



Thomas Richard Hudak

December 4, 1959 - July 21, 2021

Thomas R. Hudak

Conesus Lake - Noted herpetologist, educator, and naturalist, passed unexpectedly on July 21, 2021, age 61. Tom is survived by his wife Amy (Minster) Hudak; daughter Dr. Whitney (Nate Hayden) Hudak, brothers John (Barbara) Hudak and Robert (Patti) Hudak; mother-in-law, Lois Minster; several nephews and grand nieces and nephews. Tom is also survived by an extended network of friends across the globe, most notably in Vietnam. He is predeceased by his father Bob in 1998 and mother Winifred in 2010.

Tom spent many years showcasing his extraordinary reptile collection to both children and adults, believing that education and respect were paramount to understanding the natural world.

A Celebration of Life will be held at the Seneca Park Zoo on Saturday, August 28th with an hour of remembrance beginning at 5:30PM. In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to Return a Gift to Wildlife, Division of Fish and Wildlife, 625 Broadway, Albany, NY 12233-4751.

Previous Events

Dinner Celebration

AUG **28**. 5:30 PM (ET)

Seneca Park Zoo
2222 St. Paul St.
Rochester, NY 14621

Tribute Wall



“ Leo M. Bean and Sons Funeral Home created a Tribute Video in memory of Thomas Richard Hudak



Leo M. Bean and Sons Funeral Home - August 30, 2021 at 10:13 AM

HF

“ Hung & Family purchased the Loving Grace for the family of Thomas Richard Hudak.



Hung & Family - August 27, 2021 at 05:57 PM



“ Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of Thomas Richard Hudak.



August 23, 2021 at 07:35 PM

SI

“ Tom volunteered with us at Science Olympiad for many years. This was a competition for middle school students and some years there was an event about reptiles and amphibians. Tom would bring live animals and have the kids show their knowledge of what they learned from books. It was always the most popular event at the competition. He was a wonderful educator.

Suzanne Isgrigg - August 22, 2021 at 12:26 PM

MI

“ It’s hard to imagine a world without Tom. We’ve lost an inspirational educator, herpetologist, conservationist, colleague, mentor and most importantly friend. I’m so fortunate to have shared almost two decades of workshops, deep coffee conversations and visits in Rochester and Watertown. His annual pilgrimage to share his knowledge and passion with my students on campus and at the Zoo was a highlight for all of us. His generosity, thoughtfulness, sense of humor, and personal support meant the world to me and helped me be more comfortable being myself. Tom truly made a difference in this world and continues to inspire me and so many others. With heartfelt appreciation, thank you Tom.



Mark Irwin - August 18, 2021 at 02:38 PM

PM

“ I worked with Tom for several years when I was with the NYSDEC. At that time Tom was was doing environmental cleanup work. I also took Tom's course on handling dangerous reptiles that he offered to some of us. I particularly remember sitting in the front row and being scared enough to put my feet up on my chair while Tom had a king cobra on the the floor in front of us. Tom helped my son with a grade school project where he showed him how to pick up a 4 foot alligator. Tom was such a good guy! Condolences Amy. Tom will be greatly missed.
-Pete Miller

Peter Miller - August 04, 2021 at 10:22 AM



“ Emerald Garden Basket was purchased for the family of Thomas Richard Hudak.



August 02, 2021 at 02:56 PM

MA

“ Tom and I lived together during college and have stayed in touch on and off over the many years since. I was shocked and saddened to hear of his passing. I volunteer in a nature center and while I was holding the Milk Snake today all I could think about was his passion for, and dedication to, the nature world. I learned so much from him and the number of people he educated and inspired is more than anyone can count. His light will continue through these people as they pass his knowledge on. I'll miss you snake man and tell Jerry Garcia I said hi.

martha - August 01, 2021 at 05:35 PM

BF

“ I knew Tom for several years and worked with him when I worked at NYSDEC. I remember Tom as a manager of a spill cleanup contractor who always wanted to do the job the right way and with honesty and integrity. I appreciate his outlook on life and his friendship. He had a avid dedication and interest in reptiles and trained several of our DEC officers and my staff in how to recognize poisonous snakes and other reptiles in the field. Our thoughts and prayers are with Amy, Tom's daughter and the rest of Tom's family. Tom will be missed! Bruce and Sharon Finster.....

Bruce Sharon Finster - July 30, 2021 at 03:57 PM

MP

“ I lived at Conesus Lake for several years and Tom's family was there as well. He was good friends with my brothers and since I had a crush on him and a tomboy streak, they "Let" me be gofer when they built a tree fort. I also remember seeing Tom in his rowboat going up and down Camp Run Dr in June of '72 during Hurricane Agnes. His house was always full of turtle shells, snake skins, aquariums, frogs, etc. I pretended to be grossed out but secretly thought it was very cool. I saw Tom again as an adult before he moved to NM. We had a great talk about old summer days on the lake. You'll be missed my friend. Micci Piraino.

Miccilina Piraino - July 30, 2021 at 03:23 PM

TL

I had the pleasure of working with Tom for several years. He was a favorite Keynote speaker for years for me at a New York State, Animal Control Officers Training Session at the Town of Webster Coordinated By Barbara Acomb Hollands and Myself. He was a great guy. An incredible teacher and spokesperson for the preservation of all wildlife. The Wildlife Community will miss him dearly... May God Bless You Tom. You will now be at peace in the lords garden with all his reptiles!

Tom Link - August 28, 2021 at 12:24 PM