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# NTS NEWSLETTER

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# THE FIRST EVER GLOBAL EVALUATION OF REEF SHARKS

BY ALEC COLOSI

Sharks are an amazingly diverse and fantastic group of animals that fascinate people all over the world. Over recent decades, it has been made clear through research that these animals play an invaluable role in ocean ecosystems, particularly coral reef communities. Unfortunately, it is also clear that human activity has devastated many shark populations globally, which has a great impact on these communities.

Most research has been based upon records of how many sharks are caught by fisheries, and not much involves direct observation of sharks in their natural habitat. Recently, a global initiative was founded to assess populations of sharks in coastal habitats all over the world. Through this initiative, called Global FinPrint, scientists from across the world have just published the first global assessment of reef sharks, their population status, and conservation potential.



One of the first questions you may have is, how does someone observe sharks in their habitat without disturbing them? A common method is for a diver to sit stationary on the ocean floor or swim along a predetermined line and count how many sharks they see. This, however, may scare off certain species or lead to inaccurate counts for other reasons. To avoid these complications, the researchers involved in Global FinPrint used baited remote underwater video systems, or BRUVS.

This is an apparatus consisting of a camera mounted on a tripod with a mesh box or bag full of bait to attract predators to the camera. Over 15,000 BRUVS were deployed on reefs worldwide, and trained volunteers at several institutions watched the footage to obtain accurate counts of sharks in each area.

The results of this study gave both good news and bad news. First, the bad news: no sharks were found in nearly twenty percent of the reefs in the study. When the researchers looked into the areas with little or no sharks, they found that they shared certain characteristics. These areas tended to be poorly governed and have high human population densities near the coast. There is a higher demand for shark products, such as their fins and meat, in areas like these, and alternative means of livelihood have not been made available for these communities.

Now, the good news. Though the study did find several situations that led to the absence of sharks on reefs, they also found those that were conducive to higher shark populations. Shark sanctuaries and areas closed to fishing or with catch limits had a much higher abundance of sharks. Even areas where fishing was permitted, but without the use of gillnets or longlines, had more sharks.

Among these high-shark areas, sanctuaries and catch limits appeared to be the largest drivers of shark abundance, the larger the area the better. There is still a lot of work to do if we want to preserve global shark populations, but this study was a huge step toward understanding what needs to be done to achieve this goal. It shows, on a global scale, no less, that there are policies and management practices that can be implemented to restore and maintain populations of reef sharks. In a time where many ecological studies only show us how badly we have harmed the planet, this study gives us hope for what we can do to save it.

# ANIMAL TRACKS MATCHING

BY RACHEL ANGLES

Match the letter of the tracks to the appropriate number animal!

\*\* Answers will be on the last page \*\*

1.



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3.



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8.



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11.



12.



13.



14.



15.



16.



17.



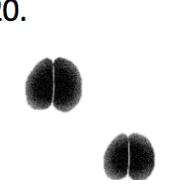
18.



19.



20.



A.



B.



C.



D.



E.



F.



G.



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I.



J.



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L.



M.



N.



O.



P.



Q.



R.



S.



T.



# BALL PYTHONS: THE BEST PET SNAKE?

BY EMILY GREZDA

As someone who works with all kinds of reptiles, I often get asked what I recommend as a beginner snake. In my opinion, the answer is the ball python! These beautiful animals only get 3-4' long and are thick-bodied, making them a little sturdier to hold onto. They are sometimes affectionately called "pet rocks" because they are very docile in nature. While there are smaller snakes available such as corn or king snakes (which are also great beginner snakes), those tend to have a "gotta go fast" mentality that isn't as suitable for just sitting and hanging out, if that is what you are looking for.

Additionally, ball pythons come in nearly infinite combinations of colors and patterns. There are literally hundreds of different "morphs", and therefore an exponential number of morph combinations to choose from. Price widely varies; a normal-type ball python may be \$20, while certain rare morphs can be thousands of dollars. However, most are reasonably priced, and as a pet, there are tons available at low price points.



