

## Meetings

### AZA's Annual Conference

Progress on amphibian conservation projects, details about the Amphibian TAG's Taxon Champion program (learn about the recovery needs of a species of conservation concern!), successes from Year of the Frog education initiatives and plans to sustain enthusiasm through annual "Spring Forward" events, announcements of Amphibian Fund recipients, and representation at TAG Mart were among the many amphibian stories shared at AZA's Annual Conference in Milwaukee, WI, 14-18 September 2008. Thanks to all of the wonderful presenters! To learn more about these topics, contact ATAG chair Diane Barber ([dbarber@fortworthzoo.org](mailto:dbarber@fortworthzoo.org)) or Shelly Grow at AZA ([sgrow@aza.org](mailto:sgrow@aza.org)).

### CEF FUNDS AWARDED

In 2008, AZA's Conservation Endowment Fund (CEF) and the Disney Worldwide Conservation Fund awarded over \$490,000 to 24 wildlife conservation projects; nine projects received funding from CEF's Amphibian Fund. Over 100 proposals were submitted. All 2008 CEF and Amphibian Fund awards are listed at: [www.aza.org/ConScience/WhatIsCEF](http://www.aza.org/ConScience/WhatIsCEF). Next year's application materials will be available in January 2009.

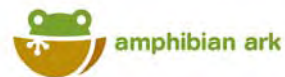
### IMLS SUPPORTS AMPHIBIANS

The Institute of Museum and Library Services has awarded over \$775,000 to a project entitled *Infectious Disease Control and Bioresource Banking for the Amphibian Extinction Crisis*. This project will provide recommendations to the *ex situ* community regarding infectious diseases in amphibians, increase human and analytical diagnostic capacity to help identify and control amphibian diseases, and increase capacity in bioresource banking via San Diego's Frozen Zoo initiative. Congratulations to Allan Pessier and Oliver Ryder (San Diego Zoo-CRES) and Joe Mendelson (Zoo Atlanta).

## 8 0 0 0 2 YEAR OF THE FROG

### FrogWatch USA Is Coming to AZA

AZA is pleased to announce that National Wildlife Federation's renowned FrogWatch USA program will be moving to AZA. More information about this transition and the program itself will be posted to [www.frogwatch.org](http://www.frogwatch.org) soon. In the meantime, we encourage you to start thinking about how this program can fit into activities at your facility.



### The Importance of Biosecurity

In recent years our community has seen an increasing awareness of biosecurity in captive amphibian programs. The concern is that if amphibians intended for release are NOT kept in strict isolation then there is a considerable risk of accidentally introducing exotic pathogens when the animals are released. Pre-release screening does not eliminate the risk, as such screening is (1) not 100% effective at finding known pathogens, and (2) can fail to detect unknown pathogens.

The reintroduction program for the Mallorcan midwife toad learned this lesson the hard way when they accidentally introduced *Bd* (prior to its 1998 discovery) from their cosmopolitan collection into wild toad populations. Fortunately in this case, the wild populations do not appear to have been severely impacted. However, this incident demonstrates the potential role the *ex situ* conservation community can play in inadvertently spreading disease and therefore our ethical obligation to do everything in our power to reasonably assure that we do not spread disease.

Read more about biosecurity at:

[www.amphibianark.org/pdf/Husbandry/A%20guide%20to%20husbandry%20and%20biosecurity%20standards%20for%20amphibians.pdf](http://www.amphibianark.org/pdf/Husbandry/A%20guide%20to%20husbandry%20and%20biosecurity%20standards%20for%20amphibians.pdf) and the Mallorcan midwife toad at: [www.current-biology.com/content/article/abstract?uid=PIIS0960982208009007&highlight=walker](http://www.current-biology.com/content/article/abstract?uid=PIIS0960982208009007&highlight=walker).

Submitted by: Kevin Zippel, Amphibian Ark Program Director

### Monthly Report Submission Information

Send Monthly Report submissions to Shelly Grow ([sgrow@aza.org](mailto:sgrow@aza.org), 301-562-0777 x263).

