

# The Tortoise Burrow

Newsletter of The Gopher Tortoise Council



## Notes From a Co-Chair

T. Norton

### In This Issue:

- Florida Forever Program Extended
- Tortoise Job Available
- Recent Research of Interest to GTC

Our annual meeting is approaching, here are some details:  
 Where is the meeting being held? Jekyll Island, GA at the Oceanside Inn and Suites.

What are the dates? The business meeting will be held at and catered by the hotel on Thurs October 2. The special topics day will be Fri October 3 and the main gopher tortoise presentations will be on Saturday October 4. We will have some field trips organized for October 5. Please get in touch with Terry Norton if you are willing to host a field trip or have ideas.

We have rooms reserved at a discount rate at the hotel. Please make your reservations by August 21, 2008.

The Georgia Sea Turtle Center will be assisting with the conference this year and there will be a tour Friday evening for those interested. We will have a low country boil on Fri night and a barbeque on Sat night. A keg of beer will be available each night.

Hotel reservations can be made by calling 1-866-553-5955.

The special topic for Friday is wildlife and ecosystem health. We have a number of speakers lined up.

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**For Registration Information and Field Trip Details, View the GTC Website:**  
[www.gophertortoiseCouncil.org](http://www.gophertortoiseCouncil.org)



**GENERAL ANNOUNCEMENTS AND PRESS RELEASES****Florida Extends Conservation Land Purchasing Program****M. Gunzburger**

Florida's immensely successful land conservation program, Florida Forever, has allowed for the purchase of over 2 million of acres of conservation land throughout Florida. However, the program was slated to expire in 2010 and no additional funding had been guaranteed. The Gopher Tortoise Council joined with other members of the Florida Forever Coalition to ask the legislature and governor of Florida to enact legislation to continue this successful program.

A great victory for conservation was achieved July 1, 2008 when Florida's Governor Charlie Crist signed into law Senate bill 542, which extends the Florida Forever program through 2020 at \$300 million a year. Each year, the legislature must now appropriate funds to launch Florida Forever bonds in the budget. The Florida Forever Coalition will continue to advocate that funds are spent on the highest conservation priorities and to make the case for Florida Forever every day.

For more information, please see the Florida Forever Coalition Website

<http://www.supportfloridaforever.org/>

**New GA Non-game Wildlife E-Newsletter****GA DNR**

Wild about wildlife? Then consider signing up for Georgia Wild, the Georgia Department of Natural Resources' free e-newsletter about nongame wildlife, native plants and natural habitats.

Georgia Wild will be delivered to your inbox each month. Recent issues explored Silver Lake Wildlife Management Area near Bainbridge, the status of hellbenders and big-eared bats, DNA research tracing sea turtle families and an ongoing survey of the sandhill habitat vital for gopher tortoises and other rare species.

Subscribe at <http://www.georgiawildlife.com/enewsletters.aspx> or contact Rick Lavender with the DNR's Wildlife Resources Division, (770) 918-6787 or [rick.lavender@gadnr.org](mailto:rick.lavender@gadnr.org). You can also read previous issues at [www.georgiawildlife.com](http://www.georgiawildlife.com).

The next issue is due out in early September.

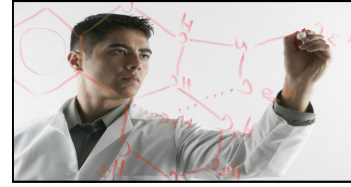
**Work With Tortoises****J. Linehan**

The Herpetology Lab at the Joseph W. Jones Ecological Research Center is seeking one temporary hourly field researcher to assist with field surveys of gopher tortoises on public lands. The position is a 2-month appointment beginning in early September 2008 with a possibility of an extension through the end of the year. On-site housing is provided on a space available basis, but is optional.

The successful candidate will be responsible for the following: 1) line distance sampling through potentially rough terrain, 2) locating and scoping tortoise burrows, and 3) data entry. Extensive travel to sites 3-4 hours off property is required. A field vehicle will be provided and travel expenses will be covered by the Jones Center. Must have a valid driver's license and clean driving record.

To apply, send letter of application detailing your interest and qualifications, a resume including contact information of at least three references to: Herpetology Hourly Field Assistant, Attn: Jennifer Linehan, Joseph W. Jones Ecological Research Center, Route 2 Box 2324, Newton, Georgia 39870, FAX information to (229)734-4707 Questions? Contact [jennifer.linehan@jonesctr.org](mailto:jennifer.linehan@jonesctr.org)

For the full job description, visit: <http://www.gophertortoiseCouncil.org/forum/>



## Recent Research

### GTC Members in Bold

**Dodd, C. K., Jr.**, and M. J. Dreslik. 2008. Habitat disturbances affect individual growth rates in a long-lived turtle. *Journal of Zoology* 275:18-25.

**Aresco, M. J.**, and **M. S. Gunzburger**. 2007. Ecology and morphology of *Chelydra serpentina* in northwestern Florida. *Southeastern Naturalist* 6:435-448.

Todd, B. D., B. B. Rothermel, R. N. Reed, T. M. Luhring, K. Schlatter, L. Trenkamp, and J. W. Gibbons. 2008. Habitat alteration increases invasive fire ant abundance to the detriment of amphibians and reptiles. *Biological Invasions* 10:539-546.

Todd, B. D., J. D. Willson, C. T. Winne, R. D. Semlitsch, J. W. Gibbons. 2008. Ecology of the southeastern crowned snake, *Tantilla coronata*. *Copeia* 2008:388-394.

Todd, B. D., and K. A. Andrews. 2008. Response of a reptile guild to forest harvesting. *Conservation Biology* 22:753-761.

Pike, D. A., L. Pizzatto, B. A. Pike, and R. Shine. 2008. Estimating survival rates of uncatchable animals: the myth of high juvenile mortality in reptiles. *Ecology* 89:607-611.

Graeter, G. J., B. B. Rothermel, J. W. Gibbons. 2008. Habitat selection and movement of pond-breeding amphibians in experimentally fragmented pine forests. *The Journal of Wildlife Management* 72:473-482.

## GOPHER TORTOISE COUNCIL ANNOUNCEMENTS

### J. Larry Landers Student Research Award

**B. Herrington**

The J. Larry Landers Student Research Award is a Gopher Tortoise Council competitive grant program for undergraduate and graduate college students. Proposals can address research concerning gopher tortoise biology or any other relevant aspect of upland habitat conservation and management. The amount of the award is variable, but has averaged \$1,000.00 over the last few years.

The proposal should be limited to four pages in length and should include a description of the project, a concise budget, and a brief resume of the student.

This is an excellent opportunity for undergraduate and graduate students to access funding for their projects.

The deadline for grant proposals each year is the 15th of September. No late submissions will be accepted because of the early annual meeting date this year.



## *Newsletter of The Gopher Tortoise Council*

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Directory of 2008 Gopher Tortoise Council Officers,  
Committee Chairs, and State Representatives  
Please view the GTC website (below) for contact information

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Terry Norton

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Tracey Tuberville

## **The Tortoise Burrow**

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<http://www.gophertortoisecouncil.org>

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*The Tortoise Burrow* is published in December, April and August. Deadlines for submission of announcements and articles are the 15th of the preceding month. Send materials to the editor:

David Steen  
[DavidASteen@gmail.com](mailto:DavidASteen@gmail.com)

Decisions concerning publication of submitted material rest with the editor and co-chairs.

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