Ball pythons live around 30 years with proper husbandry, so like with any animal, you want to make sure you can commit to caring for it that long. While the snake itself may not be expensive, you do need to invest in the right equipment to care for it. Ball pythons are not arboreal; they hide all day in burrows in the wild before coming out when it's cool to hunt. In captivity, they will eat rodents about every 7-10 days as a baby and every 2 weeks as an adult. It's actually important for the snake's enclosure to not be too large; ball pythons LIKE to be squished in a ball in small hides in their enclosure and may become stressed without them. There should be a hot side and a cool side to the enclosure: the hot side should be 80-85 degrees Fahrenheit with a basking spot that is 88-90 degrees, and the cool side should be 75-80 degrees. These temperatures should be controlled by at least 2 mini thermometers that can be put on each side of the tank to make sure the temperature ranges are correct. It is also worth investing in an infrared temperature gun to be able to take the temperature of the basking spot or various points in the tank. They're not expensive and give you a lot of peace of mind! Temperature control can be achieved in many ways. Heat mats are popular, and a great option, but you must also purchase a thermostat to regulate the heat that it emits. When you set it up, make sure that the temperature in the enclosure is correct – just because you set the thermostat to 88 degrees does not mean that that is what the temperature is inside the tank. Temperature guns are great to help with this. Another heating option is a ceramic heat emitter. These can run hot, so I also recommend purchasing a dimmer to ensure the basking spot doesn't get too hot. However, they are typically better at heating the entirety of an enclosure over the heating mats. One heating element that should NEVER be used is a heat rock. These are known to run hot and often burn reptiles; they are not a good option!

Humidity in the enclosure should ideally be 55-60%. Depending on the climate of your home, a water dish that slowly evaporates is likely enough to keep this humidity. Putting a humidifier in the room with your snake may also raise the humidity if it's still too low. This is important for many health reasons, including ensuring that the snake has a healthy shed. A good snake shed comes off in one clean piece, not fragments. Humidity gauges are inexpensive, and at least one should always be in the enclosure.

The more your ball python feels secure, the less stressed it will be. Providing at least one hide on the cool side and warm side ensures that your snake can thermoregulate as it needs while not needing to sacrifice the feeling of security. It's also great to include fake plants or other décor to "clutter up" the tank for extra hiding ability.

Setting up a ball python may seem complicated initially, but after set-up, they are very easy to maintain. They are hardy, docile snakes and do well with gentle handling. I recommend them as a first (or 10th!) snake, as they are truly good pets and more forgiving than many other species. Snakes are great, low-maintenance pets that aren't nearly as scary as society often makes them out to be. Make sure you do your research and learn for yourself how cool they are – it's worth it!



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# PODODERMATITIS, WHAT IS IT?

BY KAYLA LADEZ

Pododermatitis, commonly known as bumblefoot, is an inflammatory condition affecting the feet of captive raptors, waterfowl, and parrots. It is classified into 5 stages depending on severity.

**Stage 1:** mild thinning of the skin on the plantar surface of the foot

**Stage 2:** swelling and infection visible

**Stage 3:** open sores present in addition to redness and swelling

**Stage 4:** tendons, joints, and bones affected

**Stage 5:** severe loss of function with bone infection possible

Pictures below show parrots with mild cases and raptors with more severe cases.



Mild to moderate bumblefoot



Moderate to severe bumblefoot



Stage 5 - Severe

Pododermatitis can be caused by trauma, but it is often attributed to poor husbandry. Unbalanced diets can lack nutrients, especially vitamin A, that support skin health. Raptors and parrots require different kinds of perches based on their size, but generally birds who are forced to perch on a limited number and kind of perches, perches that are too small, or perches that are made of improper materials can also cause sores. Similarly, waterfowl who spend too much time out of water may develop sores due to bearing too much weight on their feet. Sedentary, obese, or injured birds are also more likely to have pododermatitis due to abnormal weight distribution and stance. Even heart disease can cause sores due to reduced blood flow to the feet.

Treatment is as varied as the causes of bumblefoot. Mild cases can sometimes be managed at home with antiseptics and padding on perches. More severe cases can require antibiotics, surgical debridement, and bandages to better distribute the weight of the bird. Treatment can take 1-3 months, and some severe cases may have a poor prognosis for recovery.

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## Test Your Trivia Knowledge!

