

Dirk J. Stevenson

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Professional Experience

2017–present ALTAMAHA ENVIRONMENTAL CONSULTING, LLC.

Herpetologist

Owner of conservation-driven, herpetological consulting firm based in Hinesville, GA.

2008–2017 THE ORIANNE SOCIETY, Hinesville, GA.

Herpetologist and Director of Longleaf Savannas Initiative

Directed a longleaf pine ecosystem initiative for a non-profit public charity (501 c-3) dedicated to the conservation of imperiled amphibians and reptiles. Wrote fund-raising and grant proposals and oversaw an annual program budget. Coordinated and supervised the completion of field research (e.g., radiotelemetry of spotted turtles, mark-recapture monitoring of eastern indigo snakes, habitat modeling of southern hognose snakes, surveys for snake fungus disease) and habitat management projects (e.g., longleaf pine ecosystem mgt. and restoration) funded by the US FWS, DOD, GA DNR, FFWCC and NFWF. Delivered presentations to other scientists and civic groups focused on the natural history and conservation of southern Georgia. Coordinated bioblitzes, prepared educational exhibits and designed environmental programs tailored for citizen science participants. Worked closely with agency biologists, academic scientists, private landowners and interns/volunteers. Supervised two full-time positions and field techs.

1996–2007 FT. STEWART FISH/WILDLIFE BRANCH, Ft. Stewart, GA.

Herpetologist

Worked as a staff herpetologist for an endangered species program on a large military installation. Using federal/state approved methods, coordinated and conducted field research studies tied to population monitoring of protected amphibians/reptiles, including the gopher tortoise, indigo snake and flatwoods salamander. Provided habitat management recommendations and co-authored the installation's Integrated Natural Resource Management Plan. Collaborated with visiting scientists on long-term field projects. Authored scientific publications and popular articles specific to the conservation of endangered species.

1994–1996 VIRGINIA DIVISION OF NATURAL HERITAGE, Richmond, VA.

Field Zoologist

Worked as a field zoologist for a natural heritage inventory program. Conducted surveys for rare invertebrates (e.g., amphipods, tiger beetles, freshwater mussels, odonates) and vertebrates. Reported survey results.

1992–1994 THE NATURE CONSERVANCY, Pembroke, GA.

Herpetologist

Conducted an amphibian and reptile inventory on a large military installation (Fort Stewart) located in the Coastal Plain of southeastern Georgia. Documented populations of listed/imperiled herpetofauna (flatwoods salamander, striped newt, indigo snake, southern hognose snake, gopher tortoise). Co-authored final report.

1990–1992 FL FISH/WILDLIFE CONSERVATION COMMISSION, Lakeland, FL.

Wildlife Biologist

Conducted field surveys for birds, mammals, reptiles/amphibians at three watersheds located in central Florida. Utilized a variety of field methods including transect surveys, drift fences with pitfall and funnel traps, turtle traps and Sherman live traps.

Education

1988, B.S. Biology, Southern Illinois University

Professional Affiliations

Eastern Indigo Snake Reintroduction Committee Member
Partners in Amphibian and Reptile Conservation
Society for the Study of Amphibians and Reptiles
Gopher Tortoise Council

Biography: Dirk J. Stevenson

Dirk is a zoologist, writer and educator with over 25 years of experience working in the Coastal Plain of the southeastern United States. He is originally from Illinois and graduated from Southern Illinois University (B.S. Zoology, 1988).

Dirk has worked for the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, The Nature Conservancy, the Department of Defense, The Orianne Society, and a number of environmental consulting firms. Most of his career has been devoted to population monitoring of reptiles and amphibians native to longleaf pine ecosystems — including the eastern indigo snake, gopher tortoise, striped newt and flatwoods salamander.

