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Updated and New Amphibian and Reptile Records from Clark County, Illinois [Abstract]

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Updated and New Amphibian and Reptile Records from Clark County, Illinois [Abstract]

Habitat loss and fragmentation are major contributors to declines of amphibian and reptile species (Kingsbury and Gibson 2002). Changes in the land use of Illinois (especially the Grand Prairie region) have led to a decrease in the percentage of land covered by forest. Agricultural fields fragment much of this forested area; croplands cover approximately 70% of available habitat within Illinois (Bretthauer and Edgington 2003). Early knowledge of herpetofaunal distributions in Illinois was chiefly due to the work of Smith (1961). A preliminary search of one of the two state parks in Clark County (Foster and Hampton 2003) indicated that the herpetological species list for this area is incomplete. Prior to these surveys 17 species of amphibians and 17 species of reptiles were documented in Clark County (Phillips et al. 1999), nineteen of these records are pre-1980 reports. Twenty-four additional species occur in surrounding counties. We hypothesized that some of these species might occur within Clark County. We surveyed approximately 280 ha of privately owned land, locally referred to as Rocky Hollow, in Clark County, Illinois and report herein, data for 14 different species. Specimens reported were found by active searching, by use of cover boards at our field site, or as road kills.