BY: RYAN PATTERSON

**1. Which species of snake is the only one that builds a nest for its young?**

- a. Coral Snake
- b. King Cobra
- c. Burmese Python
- d. Reticulated Python

**2. Which of these the fastest fish?**

- a. Yellowfin Tuna
- b. Mako Shark
- c. Sailfish
- d. Blue Marlin

**3. What is a group of ravens called?**

- a. Murder
- b. Gaggle
- c. Unkindness
- d. Swarm

**4. Which is the largest cat native to the Americas?**

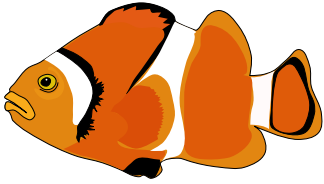
- a. Jaguar
- b. Florida Panther
- c. Mountain Lion
- d. Ocelot

**5. Which is the most diverse group of insects at over 23,000 species?**

- a. Flies
- b. Ants
- c. Moths
- d. Beetles

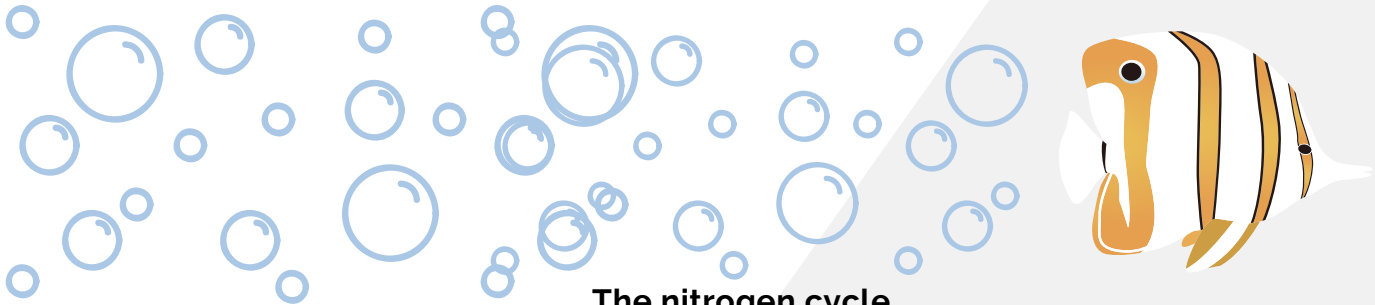
# BIOLOGICAL FILTRATION IN AN AQUARIUM

BY COLLEEN ELZINGA



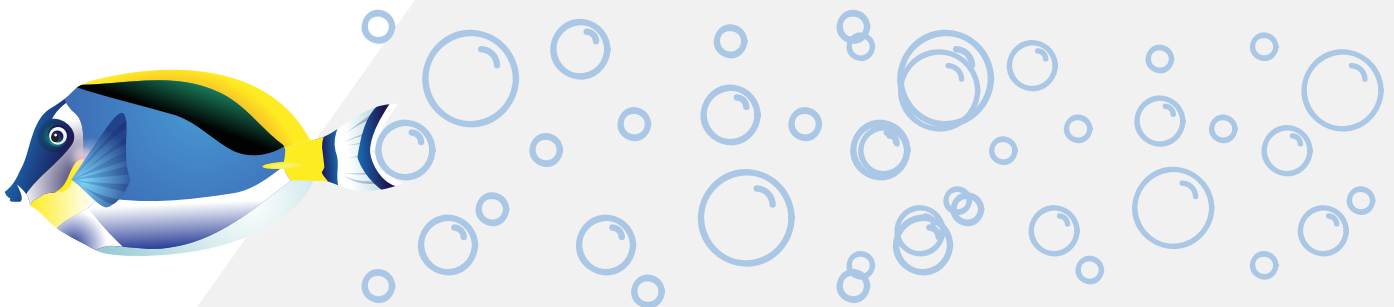
## Fish tank bacteria community.

Maintaining a good bacteria community in a fish tank is important for aquatic animal health. Beneficial bacteria can grow on essentially any surface in an aquarium, but they are likely to be concentrated in the filter sponge or media that has a high surface area. This bacterial biomass can be consumed by fish and serve as a nutrition source, but it plays a far greater role in maintaining the nitrogen cycle in a tank. This cycle is created by beneficial bacteria colonies which break down waste products into less harmful compounds. Heterotrophic bacteria can assimilate inorganic nitrogen into the biomass of the tank. As the water flows through the filter where the bacteria live, ammonia and nitrite are rapidly converted to nitrates, which helps keep the water free of toxic levels of these compounds.



## The nitrogen cycle

Fish waste forms ammonia, which is highly toxic to most fish. Beneficial tank bacteria can convert this ammonia into nitrite. As nitrite levels rise, nitrate-forming bacteria convert this nitrite into nitrate. Thus, a fully functioning biological filter eliminates harmful ammonia and nitrite compounds, while accumulating nitrates. At low levels, nitrates are not highly toxic to fish. With routine partial water changes of about 10%, the nitrate levels should remain within a safe range. Removing too much water at once or removing a vital source of bacteria accumulation in the tank can be detrimental to maintaining the delicate balance of this cycle.



