

Welcome to the 2011 FrogWatch USA Season!

AZA is pleased to welcome both new and returning FrogWatch USA volunteers to the 2011 frog and toad call monitoring season. For both those of you anticipating the frog and toad calling season and those of you who live in regions where the season has already begun, be sure to brush up on your frog and toad call identification skills and review the FrogWatch USA monitoring protocol at:

www.aza.org/current-frogwatch-volunteers/.

A list of the frog and toad species found in each state and recordings of their calls can be accessed through the FrogWatch USA Web site (www.aza.org/frogwatch), thanks to Lang Elliott. In March 2009, Mr. Elliott's book, *The Frogs And Toads of North America*, was published and includes nearly 400 photographs, natural history information, range maps, an audio CD, and more. Learn more at:

www.naturesound.com.

Test your identification skills by using the U.S. Geological Survey's public Frog Call Quiz at: www.pwrc.usgs.gov/frogquiz/.

Site Registration and Data Submission

Site registration forms and datasheets from each monitoring visit should be submitted to the FrogWatch USA office; online data submission is not currently available. Site registration forms and datasheets are available for download at www.aza.org/current-frogwatch-volunteers/. Returning volunteers do not need to submit a new site registration, unless they are adding a new site.

All datasheets should be submitted as soon as possible after each monitoring visit to: frogwatch@aza.org

Or via U.S. mail to
FrogWatch USA Coordinator
Association of Zoos and Aquariums
8403 Colesville Road, Suite 710
Silver Spring, MD 20910

When completing your datasheets, be sure to report all data, including monitoring visits when no frog or toad calls were heard.

Information about the absence of calls can be just as valuable as information about their presence!



UPCOMING TRAINING SESSIONS

Learn more about FrogWatch USA or hone your monitoring and identification skills at an upcoming training sessions, hosted by local FrogWatch USA Chapters. Contact the listed facilitator or Web site for more information, or find the Chapter closest to you at:

www.aza.org/become-a-frogwatch-volunteer/

California

Sequoia Park Zoo—March 26

education@sequoiaparkzoo.net

Florida

St Augustine Alligator Farm Zoological Park—February 11

www.alligatorfarm.com

Michigan

Detroit Zoological Society—Feb. 26 & March 6

rjohnson@dzs.org

Missouri

Saint Louis Zoo—March 19

<http://stlzoo.org/education/frogwatchusa>

New Jersey

Jenkinson's Aquarium—February 23 & March 23

jenkinsonsiaquarium@comcast.net

Rhode Island

Roger Williams Park Zoo—Feb. 27, March 9 & 24, and April 16

baustin@rwpzoo.org

South Carolina

Greenville Zoo—February 19 and 26

bfoster@greenvillezoo.gov

Tennessee

Knoxville Zoo—February 12

smcraffin@knoxville-zoo.org

Send your FrogWatch USA Chapter training dates to frogwatch@aza.org and we'll add them to the list!

Featured Species—Wood Frog

The wood frog (*Rana sylvatica*) is widespread throughout northern North America and is the only frog found north of the Arctic circle. Wood frogs tolerate the freezing of blood and tissue, in part by converting liver glycogen into glucose to limit internal ice formation and the shrinkage of cells. Wood frogs are a terrestrial species but migrate to vernal (ephemeral) pools to breed. The mating call of the wood frog is similar to a quacking duck and you'll be hearing this frog soon. Past FrogWatch USA data suggests that people will begin hearing wood frogs in late February and early March.

Online Training Available to Help you Start a Local FrogWatch USA Chapter!

In January, AZA launched its new, online training program that allows AZA-accredited zoos and aquariums to open their own chapter of FrogWatch USA that can be branded by the facility and tailored to meet each community's needs. In addition to zoos and aquariums, nature centers and preserves, state parks, parks and recreation departments, and similar institutions are encouraged to host their own FrogWatch USA chapters.

The self-paced, interactive online training course, designed by NP Training Works, teaches coordinators how to start a chapter and certify members of the public as citizen scientists for FrogWatch USA. The training course is available at www.aza.org/web-based-training.aspx. Registration costs \$50 for AZA members, and \$74 for non-members. Sign up now in order to launch a new chapter before the spring breeding season fully begins.

2010 AMPHIBIAN CONSERVATION HIGHLIGHTS AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Zoos and aquariums accredited by the Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA), have made long-term commitments to amphibian conservation. Their activities range from breeding and raising threatened and

endangered frogs and toads for reintroduction to the wild, to conducting field surveys for both amphibians and disease. Activities also include increasing awareness about local amphibian populations and engaging communities in amphibian protection, and helping colleagues around the world develop the skills necessary to advance amphibian conservation in their own countries. In January,

a report entitled *Amphibian Conservation—2010 Highlights and Accomplishments* was published. The report features some of the amphibian-related conservation projects currently taking place at AZA-accredited zoos and aquariums. Learn more about what zoos and aquariums are doing both locally and around the world by downloading the report at www.aza.org/amphibian-news/.



We Want To Hear From You!

Share your FrogWatch USA experiences, questions, and photos with us and your fellow FrogWatch USA Volunteers, by emailing frogwatch@aza.org. The newsletter is published regularly throughout the FrogWatch USA season. Previous newsletters are also available for download at www.aza.org/frogwatch-newsletters/.

Online Infrastructure in Development for FrogWatch USA

*Excerpt from National Geographic Society Press Release
29 October 2010*

The National Science Foundation (NSF) has awarded a \$2.7 million, five-year grant to the National Geographic Society (NGS) to launch a major initiative that will engage the public in scientific research about the world around them. In this project, NGS will develop and evaluate a Web-based software platform called FieldScope to support citizen science projects involving geographic data.

The development of an Internet-based technology infrastructure has remained an obstacle for citizen science project organizers because there are no specialized tools or resources for creating citizen science platforms. Each organization has to develop its own database, entry tools, and tools for displaying and/or analyzing data. The development of this infrastructure can be a serious technical and financial challenge.

In this NSF-funded project, the National Geographic Society is addressing the national need for tools that will enable scientific and educational organizations to quickly and inexpensively launch citizen science projects. The project is focusing on a particular type of citizen science project that National Geographic calls "community geography." In a community geography project, participants collect observations or measurements in different locations and analyze them for geographic patterns. Funded by NSF's Informal Science Education Program, the FieldScope platform is being developed with particular concern for the needs of projects whose goals include providing science-learning experiences to their participants

In the first phase of the project, National Geographic will develop easy-to-use tools for the three critical components of a community geography project. Using state-of-the-art geographic information systems (GIS) and social networking technologies, FieldScope will allow participants to upload data to a communal database, display, interpret and analyze the community's data and discuss their findings with the other members of the community.

Sue Allen, acting director of NSF's Division of Research on Learning in Formal and Informal Settings, said, "The development of capabilities to collect, store and share data as well as utilize new tools for understanding data will greatly influence the ability of the public to participate in science research as well as increase public understanding of science generally."

National Geographic will work with two "testbed partners" currently running community geography projects: Project BudBurst, run by the National Ecological Observatory Network (NEON) and FrogWatch USA, run by the Association of Zoos and Aquariums.

The infrastructure is currently in development—stay tuned for updates over the next couple years and feel free to learn more at www.fieldscope.us/.