Since 1996, Dirk has conducted annual mark-recapture studies and distributional surveys of eastern indigo snakes throughout southern Georgia and has partnered with numerous researchers on conservation-based, ecological studies of this magnificent snake. Recently, he has assisted the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service with authorship of the *Eastern Indigo Snake Recovery Plan Revision* and he is currently a member of the Eastern Indigo Snake Reintroduction Committee.

Dirk has also conducted status surveys for imperiled invertebrates. He has authored over 100 technical/popular articles and his photos appear in a number of publications including *Amphibians and Reptiles of Georgia* (2008, University of Georgia Press). His popular articles have appeared in *Wildlife Conservation*, *Alabama Wildlife*, *South Carolina Wildlife*, *Illinois Audubon*, *Georgia Backroads*, and the *Savannah Morning News*.

Throughout his career, Dirk has worked and collaborated with Federal and State regulatory authorities, consultants, and private landowners to achieve project goals while considering net positive outcomes on behalf of rare species.

Select Publications

Eastern Indigo Snake/Gopher Tortoise

Bauder, J.M., **D.J. Stevenson**, C.S. Sutherland, and C.L. Jenkins. 2017. Occupancy of potential overwintering habitat on protected lands by two imperiled snake species in the Coastal Plain of the southeastern United States. **Journal of Herpetology** 51(1): 73–88.

Stevenson, D.J. 2014. Eastern Coachwhip (*Coluber flagellum flagellum*) preys on hatchling Gopher Tortoise (*Gopherus polyphemus*). **Bulletin of the Chicago Herpetological Society** 49(7): 93–94.

Hyslop, N.L., J.M. Meyer, R.J. Cooper, and **D.J. Stevenson**. 2014. Effects of body size and sex of *Drymarchon couperi* (Eastern Indigo Snake) on habitat use, movements, and home range size in Georgia. **Journal of Wildlife Management** 78(1):1–11.

Bauder, J.M., C. Castellano, J.B. Jensen, **D.J. Stevenson**, and C.L. Jenkins. 2014. Comparison of movements, body weight, and habitat selection between translocated and resident gopher tortoises. **Journal of Wildlife Management** 78(8): 1444–1455.

Enge, K.M., **D.J. Stevenson**, M.J. Elliott, and J.M. Bauder. 2013. The historical and contemporary distribution of the eastern indigo snake (*Drymarchon couperi*). **Herpetological Conservation and Biology** 8(2): 288–307.

Hyslop, N.L., **D.J. Stevenson**, J. Macey, L. Carlile, C.L. Jenkins, J. Hostetler, and M.K. Oli. 2011. Survival and population growth of a long-lived threatened snake species, *Drymarchon couperi* (Eastern Indigo Snake) in Georgia, USA. **Population Ecology** 54:145–156.

Shamblin, B.M., T.A. Alstad, **D.J. Stevenson**, J.N. Macey, F.H. Snow, and C.J. Nairn. 2010. Isolation and characterization of microsatellites from the eastern indigo snake *Drymarchon couperi*. **Conservation Genetics Resources DOI** 10.1007/s12686-010-9348-5. (Published on-line 16 November 2010).

Stevenson, D.J., K.R. Ravenscroft, R.T. Zappalorti, M.D. Ravenscroft, S.W. Weigley, and C.L. Jenkins. 2010. Using a Wildlife Detector Dog for Locating Eastern Indigo Snakes (*Drymarchon couperi*). **Herpetological Review** 41(4):437- 442.

Stevenson, D.J., and N.L. Hyslop. 2010. Natural History Notes—Long-Distance Interpopulation Movement: *Drymarchon couperi* (Eastern Indigo Snake). **Herpetological Review** 41(1): 91-92.

Stevenson, D.J., M.R. Bolt, D.J. Smith, K.M. Enge, N.L. Hyslop, T.M. Norton, and K.J. Dyer. 2010. Prey records for the Eastern Indigo Snake (*Drymarchon couperi*). **Southeastern Naturalist** 9(1): 1–18.