## Importance of filtration

The largest contributing factor to fish loss in aquariums is a failure to understand the nitrogen cycle and the importance of providing the right conditions for the biological filtration process to occur. For instance, a new aquarium does not have enough beneficial bacteria to eliminate all toxins immediately. Therefore, it is necessary to take steps to support this bacterial growth in order to reduce fish health risks and prevent deaths within the first two to six weeks.

# YOUR FRIENDLY NEIGHBORHOOD HERPS

BY BROOKE DUGAN

Reptiles and amphibians aren't typically the type of local fauna that you think of when someone asks you about native Illinois wildlife, but that's why I'm here! So next time you're at a party or in a Zoom meeting, be sure to throw in there some fun new facts you've learned about some cool reptile and amphibian species native to Illinois and potentially Champaign County.

## Mudpuppy

**About:** The mudpuppy is a neotenic salamander species that's entirely aquatic and retains their external gills after sexual maturity. They're typically dark brown, gray, or black in color and are typically darker in clearer water. In stagnant water environments, their gills tend to be larger, whereas in rivers and streams they are typically smaller. Their legs are short and stumpy to walk along the bottom of stream or pond beds. Their skin is covered in a layer of slimy mucus to protect them from predators.

**Geographic Range:** Mudpuppies are found throughout the Midwest, New England, Appalachian mountains, and southern Canada in freshwater inland wetlands. In Illinois, they were historically found statewide, but currently, they're only found in a handful of clear rivers, streams, and in Lake Michigan. In Champaign County, they've been photographed since 1980.

**Habitat:** You can find mudpuppies hiding under rocks and debris during the day. They're more commonly found in deeper, clear water.

**Diet:** A hungry mudpuppy will eat most things that can fit in its mouth. Particularly, their diet consists of fish, crayfish, insects, and other invertebrates.

**Conservation Status:** The IUCN has mudpuppies listed as least concern, with surveys taken within the past 15 years suggesting the population overall appearing stable. In Illinois, they are considered threatened. They're rarely seen in the wild due to their elusive nature and habitat preferences, which makes surveying populations difficult.



## Blanding's turtle

**About:** The Blanding's turtle is an active turtle. They're easily identifiable with their bright yellow chin and throat. Their shell and skin is otherwise dark with lighter specs.

**Geographic Range:** This species is found across the Great Lakes region in Canada and US and the upper Mississippi basin with scattered populations found in New York, Massachusetts, southern Maine, and Nova Scotia. They're rarely found in southern Illinois but can be found somewhat commonly north of the Illinois River.

**Habitat:** Blanding's turtles are found in quiet marshes, prairie wetlands, wet sedge meadows, and shallow portions of lakes with abundant aquatic vegetation. They're known for being fairly active and mobile, traveling between wetlands and nesting in open grasslands.

**Diet:** Blanding's turtles frequently prey on crayfish and other small animals. They've also been known to scavenge and feed on vegetation.

**Conservation Status:** The Blanding's turtle is listed as IUCN endangered. They're also endangered in Illinois with their greatest threats being habitat destruction, road mortality, trapping, and the pet trade. While some populations nation wide appear to be stable, other populations are in decline.



## Slender Glass Lizard

**About:** The slender glass lizard is a species of limbless lizard. It's brown in color with six black stripes and a groove running the length of its body. Unlike snakes, the slender glass lizard has moveable eyelids and visible external ears. They got their name due to their easily broken tails.

**Geographic Range:** Different subspecies occupy different ranges in the US. The eastern slender glass lizard can be found in the southeastern portion of the US, including Virginia and Kentucky to southern Florida. The western slender glass lizard can be found in south east Nebraska, Iowa, Wisconsin, Indiana, and spread through to the Texas and Louisiana Gulf Coast. In Illinois, the western glass lizard can be found sporadically throughout the state, but it's more commonly seen in eastern Illinois and in western Illinois just west of the Mississippi River.

**Habitat:** The slender glass lizard has a wide range of habitats including open grasslands, prairies, scrublands, fallow fields, and near bodies of water with sandy soil.

**Diet:** Invertebrates and smaller lizards make up the majority of the slender glass lizard's diet.

**Conservation Status:** The IUCN lists the slender glass lizard as least concern with large numbers of widespread populations. It isn't threatened in Illinois but is listed as in greatest need of conservation by the Illinois Wildlife Action Plan.



