

Casting Around

photo: Art Michaels



Reptiles

Last April, during this issue's production, Commission graphic artist Ron Kuhn brought in a caged northern fence lizard. His father-in-law, Steve Waggoner, had captured the reptile in a wooded area of his property and had given it to Ron. Ron had placed tree bark and leaves in the cage, and against this backdrop I photographed the lizard. The next day Ron returned the lizard to its original capture site.

During this time we had also been preparing the *Summer PLAY Newsletter*, which appears in this issue. Its subject is reptiles in Pennsylvania.

Photographing the northern fence lizard and preparing the *PLAY Newsletter* for publication made me think about Pennsylvania reptiles. We anglers buy fishing licenses and trout stamps to catch fish, so reptiles and amphibians aren't often in the spotlight of our pursuits. However, most anglers know that Commission waterways conservation officers protect Pennsylvania's amphibians and reptiles and their habitats, in addition to protecting fish and the places where they live. Along these lines, check the timber rattlesnake item, by WCO Cadet Thomas McMann, in this issue's "Notes from the Streams," on page 54.

We anglers might not know as much about reptiles and amphibians as we know about, say, catching trout on opening day. Nevertheless, some of us anglers are interested in and curious about reptiles and amphibians. Check the letter on hellbenders in this issue's "Mail" column, on page 5.

Most of us anglers also know that some amphibians and reptiles become meals for the fish we seek. For this reason it's easy to understand how we can sometimes underestimate the value of our reptiles and amphibians. Still, we know that reptiles and amphibians are part of our aquatic environment, and as such we become increasingly curious about them, and welcome information that helps us learn about them.

When I looked into the northern fence lizard's eyes close enough to study the surrounding intricate patterns, I, angler that I am, embraced these ideas more fully.

The *Summer PLAY Newsletter* focusing on Pennsylvania reptiles begins on page 36.—*Art Michaels, Editor.*



Mark Schweiker
Governor

Pennsylvania Fish & Boat Commission

Leon H. Reed
President
Honesdale
William J. Sabatose
Vice President
Brockport
Donald K. Anderson
Meyersdale
Samuel M. Concilla
North East
Ross J. Huhn
Saltsburg
Ted R. Keir
Athens
Donald N. Lacy
Reading
Paul J. Mahon
Clarks Green
Howard E. Pflugfelder
New Cumberland
Rozell A. Stidd
Huntingdon

Boating Advisory Board

Richard W. Czop
Chairman
Collegeville
Steven M. Ketterer
Harrisburg
G. Edwin Matheny
Greensburg
Gary Miles
North East
Thaddeus Piotrowski
Bloomsburg

Ex Officio Members:

Peter A. Colangelo, Executive Director;
John F. Simmons, Director,
Bureau of Boating and Education;
Gary Smith, Department of
Conservation and Natural Resources

Magazine Staff

Editor—Art Michaels
Graphic Design—Ron Kuhn
Circulation—Linda Covage

Regular Contributors

Vic Attardo Cliff Jacobson
Mike Bleech Charles R. Meck
Rob Criswell Wayne Phillips
Jon Farley Linda Steiner
Dave Wolf

Pennsylvania Angler & Boater (ISSN1093-0574) is published bimonthly by the Pennsylvania Fish & Boat Commission, 1601 Elmerton Avenue, Harrisburg, PA 17110-9299. ©2002 PA Fish & Boat Commission. Nothing in this magazine may be reprinted without the written permission of the PA Fish & Boat Commission. Subscription rates: one year, \$9; three years, \$25; single copies are \$3.00 each. Periodicals postage is paid at Harrisburg, PA. **POSTMASTER:** Send address changes to: *Pennsylvania Angler & Boater* Circulation, Pennsylvania Fish & Boat Commission, P.O. Box 67000, Harrisburg, PA 17106-7000. For subscription and change of address, use above address. Please allow six weeks for processing. Send all other correspondence to: The Editor, *Pennsylvania Angler & Boater*, P.O. Box 67000, Harrisburg, PA 17106-7000. Editorial queries and contributions are welcome, but must be accompanied by self-addressed, stamped envelopes. Material accepted for publication is subject to Pennsylvania Fish & Boat Commission standards and requirements for editing and revising. Submissions are handled carefully, but the publisher assumes no responsibility for the return or safety of submissions in his possession or in transit. The authors' views, ideas and advice expressed in this magazine do not necessarily reflect the opinion or official position of the Pennsylvania Fish & Boat Commission or its staff. The Pennsylvania Fish & Boat Commission receives federal aid in sport fish restoration. Under appropriate federal acts, the U. S. Department of the Interior prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, sex or handicap. If you believe that you have been discriminated against in any program, activity, or facility as described above, or if you desire more information, please write to: The Office of Equal Opportunity, Department of the Interior, Washington, DC 20240.