## Professional Training and Scholarships

Register now for AZA Professional Training's Amphibian Biology, Conservation, and Management course, April 18-24, 2009 at [www.aza.org/prodev/Amphibians](http://www.aza.org/prodev/Amphibians).

The *Cameron Park Zoo Amphibian Conservation Award* promotes professional training for employees or associates of any zoo, aquarium, or related facility in Latin America or the Caribbean Basin. The Award, sponsored by Zoo Conservation Outreach Group and Cameron Park Zoo, covers tuition, meals, lodging, air travel, and ground transport between the airport and course site. Other international scholarships that can be applied towards the Amphibian Biology, Conservation, and Management course are: *International Conservation Training Award* (all countries) and the *Zoo Conservation Outreach Group Conservation Training Award* (Latin America and the Caribbean Basin only).

The deadline to apply for scholarships for the April 2009 course is October 24, 2008; visit [www.aza.org/prodev/Awards](http://www.aza.org/prodev/Awards) to apply.

## NEW RESOURCE AVAILABLE

The *Proceedings of the Appalachian Salamander Workshop* are now available at: [www.cbbsg.org/cbbsg/workshopreports/26/appalachian\\_salamander\\_conservation\\_2008.pdf](http://www.cbbsg.org/cbbsg/workshopreports/26/appalachian_salamander_conservation_2008.pdf). Held 30-31 May at the Conservation and Research Center, Smithsonian's National Zoological Park, Front Royal, VA and facilitated by the IUCN's Conservation Breeding Specialist Group, participants identified prime threats to Appalachian salamanders and some conservation actions that could be taken to protect them.

## AZA OUTSTANDING SERVICE AWARDS

Congratulations to Diane Barber (Fort Worth Zoo), Dr. Jackie Ogden (Disney's Animal Kingdom), Vicky A. Poole (National Aquarium in Baltimore), Dr. Jennifer Pramuk (WCS/Bronx Zoo), and Andy Snider (Fresno Chaffee Zoo) who were among those selected by AZA Chair Satch Krantz to receive 2008 Outstanding Service Awards. AZA thanks them for their contributions and leadership during Year of the Frog.

## A CALL TO ACTION

### Field Assistants Needed for Amphibian Surveys in Costa Rica and Panama

As predicted by researchers, *Bd* has swept across the Central American Isthmus and decimated montane amphibian communities in its path. Not all amphibian populations disappear completely in the wake of the arrival of chytridiomycosis, although some species become sufficiently scarce that they appear to have gone missing permanently. Thus sites of recent recorded declines must be checked to verify any recoveries and/or the continued absence of species known to have existed there.

Amphibian Ark, with support from staff at Houston Zoo and Zoo Atlanta, has taken on the task of identifying volunteer field assistant crews to accompany an experienced group leader to survey sites of historical declines in Costa Rica and Panama. Three or four expeditions are expected to be held in 2009, each requiring three assistants with field and amphibian experience and lasting 1-2 weeks. Home institutions are asked to provide keeper salary (or vacation leave), airfare, and lodging and food per diem (approx. \$30/day). Home institutions also agree to donate \$400/week per assistant to help cover research expenses for the expedition (e.g., payment for guides, truck rentals, permits, travel for group leader, etc.). Contact Amphibian Ark's Kevin Zippel ([kevinz@amphibianark.org](mailto:kevinz@amphibianark.org)) to learn more.

### Responding to *Bd* in Eastern Panama

Documentation of *Bd* crossing the Panama Canal into eastern Panama is now available at: <http://www.springerlink.com/content/u6l4775128852478/fulltext.pdf>.

Recently, Houston Zoo and Zoo New England jointly sent a modified shipping container to Panama's Summit Zoo for rescue of eastern Panamanian species. The Smithsonian Institute is also working on a response to help eastern species, and is looking for partners. There are at least 15 species at risk in eastern Panama, including ~10 that are endemic or the last extant population of the species. The infrastructure is already in Panama, we just need additional outside investment. If you can help, contact staff at Houston (Paul Crump, [pcrump@houstonzoo.org](mailto:pcrump@houstonzoo.org)) or the Smithsonian (Brian Gratwicke, [gratwickeb@si.edu](mailto:gratwickeb@si.edu)).

Submissions by Amphibian Ark