## Spring Peeper

**About:** The spring peeper got its name due to the soft, ascending peep call that they make commonly during the breeding season. They're a small frog species with notably large toe pads, a dark "X" on their backs, and a dark spot or bar between their eyes.

**Geographic Range:** Spring peepers can be found across the United States, ranging from East Coast to the Midwest. In Illinois, they have been found in the majority of counties across the state, excluding the Grand Prairie.

**Habitat:** The spring peeper inhabits damp wooded areas near forests, inland wetlands, and small bodies of water. They tend to hide under logs and rocks and lay their eggs in pools of water or ponds.

**Diet:** Common prey species include small insects and spiders.

**Conservation Status:** The IUCN lists the spring peeper as least concern. In the state of Illinois, they are locally common.



## Massasauga

**About:** The Massasauga is the only Illinois rattlesnake to have both a rattle and 9 symmetrical plates on the top of its head. It's one of the few venomous species of snake in Illinois. They have dark bowtie shaped splotches on their backs with round blotches along their sides.

**Geographic Range:** This species is found in scattered populations across the Great Lakes and Great Plains regions to Arizona, Mexico, and the Texas Gulf Coast. Historically, they were found in approximately two-thirds of Illinois, but currently, they are believed to only have 1-3 populations, with the only potentially viable population found at Carlyle Lake.

**Habitat:** Massasauga live in a variety of different habitats within their range, including wetlands, meadows, floodplains, open savannas, prairies, and dry woodlands.

**Diet:** Their primary diet consists of small rodents, but massasaugas have been historically reported to feed on small snakes, mammals, and frogs as well.

**Conservation Status:** The IUCN lists the Massasauga Rattlesnake as least concern, but there has been a notable decrease in population and fragmentation due in part to habitat loss and deliberate killing. They are considered endangered in the state of Illinois. The Carlyle Lake population is known to suffer from a largely fatal snake fungal disease (*Ophidiomyces ophidiicola*).



# Follow Us Behind the Scenes

**Welcome to the final part of our three-part series! We're continuing to introduce you to the outstanding individuals that make up the NTS Executive Board. Hold on to your safari hats as we take you on a behind the scenes tour of this zoo of a group.**

BY SHEVON MEADOWS



**Drew is on his way to becoming a small animal and companion exotics practice owner!**

Acting as the NTS treasurer is upcoming second year Drew Cadwell. His duties include collecting dues and creating and communicating the budget to each of the chairs. Drew is also involved with the OTS, CAVA, and NAVAS clubs. Prior to vet school he lived in Colombia, Panama and Barbados for a combined total of 9 years, completed an internship at a zoo in Jamaica, and worked as an assistant at a clinic specializing in small animal theriogenology. Since starting vet school Drew has become a part of the WMC and is excited to say he's had a bald eagle as one of his patients. He has performed teeth extractions, spays and neuters on cadavers, and has dissected all kinds of "non-traditional" species through the WMC and comparative anatomy lab class. In his free time, he likes playing soccer, reading, listening to music, playing guitar, and spending time with his black cat, Sabrina. Drew loves the fun, exciting nature of people on the executive board. He feels we definitely have a work hard, play hard mentality, and really keep each other accountable.

He believes our membership is open-minded, adventurous, and ready for new challenges which makes being a leader in NTS really exciting.

Holding the position of ISCWAVMA Treasurer is upcoming second year Shevon (Siobhan) Meadows. ISCWAVMA is the Illinois Student Chapter of the World Aquatic Veterinary Medicine Medical Association, a subsection of NTS, typically referred to as Aquatics club. Her duties include tracking club spending, organizing fundraisers, planning lunch lectures, and maintaining the BSB fish and tanks. She is also involved with the Wildlife Medical Clinic and SAVMA as part of the Big Sib Little Sib committee. Prior to vet school she volunteered for International Student Volunteers in Ostional, Costa Rica by collecting data on nesting Olive Ridley sea turtles, volunteered with the mammal care department at the Virginia Beach Aquarium, completed a PADI Divemaster internship in Tenerife, Spain, and worked as a Divemaster for Operation Wallacea in Greece. She also assisted with spectral reflectance data collection cruises to the Gulf stream with NOAA and the Coastal Studies Institute in Manteo, NC as their subcontracted satellite imagery analyst through her minor in GIS and remote sensing. After graduating undergrad, she spent 2 years working as a technician at a walk-in small animal practice and now works for the ASPCA when not in class.



