

BIOLOGY OF SNAKES CONFERENCE & BLAST

www.biologyofsnakes.com

To celebrate their beauty, importance, and conservation, Chiricahua Desert Museum & Geronimo Event Center (Rodeo, New Mexico USA) will be hosting the first **Biology of Snakes Conference**. The dates of this conference are **July 26-29, 2017**. Previous professional meetings on snakes that we have organized placed emphasis on certain lineages, predominately the vipers, boas, and pythons (Biology of the Pitvipers, Biology of the Vipers, Biology of the Boas and Pythons), but for Biology of Snakes (BoS) we are throwing out the broadest net possible and intend to explore and discuss the entire group. Indeed, this is an exciting and ambitious agenda. We welcome everyone who is interested in snakes!

The schedule begins with our invited speakers. These three luminaries have made tremendous contributions to our knowledge of snakes; we are privileged to have them attend and present.

- Dr. Wolfgang Wüster will deliver the Keynote. His talk is titled, “Natural History and Genetic Basis of Venom Evolution.” Those of you who have seen Wolfgang speak know that he will give us a very lively and exciting presentation.
- Dr. Frank Burbrink is our featured speaker. His recent work on snakes has taken him far from his office in New York. Frank will be discussing, “The Origin and Diversification of Snakes in Madagascar.”
- Dr. Mark O’Shea is our banquet speaker. Most of us know that Mark is always on the move, but somehow we were able to lure him to this meeting. He will engage and entertain us with an intriguing title, “Amphibian and Reptile Art in Miniature: Adventures in Herpeto-Philately.”

We will be honoring three world-class artists who have made snakes and other reptiles prime subjects of their art (see their profiles and art at the BoS website). At the conference, these individuals will discuss their remarkable careers. In some form or another, their art will be showcased and available for sale. Also, you may contact them ahead of the meeting if you would like to have them to deliver a particular piece of art you want to acquire.

- Tell Hicks tellhicks@gmail.com
- Carel Brest van Kempen cpbvk@juno.com
- William B. Montgomery wbmont@gmail.com

The Geronimo Event Center

Bob and Sheri Ashley, owners of the **Chiricahua Desert Museum**, had yet another magnificent vision for the town of Rodeo, New Mexico, **The Geronimo Event Center**. The Geronimo Event Center (GEC) is located next to Chiricahua Desert Museum, a non-profit institution. Plans for GEC began in 2015, and building was completed by 2016. These facilities are located in the beautiful countryside of New Mexico's bootheel. Views of the nearby Peloncillo and Chiricahua Mountains are breathtaking. The night

skies are spectacular and appreciated by both professional and amateur astronomers, as well as the star gazer in all of us. On clear nights, the view of the Milky Way is wondrous and simply unmatched.

Owing to its spaciousness and large commercial kitchen, GEC is able to accommodate meetings of up to 400 people. One main feature is the state-of-the-art audio-visual system and a 20' x 20' screen, which make for a very enjoyable experience whether attending academic lectures or watching a Hollywood action adventure movie.

The **Apache Museum** is located in the lobby of GEC and is free to the public (donations accepted). This special museum honors both Geronimo, a prominent leader from the Bedonkohe band of the Chiricahua Apache tribe, and the Apache Nation of the region. The museum highlights rare, period photographs of Geronimo, U.S. troops, and the local Apache of the Chiricahua region. Antiquities include the tools, art and objects made by the Apache peoples. The Apache Museum is honored to showcase Geronimo's personal bow, arrows, and quiver.

The GEC is of historic interest because it is located just 15 miles east from where Geronimo surrendered to U.S. troops on April 1, 1886. Make plans to visit this significant monument.

Early Registration

Early Registration is by June 1, 2017

Adult Registration \$145 USD

Student Registration \$100 USD

Presenter Registration \$75 USD

Spouse Registration \$55

Banquet \$40

Early registration is now open. Go to the official BoS website to register early!

All registrants will receive a printed conference program and BoS bag with fun swag items.

Abstracts

ABSTRACT SUBMISSION DEADLINE IS JUNE 1

Planning Your Trip to Rodeo, NM

***** The official BoS website has detailed information on travel and accommodations *****

The rural town of Rodeo is an unincorporated community in Hidalgo County in the southwestern corner (“bootheel”) of New Mexico. It lies less than one mile from the Arizona border on New Mexico State Highway 80. **There are no gas stations, banks, police stations, hospitals, and McDonalds to be found in Rodeo, NM.** Plan accordingly for rural travel.

AIRPORTS

Rodeo, NM is served by Tucson International Airport (**TUS - 2.5 hours**), Phoenix Sky Harbor International Airport (**PHX – 5 hours**), and El Paso International Airport (**ELP – 3 hours**).

We recommend that you rent vehicles at the airports. Personal transportation will allow you to explore the beautiful landscape of southern Arizona. For individuals who do not want to rent a vehicle, you may want to hitch a ride by finding a “riding partner” from the airport. We will advertise this on the BoS Facebook.

SHUTTLE SERVICE

We intend to have a **limited shuttle service** at **TUS** only. It will pick up individuals at **1 pm on Wednesday; after the conference on Sunday, it will depart the GEC at 10 am.** Please register for this service at least two weeks prior to the event with CDM (575) 557-5757. This shuttle is gratis only to registrants.

WHERE TO STAY

There is limited guest-housing in the community of Rodeo-Portal. Plan early to secure a room or place to stay. Also, major hotel chains are located in Lordsburg, NM and Douglas, AZ, which are within reasonable driving distance from Geronimo Event Center (approx. 50 miles). Road-hunting anyone?

Designated camping sites (\$\$) and primitive camping (free) are available at the nearby (10 miles) Coronado National Forest – Chiricahua Mountains.

<https://www.fs.usda.gov/recarea/coronado/recarea/?recid=25312>

EMERGENCIES AND PORTAL RESCUE

If you have any medical issues, plan accordingly for rural travel. Review all of your health insurance benefits and services. Bring pertinent contact information.

CALL 911 for any emergency while in Rodeo NM or Portal AZ

Portal Rescue: www.portalrescue.com (business phone: (520) 558-2206).

Local Activities

The region of the bootheel in New Mexico and Chiricahua Mountains offer unprecedented and amazing opportunities for recreation. It is world-famous for wildlife viewing, from rare insects and reptiles (non-avian) to trogons and many other birds, bears, peccary, deer, and jaguar (if very lucky).

Recreation Ideas

- Bicycling & Motorcycling
- Camping & Cabins
- Fishing
- Hiking
- Horse Riding
- Nature & Bird Viewing
- OHV Riding
- Picnicking
- Scenic Driving
- Water Activities
- Herping – see BoS website for information on local rules & regulations in NM and AZ.
- Stargazing (www.skyandtelescope.com/astronomy-resources/stargazing-basics/)

Contact Us!

If you have any questions, concerns, or need more general information, do not hesitate to contact one of us. The phone number at the **Chiricahua Desert Museum** is (575) 557-5757.

As the organizers of **Biology of Snakes Conference 2017**, it is our hope that you will find this meeting educational, innovative, inspiring, and enjoyable.

From all of us, thank you for your valued support and participation in this important meeting.

Dr. Gordon W. Schuett	gwschuett@yahoo.com
Dr. Chuck Smith	charlessmith35@gmail.com
Dr. Warren Booth	warren-booth@utulsa.edu
Bob Ashley	bobashleycdm@hotmail.com
Sheri Ashley	ecoorders@hotmail.com

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