A Report on the Reptiles Collected by J. M. Shaffer From the Keokuk Area 1863-1895

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On March 9, 1942, the Parsons College Biology Department undertook the identification of the J. M. Shaffer collection which had been on display at the Fairfield Public Library Museum for many years. The collection was found to contain many specimens without adequate collecting data. Each bottle had a number which corresponded with one kept in a ledger by Doctor Shaffer. Unfortunately through the years the ledger has been misplaced. All of the specimens in the collection fall within their established ranges with the exception of a single Phrynosoma cornutum. This specimen has only the date 1880 attached to the bottle. A population of this lizard in southern Iowa is extremely unlikely. As Keokuk is located in the extreme southeastern corner of the state it is impossible to determine whether all of the specimens were secured in Iowa, or if some were collected in either Missouri or in Illinois, just across the river.

The Mississippi River draws a rough dividing line between certain of our terrestrial faunal groups. We know that this is not due to the river acting as a barrier, but rather to the different character of the areas east and west of the river. This change is not abrupt, since eastern forest areas extend westward and grassland covers many areas east of the river. We may therefore expect a considerable overlapping of the typical eastern and western forms in this region.

Ruthven and Blanchard in their studies on the genera Thamnophis and Lampropeltis brought out this overlapping and subsequent intergradation in the Mississippi Valley region.

Acknowledgement is here expressed to Mr. J. Wilbur Dole and to Miss Lelia Wilson of the Fairfield Public Library, from whom permission was obtained to examine the collection. An examination of the collection resulted in the following forms being identified:

2. Western Smooth Green Snake, Opheodrys vernalis blanchardi Grob. Six specimens; three dated 1870, 1871, and 1882.
4. Pilot Black Snake, Elaphe obsoleta obsoleta Say. Two large specimens.
5. Speckled King Snake, Lampropeltis getulus holbrooki Stej. One specimen without collecting data.
7. Red Milk Snake, Lampropeltis triangulum syspila Cope. Ten specimens; one collected in 1891.
9. Common Water Snake Natrix sipedon sipedon Linn. Nine specimens; one collected 1868 (the earliest date), two in 1891. All of these snakes were labeled 'Water Moccasin' with the Latin name Ancistrodon piscivorus accompanying them.
10. De Kay's Snake, Storeria dekayi Holbrook. Two specimens.
14. Red-sided Garter Snake, *Thamnophis sirtalis parietalis* Say. Twenty-three were collected; four labeled 1868, 1869, 1869, 1878, 1893.
15. Western Ribbon Snake, *Thamnophis sauritus proximus* Say. One specimen.
20. Timber Rattlesnake, *Crotalus horridus horridus* Linn. Nine specimens; six were collected in 1879, one in 1883 and two were without data.

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LITERATURE CITED

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