**Shevon is on her way to becoming an aquatic wildlife and conservation veterinarian!**

Since starting vet school, she has been able to participate in tours of the veterinary center and assist in a sea lion necropsy at the Brookfield Zoo, partake in a tour of the veterinary center at the Shedd Aquarium, and assist in the care and treatment of numerous species of Illinois wildlife through the WMC. Over the summer, Shevon has been able to transport some wildlife to rehabilitators and work at the VTH SAC ER as a student helper. In her free time, she enjoys audiobooks, puzzles, escape rooms, crafting, oversharing pictures of her cats, and putting on one-woman vocal concerts for them while cleaning. She has two male DSH orange tabbies; four-legged Aslan and two-legged Trident. Her favorite part about being a board member is being able to play a part in cultivating a respect, knowledge base, and confidence in working with the non-traditional species side of veterinary medicine.



Rachel is on her way to becoming a zoo vet!

Acting as NTS Secretary is upcoming second year Rachel Angles. Her duties include taking notes during board meetings and updating NTS bulletins around the vet med campus. She also compiles the listserv for when there are new members at the start of the semester and assists with tasks as needed by the other board members. She is also involved with the Wildlife Medical Clinic, NAVAS, and the Diagnostic Imaging Club. Prior to vet school, Rachel was a kennel technician at a small animal clinic, worked on a dairy farm, was an animal care volunteer at Miller Park Zoo, and participated in a wildlife rehabilitation internship at Treehouse Wildlife Center. She also conducted and published research regarding steroid hormone metabolism in developing reptile and bird eggs, and was in the color guard for her undergraduate university marching band. Since starting vet school, she has been able to neuter feral cats, draw blood from a bald eagle, float a horse's teeth, and observe and assist with a sea lion necropsy at the Brookfield Zoo. She has spent the summer working for the equine medicine and surgery service in the large animal clinic, and has continued to volunteer for the Miller Park Zoo. She is also excited to share that she has been selected as a team leader for the

Wildlife Medical Clinic for next year! In her free time, she enjoys hiking, reading, binge-watching TV, and spending time with her Great Dane/Mastiff mix dog, Lacey G (aka "Lazy"). Her favorite part about being a board member is getting to spend time with and learn from others who are so passionate about all different species, especially the ones not typically represented in a normal curriculum.

Holding the position of ISCWAVMA Vice-President is upcoming second year Ryan Patterson. His duties include helping with the fish tanks, participating in the newsletter, and filling in wherever needed within the club. Ryan is also a volunteer with the WMC. Prior to vet school, he worked in a small animal general practice and ER. He also participated in an internship in the sea turtle, dolphin, and whale hospitals of the Mote Marine Lab and Aquarium and while there assisted with rehabbing sea turtles, a bottlenose dolphin, and two whale species. Since starting vet school, he has been able to volunteer with the WMC and work in the VTH SAC ER over the summer. In his free time, Ryan likes listening to music, playing the ukulele, watching sports (especially football), golfing, and playing any sport he can. His favorite part about being a board member is being able to assist with and participate in field trips and wet labs.



Ryan is on his way to becoming an aquatics vet!

## Trivia & Matching Answers

1. Which species of snake is the only one that builds a nest for its young?

- a. Coral Snake
- b. **King Cobra**
- c. Burmese Python
- d. Reticulated Python

2. Which of these the fastest fish?

- a. Yellowfin Tuna
- b. Mako Shark
- c. **Sailfish**
- d. Blue Marlin

4. Which is the largest cat native to the Americas?

- a. **Jaguar**
- b. Florida Panther
- c. Mountain Lion
- d. Ocelot

3. What is a group of ravens called?

- a. Murder
- b. Gaggle
- c. **Unkindness**
- d. Swarm

5. Which is the most diverse group of insects at over 23,000 species?

- a. Flies
- b. Ants
- c. Moths
- d. **Beetles**

Matching Answers:

- 1. I.
- 2. H.
- 3. A.
- 4. L.
- 5. E.
- 6. D.
- 7. N.
- 8. O.
- 9. K.
- 10. M.
- 11. B.
- 12. F.
- 13. T.
- 14. J.
- 15. P.
- 16. R.
- 17. Q.
- 18. C.
- 19. G.
- 20. S.

