the largest distribution of any turtle in North America. They usually grow about an inch a year and reach sexual maturity at five years of age. Their life-span is thirty to forty years and they may weigh from fifteen to thirty pounds when grown.

Female Common Snapping Turtles are considered sexually mature when they reach eight inches in length. They mate from May through November and are believed to store the sperm or fertilized eggs until egg laying occurs in May or June. From twenty to forty eggs are laid in a clutch. The eggs are usually laid near water, but some females have been observed laying their eggs as far as two miles from a water source.

Great care must be taken when handling a snapping turtle. Common Snappers not only strike from the front of their shells, but they can strike across the back of the shell with the head upside down. Some people suggest picking them up by their tails, but this can result in serious injury to the turtle.

Snapping turtles are frequently caught to be eaten and I even found a web site that lists various ways to prepare them. This is one reason why 16 states have passed laws to protect their snapper populations.

GCTTS News List

If we don't have your e-mail address, you are missing out on important information from GCTTS. Our low-volume news list is used to make announcements of upcoming events and much more. Sign up by sending a request to be added to the news list:

info@gctts.org



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sick a long time before their new "owner" (or more appropriately called kidnapper) sees a runny nose or runny eyes. Sometimes the "owner" never knows anything is wrong until the tortoise stops eating. Once ill a tortoise must be seen by a vet experienced with tortoises to receive injectable antibiotics if they are to have a chance of recovery. If they remain in an inappropriate humid climate, respiratory infections can be a constantly recurring thing. There is also a form of bacteria causing respiratory infections, called Mycoplasma that can never be cured. After diagnosis, treatment can be done using certain antibiotics that will make a tortoise asymptomatic (showing no symptoms) for an indefinite period of time but there may be recurrences of illness and the tortoise is never completely "cured." They will always carry the Mycoplasma bacteria in their system. All respiratory infections are highly contagious between tortoises and turtles. Many people who thought they were doing a tortoise a favor by releasing it back into the wild has also caused the death of many native populations by releasing one with an infection that eventually kills the members in that area. This is a very serious problem for the Texas Tortoise and the harvest-

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ing of them from the wild and the unregulated re-releasing back into the wild must be stopped.

Every year a number of Texas Tortoises show up in the Houston area. They, of course, have been unwillingly transplanted from south Texas or northern Mexico to here by someone. Many are found as escaped “pets” wandering around a subdivision of houses. The lucky ones find their way to a wildlife rehabilitator who eventually makes arrangements for them to be taken to a zoo or monitored preserve back in a drier climate. This is not always an easy task. Finding the right place with permits in the right climate that wants them can be a challenge. Only a few studies have been done on these tortoises over the years. Some of these were done by Texas universities. Thorough studies do tests for Mycoplasma, etc., and observe rescued tortoises in large outdoor compounds over time. This takes money and not many people care enough to pursue serious studies. These tortoises can not be released back into the wild, there are not many permitted places that will take them and the general public can not legally keep them. The state takes no responsibility towards providing compounds for these uprooted tortoises. You can see this is a big problem.



You may think that all a tortoise keeper has to do if they live in a humid climate is keep a tortoise indoors where the humidity could be controlled better. We at the Gulf Coast Turtle & Tortoise Society do NOT condone this practice. When keeping any tortoise indoors on a permanent basis you must look at two things:

First, is the problem with insufficient UVB rays, which leads to vitamin D deficiencies, which in turn leads to calcium deficiencies. Do not be fooled by those that tell you it is just as good keeping tortoises inside as outside if you have a “good” UVB or broad spectrum light. Some UVB bulbs are better than others but NONE are equal substitutes for the natural, direct, unfiltered sun. This snowball effect of insufficient UVB rays, vitamin D deficiency and calcium deficiency can cause soft and/or deformed shells and bones. Natural sunlight can not be filtered through a window or any kind of plastic. These glazing materials filter out a high percentage of the necessary UVB rays.

Second, these magnificent animals that can out live a human



deserve a humane natural habitat to spend their long lives in. We believe keeping turtles and tortoises indoors, on a permanent basis, is cruel and unhealthy. This practice is equivalent to locking your child in his bedroom with no books, TV, radio or computer. What a boring life this would be for anyone. Living in confined quarters like a terrarium must be very boring to an animal that is naturally an explorer of his territory.

Keeping them outside in humid climates long term is not recommended either. Try to do what is best for the tortoise and find an appropriate facility in a drier climate. As stated before, because of their threatened status, doing this is not always an easy job. We are presently looking for other appropriate facilities for Texas Tortoises and will update this article with our success.

GCTTS Hotline 281-443-3383

The hotline can be useful to anyone who wishes to use it! It can be used to coordinate rescues and adoptions. It can also be used to obtain turtle and tortoise care information, directions to events, or event times. If you are interested in volunteering for any event, outreach, making copies, or helping with the newsletter, please call the hotline and let us know.

The Gulf Coast Turtle and Tortoise Society

Membership Application

Membership fees are our major source of funds. Your membership supports our many outreach and rehabilitation efforts. Members receive the GCTTS newsletter and can vote for our Board of Directors. Membership dues are:

Regular:	\$15.00 per year per address
Contributing:	\$25.00 per year per address
Sponsoring:	\$50.00 per year per address

Name(s) _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

Phone _____ E-Mail _____

What species of turtles and/or tortoises do you currently have? _____

Volunteer Opportunities:

Public Speaking___ Booth Assistance___ Exhibiting your Turtles___
Helping at Programs___ Hotline Assistance___ Telephone Committee___
Web Site Assistance___ Newsletter (Writing, Artwork, Layout, Typing, Copying)___
Mailing Information___ Copying___ Data Input___
Forms___ Labels Design___

Other _____

Please mail your membership application and dues to:



Gulf Coast Turtle and Tortoise Society

1227 Whitestone Lane

Houston, TX 77073