

mal immune system functions, diseases, injury, and death of frogs and salamanders. Studies by Dr. Tyrone Hayes at the University of California have strengthened the case for banning atrazine, a potent chemical that is the most common contaminant of ground, surface, and drinking water nationwide. Dr. Hayes demonstrated that atrazine is an endocrine disruptor that “assaults male sexual development,” interfering with reproduction by chemically castrating and feminizing male frogs. Atrazine has also been linked to increased prostate cancer, decreased sperm count, and high risk of breast cancer in humans. Thousands of pounds of atrazine are used each year in the Bay Area in close

proximity to habitat for the Red-legged Frog and Tiger Salamander.

The Bush administration has attempted to undercut Endangered Species Act protections by changing how pesticide impacts on wildlife are evaluated and making it easier for pesticide manufacturers to ignore the effects of their products on endangered plants and animals. The EPA proposed new regulations in 2004 that would have removed input from expert wildlife agencies in determining whether pesticides threaten endangered species, but a federal court overturned these new rules in 2006.

The lawsuit, report on pesticide impacts to Bay Area species, maps of pesticide use, and information about the

listed species are available at: www.biologicaldiversity.org/swcbd/programs/science/pesticides/bay-area.html



Freshwater and wetlands habitat used by the endangered San Francisco Garter Snake (*Thamnophis sirtalis tetrataenia*) has been contaminated by pesticides. A lawsuit seeks to prevent further applications until a thorough review of the effects of potentially harmful agents has been properly assessed.

O B I T U A R Y

George Thomas McDuffie (1927–2007)

George McDuffie, a well-known Ohio herpetologist, passed away on 15 April 2007. Born in Cincinnati, Ohio, on 25 August 1927, George received his Bachelors (1952), Masters (1956), and Doctoral degrees (1960) from the University of Cincinnati, the latter doing research on the natural history of Copperheads in the Buckeye State. His research on these snakes was published in 1963 [Studies on the size, pattern, and coloration of the Northern Copperhead (*Agkistrodon contortrix mokasen* Daudin) in Ohio. *Journal of the Ohio Herpetological Society* 4: 15–22]. He was one of the founding members of the Ohio Herpetological Society, which evolved into the Society for the Study of Amphibians and Reptiles.

During the 1950s and 1960s, George mentored many young herpetologists in southwestern Ohio, and most of them experienced their first real snake hunt under his watchful eye. He is remembered for his sense of humor, and on field trips to Shawnee State Forest in southern Ohio, many students and colleagues on their first field trip listened in stunned silence to the plethora of risqué limericks that he sang with gusto (and which they eventually memorized and sang also). More importantly, he took the time and made the effort to teach them how to find amphibians and reptiles, and much of what they know today about field herpetology can be traced directly back to George.

At the first Shawnee Herpetological Weekend held at Shawnee State Forest in May 2006, keynote speaker Joseph T. Collins (who grew up in Cincinnati and was mentored by George during his teenage years) dedicated the event to George McDuffie, and spoke fondly of his influence. Memorial contributions should be sent to the Torch Lake Protection Alliance, P.O. Box 706, Bellaire, MI 49615.



George McDuffie with a Western Diamondback Rattlesnake (*Crotalus atrox*) ca. 1960. Photograph courtesy CNAH files.