

Husbandry Resource Guide in Spanish!

In 2008, the Amphibian Taxon Advisory Group (ATAG) published an "Amphibian Husbandry Resource Guide" and now, thanks to Luis Carrillo from Africam Safari, Carlos Olivera A. from the Mexico City Zoo's Office, and Alison Acosta Oakes, an independent collaborator, this impressive resource is available in Spanish (www.aza.org/amphibian-population-planning/). Thanks also to those AZA members that helped clarify terms, edit, and provide additional photos.

Africam Safari shared this document at the Asociación Latinoamericana de Parques Zoológicos y Acuarios (ALPZA) conference in May 2009. Please share it with your colleagues, as well.

While this Guide is a wonderful resource, much more can be learned from the hands-on teaching and networking at AZA's *Amphibian Biology, Conservation, and Management* course. Registration and scholarship applications, including some sponsored by the Zoo Conservation Outreach Group for Latin American colleagues, opens in August. For more information, visit: www.aza.org/professional-training/.

From Capitol Hill—Two Items of Interest

1. The House Interior Appropriations Subcommittee released their budget figures for FY 2010 and have included the following language in their report:

"The Committee is aware of the impacts of the Chytrid disease on amphibian species worldwide.....The Committee urges the Service [U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service] to work with the international conservation community to establish conservation and captive breeding programs to conserve the most imperiled of these species."

This language is very similar to language that AZA gave the Subcommittee last month.

2. AZA has been informed by the House of Representatives' Committee on Natural Resources that they are considering a Congressional hearing in late July focusing on Chytrid and the decline of amphibian species worldwide. They are particularly interested in the possible role of AZA in the conservation of these species.

Newtfest 2009!

By Jennifer Stabile, Central Florida Zoo and Botanical Gardens



© Dustin Smith, Miami MetroZoo

On March 1-4, 2009 a massive effort was put together by the Florida Fish and Wildlife Commission and the U.S. Forest Service

(USFS) to conduct striped newt (*Notophthalmus perstriatus*) surveys in the Ocala National Forest. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has been petitioned to list the newts as a threatened species, and the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission will follow suit after a state moratorium is lifted. Statewide surveys have been conducted since 2006, tracking the decline of the striped newt populations. On the first day of the survey, Dr. Steve Johnson from the University of Florida gave an amazing presentation on newt ecology and habitat characteristics, while Kevin Enge (FWC) went over survey methods and techniques. Over 50 people showed up each day (most camped out) from a wide range of agencies including government employees, the Central Florida Zoo & Botanical Gardens, Miami Metro Zoo, students, and newt enthusiasts. The surveys went well, data was completed for 82 ponds that were either potential newt habitats or held historical populations. Seven of the historically abundant ponds contained striped newts, 27 ponds contained gopher frogs (*Rana capito*), and one new newt population was found on the first day. The data collected concerning the locations of striped newt/gopher frog breeding ponds will enable the USFS to modify their management practices accordingly.

This was the first of many statewide newt surveys being conducted this year, including the Seminole State Forest and St. Marks National Wildlife Refuge in April. It seemed that everyone had a great time, and accomplished quite a bit. Thanks to the FWC's "No Newtist Left Behind" policy, it appears everyone made it out of the woods.

From the Field

Puerto Rican Crested Toad Calling

On April 30, 1,800 northern Puerto Rican crested toad (*Peltophryne lemur*; PRCT) tadpoles from the Toronto Zoo were released at El Tallonal. Four days later it rained heavily, with almost three inches falling in just two hours. One of the partners from the PRCT Recovery Team, Abel Vale, was concerned that the pond where the tadpoles were released would overflow, dispersing the tadpoles. He went to check the site and diverted some of the rain runoff, stopping the pond from overflowing.

He returned later that evening to check on the tadpoles again. While there, and in the midst of a symphony of coquí and insect calls, he heard a "magic call coming from the forest, the Sapo Concho del Norte was singing." Stunned and with goose bumps, he called his wife to share the news, along with others from the Recovery Team who came rushing to the scene.



Adult male calling at El Tallonal. © A. Puentes

In summary 18 males (all measured and weighted) were found, spread among three ponds at the PRCT SSP's release site, meaning that all adults present had originally been captive born and released as tadpoles. Unfortunately, no females were found and the following morning, there were no eggs present. Still, hope remains that the females would show up, especially as more rains were forecasted.

UPCOMING PARC MEETINGS

Register now for upcoming regional Partners in Amphibian and Reptile Conservation (PARC) meetings.

NE PARC: 11-13 August, Watkins Glenn, NY, <http://www.pwrc.usgs.gov/neparc/>

MidWest PARC: 13-15 August, Howell, MI, <http://www.mwparc.org/meetings/2009/>

Amphibian BioBlitz in Virginia

By Brian Gratwicke, Smithsonian's National Zoological Park

On May 9-10, the first amphibian bioblitz was held at the Smithsonian National Zoological Park's Conservation Research Center, a 3,200 acre facility near Front Royal, Virginia.

About 40 volunteers divided into seven teams to conduct streamside and terrestrial transects around the property over 24 hours. Out of the 30 terrestrial transects sites chosen, 23 were completed and of the 20 streamside transects chosen, 10 were completed. Overall, 412 individuals representing 15 amphibian species and five reptile species were found. Five new species were added to the Virginia Herpetological Society's records for the area. Most salamanders were swabbed to test for chytridiomycosis; results will be forthcoming.

Photos from the event are online at <http://www.flickr.com/groups/smithsoniancrc>. Funding and support was gratefully received from the Amphibian Taxonomic Advisory Group and the U.S. Geological Survey.

New Publications

Kouba A.J. and C.K. Vance. 2009. Applied reproductive technologies and genetic resource banking for amphibian conservation. *Reproduction, Fertility and Development*. 21: 719-737. This article is available by contacting co-author Andy Kouba (akouba@memphiszoo.org) or the Amphibian TAG (Chair, Diane Barber: dbarber@fortworthzoo.org).

Byram, J.K. and M.A. Nickerson. 2009. "The Use of Tricaine (MS-222) in Amphibian Conservation." This 15-page publication, which received partial funding from the Cryptobranchid Interest Group's (CIG) Ron Goellner Conservation Fund, is now available with a \$10 donation to:

The Reptile and Amphibian Conservation Corps
University of Florida
P.O. Box 117800
Gainesville, FL
32611-7800

Checks should be made payable to the University of Florida Foundation with "RACC" in the check's memo section.

Frost, DR., J.R. Mendelson, and J. Pramuk. 2009. Further Notes on the Nomenclature of Middle American Toads (Bufonidae). *Copeia*. 2: 418.

The Amphibian Conservation Report is published regularly by AZA. Past issues can be accessed at: <http://www.aza.org/amphibian-news/>. Send items for inclusion in future **Quarterly Report Submissions** to Shelly Grow (sgrow@aza.org, 301-562-0777 x263).