



The Desert Tortoise Preserve Committee Invites You to Join Us At Our

34th Annual Banquet and General Meeting
January 24, 2009

Time: 2:00 to 5:00 P.M (Annual Meeting)
5:00 to 6:00 P.M (Mixer No Host)
6:00 to 9:00 P.M (Banquet Event)

Location: Antelope Valley Inn, 44055 North Sierra
Highway, Lancaster, California 93553
Phone: 661-874-4075

Guest Speaker: Taylor Edwards

Conservation Biologist, Assistant Staff Scientist at the University of Arizona

“Defining the Desert Tortoise with DNA; Applications of Biotechnology to Tortoise Conservation”

Abstract: Desert Tortoises can be secretive animals and understanding their biology provides many challenges. One of the tools that has helped scientists unlock their mystery is the application of molecular genetics to tortoise research. Every individual tortoise holds within its DNA a blueprint of the evolutionary history of the species. This information can then be applied to conservation efforts by informing biologists and land managers. I will discuss some of the latest research using DNA that has been conducted at the University of Arizona. With multiple collaborators, we have obtained over 1,400 DNA samples from tortoises throughout their range. A major contribution to our research has been fieldwork in Sonora, Mexico, which has involved a multi-faceted, multinational, cooperative effort. Applying the same techniques used by forensic scientists, we have studied the effects of habitat fragmentation on populations, made recommendations for the Recovery Plan, tracked translocations of tortoises by humans, and identified the genetic origins of tortoises held in captivity. In addition, we are also conducting studies of behavioral genetics, paternity, and are even redefining the species of the genus *Gopherus*.

\$ _____ Dinner Reservation \$35.00
\$ _____ Optional tax-deductible donation
\$ _____ Enclosed is my check for a total of

Name(s): _____ Phone Number: _____
Address: _____ Email: _____
City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

To RSVP and For Information Contact: Melissa Nicholson, Preserve Manager
951-683-3872, Fax: 951-683-6949, E-mail: dtpc@pacbell.net