

Year of the Frog Events

Fear of the Frog in New Mexico

The 20th anniversary of Albuquerque Biological Park's Halloween event, Zoo Boo, incorporated a "Year of the Frog" theme and amphibian conservation fund raiser, with proceeds being donated to AZA's Amphibian Fund. The event drew more than 14,000 people. The event art featured a skull with intricate drawings of dressed-up frogs and the title "Year of the Frog" with the word "Fear" crossed out. Visitors received a t-shirt with each donation of \$10 or more. The Park also distributed literature about the amphibian extinction crisis and amphibian conservation.



Leap Frog in Toronto

On 14 November over 800 people went to the Toronto Zoo in an attempt to break the Guinness World Record™ for the MOST LEAP-FROGGERS!

It was a beautiful day and participants enjoyed animal visits from the Zoo's reindeer and camels, entertainment by the Zoo's buskers and musical act "Tribal Quest," and free coffee and hot



chocolate supplied by Starbucks.

The previous world record for

most leap-froppers was set in 2006 in Germany, and was 1,197 leapers. The Zoo did not break this record, but the amazing turnout showed that there is strong support for frog conservation and helped bring this important conservation issue to the forefront.

Sponsor CTV and 97.3 EZRock were on site and kept the event "HOPPING" all day, while Tom Brown served as Emcee and kept energy levels high. Thanks to all sponsors that helped make this event a success. More photos available at: www.torontozoo.com/leapfrog2008/?e=frog.

Seventh Session of ABCM Held at Toledo

R. Andrew Odum and Kevin Zippel, Course Administrators

In November the Toledo Zoo hosted the seventh offering of AZA's Board of Regents *Amphibian Biology, Conservation, and Management* course (ABCM). This is the 2nd amphibian course conducted this year and is the first time the course was held since the opening in May of the Zoo's new amphibian facility, *Amazing Amphibians*. This facility was specifically designed with the course in mind and includes many examples of amphibian enclosure designs, life support systems, environmental systems, bio-security, and a diverse representation of the Amphibia.

ABCM was developed to increase capacity in zoos for managing and conserving amphibians. The instructors have worked closely with Amphibian Ark and the AZA Amphibian TAG to



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focus on current issues facing amphibians and their need for *ex-situ* conservation. The faculty includes both zoo amphibian biologists and academics, most

of which have been active in amphibian conservation for years. A principal part of the program is an exercise in developing a zoo-based master plan for amphibians. The plan must contribute to amphibian conservation and public education. Part of this exercise includes hands-on workshops to design and build an amphibian enclosure, and to create educational graphics. Other topics covered include husbandry of different amphibian groups, medical care, nutrition, amphibian diversity and evolution, amphibian development, life support systems, amphibian monitoring, and amphibian conservation.

Eighteen students attended the course in November from three countries. To date, ABCM has trained over 150 individuals from more than a dozen countries. Learn more and register for the April 2009 course at: www.aza.org/prodev.

From the Field

Toledo Zoo Hatches Third Species of North American Plethodontid

R. Andrew Odum, Toledo Zoo

The Toledo Zoo has successfully hatched its third species of North American woodland salamander



© Timothy A. Herman. Toledo

in a year. On 19 November, a Black Mountain Dusky Salamander, *Desmognathus welteri*, successfully hatched in the Zoo's new amphibian area. The eggs were laid by the mother on

20 September. Several additional eggs appear viable and more hatchlings are expected in the next few days. This is probably the first captive breeding for this species. Over the last year the Zoo has also successfully hatched a slimy salamander and 22 four-toed salamanders. All the young are doing well.



Publicity Supports Amphibian Conservation

AArk partners around the world enjoyed two

publicity bumps in November. On 20 November, Animal Planet debuted Jeff Corwin's new documentary "The Vanishing Frog (www.savethefrog.com)" which highlighted AArk and our partners' projects around the world. The documentary was sponsored by our partner Clorox. On 20-21 November, the Zoological Society of London hosted a symposium (see Pramuk, next column) with the keynote delivered by YOTF patron Sir David Attenborough (www.zandavisitor.com/newsarticle-655-Sir_David_Attenborough_Leads_Amphibian_Symposium_at_ZSL_London_Zoo). The event was funded by ZSL, WCS, and WT Partnership. Both events raised public awareness and therefore enable your fundraising efforts for amphibians.

Submitted by: Kevin Zippel, Amphibian Ark Program Director

NEW RESOURCE AVAILABLE

Kouba, A.J., C.K. Vance, and E.L. Willis. 2009. Artificial fertilization for amphibian conservation: Current knowledge and future considerations. *Theriogenology* 71:214-227. Thank you, Memphis Zoo and Mississippi State University, for making this resource available.

Meeting

Year of the Frog Coming to an End; Efforts to Save Them Can't: The Research and Practice of Halting the Global Decline in Amphibians

Jennifer Pramuk, WCS' Bronx Zoo

The successful 2008 Year of the Frog campaign, intended to raise global awareness of the amphibian extinction crisis, is coming to a close. It is the hope of conservationists that the close of this campaign will highlight unrelenting and growing global efforts to save amphibians from extinction. As part of this effort, the Zoological Society of London (ZSL) hosted a symposium from 20-21 November 2008 titled "Halting the Global Decline in Amphibians." ZSL and the Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS) were co-sponsors of this symposium, which was organized by Lesley Dickie (EAZA), Jennifer Pramuk (WCS), and Kevin Zippel (Amphibian Ark).

This event brought together dozens of international researchers and conservation practitioners who, through talks and posters (abstracts are available at: www.zsl.org/zsl-london-zoo/whats-on/amphibian-declines-symposium,293,EV.html), disseminated current knowledge of amphibian declines worldwide and presented potential solutions to the problems facing these ecologically important animals. Topics ranged from climate change to program development and disease mitigation. The event's keynote speaker was Sir David Attenborough who eloquently stressed the biological and cultural importance of frogs, salamanders, and caecilians and presented clips from his recent amphibian-themed episodes of his wildly popular BBC program "Life in Cold Blood." In total, more than 200 participants attended the two-day symposium.

An overriding theme of the symposium was how much work remains to be done to save amphibians from extinction, including increased capacity and infrastructure building as well as research on treating and mitigating amphibian diseases. To accomplish these goals, increased funding from governmental and private foundations will be required, in addition to institutional and public support. The symposium highlighted the future direction of amphibian conservation and provided recommendations for building on the momentum created by the 2008 Year of the Frog campaign.

Send **Monthly Report Submissions** to Shelly Grow (sgrow@aza.org, 301-562-0777 x263).