# DR. ANTHONY CERRETA INTERVIEW!

BY KENNYMAC DURANTE

Hello all you highly esteemed NTS newsletter readers! This month's article is quite a special one as I had the honor to virtually interview the new Illinois Zoological and Aquatic Animal Resident (IZAAR), Dr. Anthony Cerreta! The Illinois Zoological and Aquatic Animal residency is a 3 year program in which the residents rotate through the University of Illinois, Brookfield Zoo and the Shedd Aquarium in order to acquire extensive experience and exposure to a variety of taxon including megavertebrates, large carnivores, non-human primates, marine mammals, herptiles, birds, fish and small mammals. Residents gain countless clinical experiences that are critical to zoo and aquatic animal medicine such as handling and immobilization, providing preventative medicine, management of sick and injured animals as well as population health. The IZAAR program also includes training in research, scholarly writing and teaching!

Now that you know a bit more about the IZAAR program, let's move on to the main event! I hope you enjoy this interview, learn something about zoo residency, and most importantly, get to know Dr. Cerreta!



**Q:** Please introduce yourself! Where did you go for veterinary school (could also include undergrad if you would like)? What city and state are you originally from? Do you have any pets? Any hobbies that you like to do in your free time? This part can really be anything that you'd like to share with the reader!

**A:** I'm originally from south Florida (Fort Lauderdale area) and went to the University of Florida for undergrad. I stayed and worked at the UF CVM in the Wildlife and Zoomed service for 2 years before going to vet school at North Carolina State University. So, if you see someone that doesn't know how to drive in the snow this winter, it is likely me. I'm a big hockey fan – Go Canes! I have two ball pythons (Bonnie and Clyde) and a 90-gallon saltwater aquarium that is currently in Florida.

**Q:** Where does your inspiration for zoo medicine come from?

**A:** I have always had a passion for animals, which I think stemmed from growing up with leopard geckos, bearded dragons, snakes, dogs, and fish (thanks mom), but it wasn't until I was able to volunteer in the Zoomed service at UF that I realized that I could combine my passions for medicine and animals. I also developed an interest in research and helping to improve our knowledge base for these species - whether that be improving how we care for ZCA species to managing animals in zoological collections, or how that information can translate to conservation.

**Q:** What career paths have you taken prior to starting your residency here?

**A:** I did a combined zoo and small animal rotating internship at the University of Tennessee.

**Q:** What experiences during veterinary school did you have that allowed you explore the field of zoo medicine?

**A:** We had the opportunity to help treat injured reptiles and amphibians through the Turtle Rescue Team. That opportunity opened the door for me to get involved with research projects and get to know the faculty, who have been incredible mentors throughout my career. If it wasn't for them, I certainly would not be in this position today.

**Q:** What has been your favorite case that you've experienced before or during residency?

**A:** Hmm, I'm not sure this counts as a case, but I did help anesthetize and move 27 tigers in one day... but that's a story that you will have to ask me to tell in person, haha!

**Q:** What are you looking forward to the most during your residency?

**A:** It is such a unique program that really exposes us to all aspects of zoological medicine – ZCA, Zoo, and Aquatics. It is honestly hard to choose which part I am most excited about; I'm kind of still taking in this awesome experience and feel really lucky to work with such incredible mentors and students.

**Q:** Any helpful tips that you would like to share for students interested in pursuing a career in zoo medicine?

**A:** I was told in one of my vet school interviews that I would never become a zoo veterinarian – so my biggest word of advice is don't give up! Try to make the most out of every experience and opportunity you are afforded, listen to your mentor's advice and trust their guidance. I am more than happy to meet (I guess virtually?) with anyone and talk through more specifics as well. Here's my email: [acerreta@illinois.edu](mailto:acerreta@illinois.edu).

**Q:** Finally, and maybe most importantly, what is your favorite species and why?

**A:** It's a toss-up between the tuatara and pangolin. Pangolins mostly because I can relate to their awkwardness, but respect the need to just roll up into a ball sometimes. I also love dinosaurs and the tuatara is probably the closest I'll ever get... unless someone makes Jurassic Park a reality (fingers crossed).

## Guinea Pig Breeds Mix-N-Match

The American Cavy Breeders Association recognizes 13 breeds of guinea pigs, though many others exist worldwide! Guinea pig breeds can be classified based on coat length, texture, and color. Many breeds come in a wide variety of colors. In fact, there are over 10 different color variations that can be seen in certain breeds. Because there are so many breed and color combinations, some breeds won't be pictured. However, Guinea Pigs AU has a great comprehensive list at <https://guineapigsaustralia.com.au/guinea%20pig%20breeds.htm>

Take a shot at matching some guinea pig breeds with their pictures!

