



Martha Segura/Atlanta/NPS

05/27/2008 11:45 AM

To: Whitney Granger/Atlanta/NPS@NPS

cc

bcc

Subject: Fw: JELA Snake

David Muth

05/27/2008 10:25 AM
CDT

To: Martha Segura/Atlanta/NPS@NPS, "Chris Winne" <ctwinne@uga.edu>, kbuhlmann@earthlink.net, "Nancy_F_Walters" <Nancy_F_Walters@nps.gov>, "Robert_Woodmannps.gov" <Robert_Woodman@nps.gov>

cc: David Luchsinger/JELA/NPS, emero@viscommpublishing.com, Allyn Rodriguez/JELA/NPS@NPS, Angela R Rathle/JELA/NPS@NPS, Earl Higgins/JELA/NPS@NPS, Fred Fuller/JELA/NPS@NPS, Jack Henkels/JELA/NPS@NPS, Wanda Lee Dickey/JELA/NPS@NPS, Wendy Rihner/JELA/NPS@NPS

Subject: Fw: JELA Snake

Herpophiles:

See the photo of a copperhead below taken in Barataria. That is me in the photo which was taken by ranger Emero Weisler. It was a chilly March day in 1988. We had a crew of volunteers from the Sierra Club cleaning up an old dump site along Hwy 45 between Twin Canals and Bayou Coquille on the east side. As soon as we began pulling things out of the dump, we started turning up copperheads (and other species, including Louisiana Milk Snake). It was decided we needed a safer technique, so I took that potato rake and began pulling things out of the dump piles individually to make sure they were snake free before the volunteers picked them up. (Emero-correct me on the details if I got them wrong.)

As I found the copperheads (I remember there being about 20--which I'm sure that must be an exaggeration), I used the rake to transfer them (they were sluggish) to a hollow live oak. I decided they could den together in there conserving warmth.

Several of the copperheads were quite large, but this one was astounding. We decided we needed a photo, and Emero took this one. All we've had at the park was a single print, if I recall. So I was delighted when he sent me this digital copy.

It was chilly, we were working hard, and I did not want to keep the snake exposed too long (and, frankly, I was afraid to try to handle that monster). A day or so later I pulled out Conant and discovered the record at the time of the Peterson publication was 52 inches. I knew then that we had let the world record copperhead get away.

I'm 5'10"-- 70 inches. As you can see in the photo, the snake, not completely stretched out and even considering parallax, reaches beyond my waist, and there is another foot of it coiled through the tines of the rake. The top of my shirt would be about 54-55 inches, which it would clearly have reached if stretched out, making that individual already a record. But I estimated it was more than 60 inches in the field, and even if I was off by ten percent, it still beats the record in Conant's most recent edition. Rossman and Dundee list the largest as 53".

After we realized it was the probable world record copperhead, we went back looking for it, but never found any of them again.

David

David P. Muth
Chief of Planning and Resource Stewardship
Jean Lafitte National Historical Park and Preserve
419 Decatur St., New Orleans, LA 70130-1035
(504) 589-3882 x 128; (504) 589-3851 fax
(504) 382-4949 cell
david_muth@nps.gov

----- Forwarded by David Muth/JELA/NPS on 05/27/2008 09:56 AM -----



"Emero"
<emero@viscommpublishing.com>

05/26/2008 11:57 PM
EST

To: <David_Muth@nps.gov>
cc:
Subject: Fw: JELA Snake

Dave:

Here's a blast from the past. I'm sure you remember this little fella from March, 88.

Emero

----- Original Message -----

From: "Linda Weisler" <linda@viscommpublishing.com>
To: "Emero" <emero@viscommpublishing.com>
Sent: Friday, May 23, 2008 10:33 AM
Subject: JELA Snake



[attachment "JELA Snake.jpg" deleted by David Muth/JELA/NPS] JELA Snake.jpg

