

5 May 2010

Featured Species

American toad (*Bufo americanus*)

The American toad is widespread throughout eastern North America, extending from Manitoba, Canada, south through the Appalachian Mountains and as far west as Oklahoma, Kansas, and Wisconsin. This species can be found in a variety of habitats from mowed lawns to woodland forests. American toads breed between March and July, depending on location. Their call is a musical trill lasting up to 30 seconds. In March and April, FrogWatch USA volunteers started hearing American toad choruses in: Connecticut, Illinois, Maryland, North Carolina, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Virginia, and West Virginia. If you have any photos or stories about your first American toad of the season, contact Mandy (mgaudreau@rwpzoo.org)!

American toads have two enlarged glands on the side of the neck that secrete a viscous white poison. This poison can be dangerous to pets, so be sure to discourage pets from eating or mouthing



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these amphibians. People who have handled these toads, or any amphibian, should avoid touching their eyes and mouths until they have washed their hands.

Rhode Island Natural History Survey Holds Amphibian Conservation Conference

The Rhode Island Natural History Survey held its annual conference on Friday, April 9th. This year's conference focused on amphibian conservation, due to a recent survey for *Batrachochytrium dendrobatidis* (*Bd*; a chytrid fungus that can cause a disease lethal to many frogs) conducted in Rhode Island in which *Bd* positive frogs were discovered. Experts on *Bd* and ranavirus discussed the biology and potential ecological impact of these water-borne pathogens on amphibian populations, as well as monitoring strategies and potential management responses. At the end of the conference, a moderated discussion focused on ways to continue researching the situation in Rhode Island and on possible management responses. Invited speakers included Edgardo Griffith of the El Valle Amphibian Conservation Center in Panama, Tim Georoff of the Roger Williams Park Zoo, Carlos Rodriguez of the Wildlife Conservation Society, and Eric Baitchman of Zoo New England. Learn more at: www.rinhs.org.

Climate Change and Conservation of Native Amphibians and Reptiles Conference

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Southwest Region held a Climate Change and Conservation of Native Amphibians and Reptiles Conference on March 16-18th. Topics included management of emerging pathogens, pathogen and parasite diagnostics, reproductive physiology, impact of exotic species on native herpetofauna, genetics management, and incorporating climate predictions into conservation and management. Attendees also participated in active break out groups to develop strategies and actions for implementation. For more information visit: www.fws.gov/southwest/Climatechange/amphibreps.html.

FrogWatch USA Welcomes New Chapters

In April, two new FrogWatch USA Chapters were opened at:

- Saint Louis Zoo, St. Louis, Mo.
- North Carolina Aquarium at Fort Fisher, Kure Beach, NC

For a complete listing of FrogWatch USA Chapters, visit: www.aza.org/become-a-frogwatch-volunteer/.

R.I. and Md. Lead in Most Data Submitted

Rhode Island and Maryland FrogWatch USA volunteer data sheets are pouring into AZA. How is your FrogWatch USA chapter doing with submitting data? AZA challenges all FrogWatch USA chapters to compete in the challenge of who can submit the most data sheets each month. If you are unsure how to submit your data see below.

Data Submission Process Reminder

All data should be recorded on a FrogWatch USA datasheet (available at: www.aza.org/current-frogwatch-volunteers/) and submitted to the AZA FrogWatch USA Office via email (frogwatch@aza.org) or regular mail (see below); online data submission is not currently available.

Mail submissions to:

FrogWatch USA Coordinator
Association of Zoos and Aquariums
8403 Colesville Road, Suite 710
Silver Spring, MD 20910

Datasheets should be submitted as soon as possible after each monitoring visit.

We Want To Hear From You!

Share your FrogWatch USA experiences, questions, and photos with us and your fellow FrogWatch USA Volunteers, by contacting Mandy at mgaudreau@rwpzoo.org. The newsletter will be published twice a month throughout the FrogWatch USA season. Previous newsletters are available at: www.aza.org/frogwatch/.