A.



G.



B.



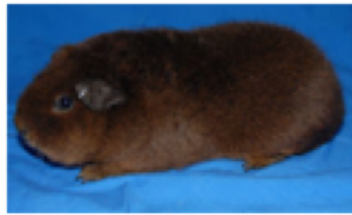
H.



C.



I.



D.



J.



E.



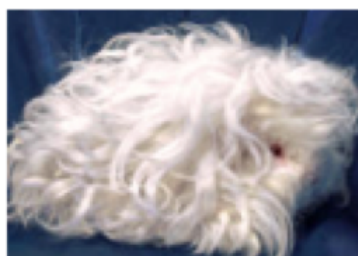
K.



F.



L.

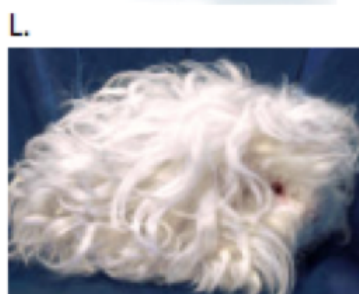
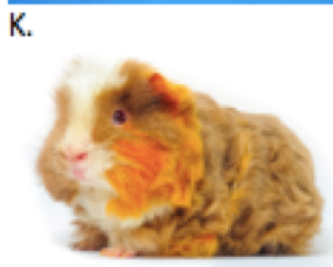
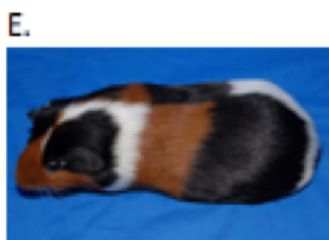
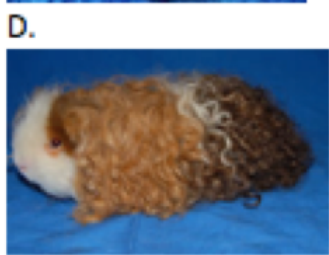
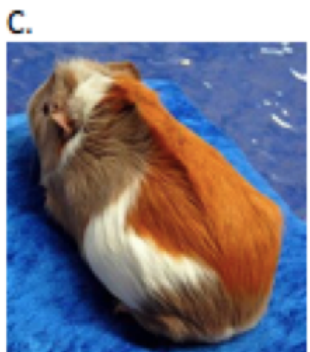
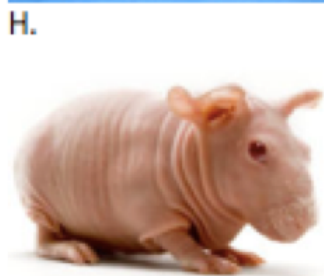
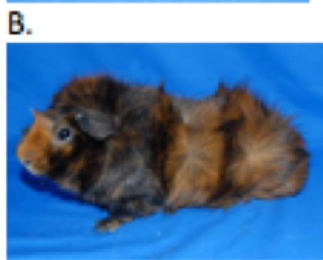
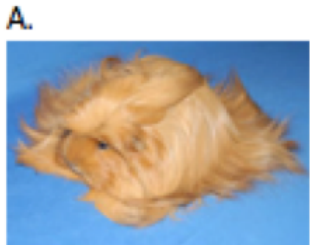


1. Teddy
2. Coronet
3. Peruvian
4. Skinny
5. Texel
6. Ridgeback
7. American
8. Alpaca
9. Silkie
10. Lunkarya
11. Abyssinian
12. White Crested

# Guinea Pig Breeds Mix-N-Match

The American Cavy Breeders Association recognizes 13 breeds of guinea pigs, though many others exist worldwide! Guinea pig breeds can be classified based on coat length, texture, and color. Many breeds come in a wide variety of colors. In fact, there are over 10 different color variations that can be seen in certain breeds. Because there are so many breed and color combinations, some breeds won't be pictured. However, Guinea Pigs AU has a great comprehensive list at <https://guineapigsaustralia.com.au/guinea%20pig%20breeds.htm>

Take a shot at matching some guinea pig breeds with their pictures!



**Fun fact:** 5 of the 13 ACBA recognized breeds are Satin versions of the Abyssinian, American, Peruvian, Silkie, and Teddy breeds. Satin hair shafts are hollow, giving the coat a shiny quality!

## Answers:

1. I
2. A
3. J
4. H
5. D
6. C
7. E
8. K
9. G
10. L
11. B
12. F

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