Stevenson, D.J., K.M. Enge, L. Carlile, K.J. Dyer, T.M. Norton, N.L. Hyslop, and R.A. Kiltie. 2009. An Eastern Indigo Snake (*Drymarchon couperi*) mark-recapture study in southeastern Georgia. **Herpetological Conservation and Biology** 4(1):30–42.

Stevenson, D.J., R.A. Moulis, and N.L. Hyslop. 2008. Species Account: Eastern Indigo Snake, *Drymarchon couperi*. In Jensen, J., C. Camp, W. Gibbons, and M. Elliott (Eds.). **Amphibians and Reptiles of Georgia**. University of Georgia Press. Athens. 575 pp.

Stevenson, D.J. 2006. Indigo: North America's largest snake is a gentle giant. **Wildlife Conservation** 109(6):46-51.

Stevenson, D.J., K.J. Dyer, and B.A. Willis-Stevenson. 2003. Survey and monitoring of the eastern indigo snake in Georgia. **Southeastern Naturalist** 2:393-408.

Amphibians

Farmer, A., K. M. Enge, J. B. Jensen, L.L. Smith and **D.J. Stevenson**. The status and distribution of the striped newt (*Notophthalmus perstriatus*). **Herpetological Conservation and Biology**. In press.

Wallace, M.P., Sr., **D. J. Stevenson**, and L.V. LaClaire. 2009. Captive Longevity and Size Records for the Peninsula Newt (*Notophthalmus viridescens piaropicola*) and Striped Newt (*Notophthalmus perstriatus*). **Bulletin of the Chicago Herpetological Society** 44(9):138-139.

Jensen, J.B., and **D.J. Stevenson**. 2008. Species Account: Flatwoods Salamander, *Ambystoma cingulatum*. In Jensen, J., C. Camp, W. Gibbons, and M. Elliott (Eds.). **Amphibians and Reptiles of Georgia**. University of Georgia Press. Athens. 575 pp.

Stevenson, D.J. 2008. Species Account: Striped Newt, *Notophthalmus perstriatus*. In Jensen, J., C. Camp, W. Gibbons, and M. Elliott (Eds.). **Amphibians and Reptiles of Georgia**. University of Georgia Press. Athens. 575 pp.

Bevelhimer, M.S., **D.J. Stevenson**, N.R. Giffen, and K. Ravenscroft. 2008. Annual surveys of larval *Ambystoma cingulatum* reveal large differences in dates of pond residency. **Southeastern Naturalist** 7(2):311-322.

Bishop, D.C., J.G. Palis, K.M. Enge, D.J. Printiss, and **D.J. Stevenson**. 2006. Capture rate, body size, and survey recommendations for larval *Ambystoma cingulatum* (Flatwoods Salamanders). **Southeastern Naturalist** 5:9-16.

General

Stevenson, D.J. and H. C. Chandler. 2017. The herpetofauna of conservation lands along the Altamaha River, Georgia. **Southeastern Naturalist** 16(2): 261–282.

Stevenson, D.J., J.B. Jensen, E.A. Schlimm, and M. Moore. 2015. The distribution, habitat use, activity, and status of the Spotted Turtle (*Clemmys guttata*) in Georgia. **Chelonian Conservation and Biology** 14(2):136–142.

Stevenson, D.J. and J. Stackhouse. 2012. The Amphibians and Reptiles of the Altamaha River, Georgia. **International Reptile Conservation Foundation—Reptiles and Amphibians: Conservation and Natural History** 19(3): 170–186.

Stevenson, D.J. 2010. The Altamaha: Georgia's Little Amazon. **HerpNation** 1(3): 6-14.

Stevenson, D.J., G. Beaton, and M.J. Elliott. 2009. Distribution, status, and ecology of the Say's Spiketail (*Cordulegaster sayi*) in Georgia, USA. **Bulletin of American Odonatology** 11(1):20-25.