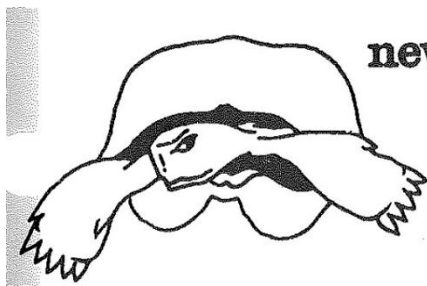




This is a reproduction of a previous Gopher Tortoise Council newsletter. This document has been altered from its original presentation so that information, news, and notable content can be preserved. Formatting, spelling, and grammar have been maintained to the extent possible. If possible, original images from the document have been included in these reproductions. The current and recent newsletters of the Gopher Tortoise Council, *The Tortoise Burrow*, can be found on the Council's website [here](#). Personal information, such as addresses and phone numbers have been redacted from this document.



newsletter of the GOPHER TORTOISE COUNCIL

Image: Original artwork and letterhead for the newsletter of the Gopher Tortoise Council

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING

A meeting on 10 May 1981 was held at the Solon Dixon Forestry and Wildlife Research Center, Dixie, Alabama. State reports were given to update the status of the tortoise. Dr. Robert Mount, Alabama, reports that the gopher tortoise has been designated a game animal and there is no open season during which the tortoise may be lawfully hunted, taken, caught, captured, or killed. The U.S. Forest Service is protecting the tortoise and no gassing is permitted in the Conecuh National Forest. Dr. John Burris, Mississippi, stated some plans are being proposed for tortoise protection but these are indefinite at this time. He also alerted those present that some nuclear waste sites are being established in prime tortoise habitat and did not offer much hope that these sites would be changed. Dr. Wally Wahlquist, Georgia, is working on drafting a petition to submit to the authorities for tortoise protection. South Carolina did not have a spokesman, but the tortoise is protected in the two counties in which it occurs. Ms. Joan Diemer, Florida, is working with several people to gather information and then push for protection. Ms. Teresa Heaton, Louisiana, has just consented to be the state rep and was not at the meeting. She is employed as an aquatic biologist by the Mississippi State University Research Center and lives in Slidell, Louisiana. Thanks to Rhett Johnson, Resident Manager of the Research Center, for the

fine accommodations for the night and the meeting place. Mr. and Mrs. Solon Dixon joined the group for dinner Friday evening and our thanks to them for making the Research Center possible; it is a beautiful place.

GOPHER TORTOISE COUNCIL ANNUAL STUDENT AWARD

The GTC will again offer a cash award to a student pursuing an undergraduate or graduate degree who is planning or actively conducting research involving the gopher tortoise, Gopherus polyphemus. This year's award is \$400.00. The only obligations of the recipient, other than conducting the proposed research, are to submit to the GTC a copy of their final report within six months of the project completion date, acknowledge of the GTC in appropriate scientific papers, and copies of any papers that originate from the research. Proposals should be short, no more than 3 double spaced typed pages, and should include a brief biological section, a description and justification of the research and a budget indicating how the money will be spent. Proposals should be sent to Dr. Ron Altig, Department of Zoology, Mississippi State University, State College, MS 39762 by 15 September 1981. The GTC will announce the recipient of the award at the 1981 Annual Meeting.

ANNUAL MEETING OF THE GOPHER TORTOISE COUNCIL

14 November 1981 is the date, Mississippi Museum of Natural Science in Jackson, MS is the place. The next newsletter will have more information.

WILDLIFE SYMPOSIUM

A NONGAME AND ENDANGERED WILDLIFE SYMPOSIUM will be held 13-14 of August 1981 at the University of Georgia Center for Continuing Education, Athens, GA. Larry Landers is one of the speakers and will discuss The Status of the Gopher Tortoise in Georgia. If you did not receive a pre-registration form and program, please contact: Georgia Department of Natural Resources, Game and Fish Division, Nongame and Endangered Wildlife Symposium. Rt. 2, Box #####, Social Circle, GA 30279.

CURRENT LITERATURE

McRae, W.A., J.L. Landers, and G.D. Cleveland. 1981. Sexual dimorphism in the gopher tortoise (*Gopherus polyphemus*). *Herpetologica* 37:46-52.

ABSTRACT: Shell dimensions and the anal notch of adult female gopher tortoises were significantly larger than those of adult males. The degree of plastral concavity, width between the posterior tips of the anal shields, thickness of anal shields, and length of the gular projections were significantly greater in males. Sexual dimorphism in these characters is independent of sex-related body size, and apparently is a result of selection to aid in breeding and successful reproduction. A discriminate function based on the ratios plastral concavity/body volume, anal width/anal notch, and anal thickness/body volume was developed which accurately classified individual tortoises by sex.

1981-82 GOPHER TORTOISE COUNCIL DUES

_____ New Member	_____ Student _____ \$5.00
_____ Renewal	_____ Regular _____ \$10.00
	_____ Contributing _____ \$25.00
	_____ Sustaining _____ \$100.00

Please send the above, appropriately checked, with your remittance to:

Ms. Lynne Lohmeier, Membership Chairman
c/o MSU Research Center
NSTL Station, MS 39529

This document was created and transcribed by Bradley O'Hanlon
March 2026