
To: AArk Steering Committee and colleagues
From: AArk Staff
Subject: AArk monthly activity report for August 2008
Date: 18 September 2008

*Note: these reports document efforts that are underway; people seeking additional information should contact [Kevin Z](#).
These monthly reports are now archived [online](#).*

General updates from the amphibian community

News/Publications

- Froglog [88](#) issued
- [Are we in the midst of the sixth mass extinction? A view from the world of amphibians](#)
- Rare amphibians found in [Costa Rica](#), [Australia](#), and [India](#)
- [Dr S.D. Biju receives 2008 Sabin Award for research in the Western Ghats over the past 15 years](#)
- [One small pod for scientists, one giant leap for endangered frogs](#)
- ["Arca de Noé" para anfibios](#)

Amphibian/Herp Meetings

- Mesoamerican Conservation Strategy Meeting in San Pedro Sula, Honduras 4-6 September
- [Symposium](#) to create a national strategy for declining Chilean amphibians in Santiago 11-12 September
- X [Reunión](#) Nacional de Herpetología in Mexico 6-9 October
- [Halting the global decline in amphibians: research and practice](#) in London 20-21 November
- VIII Latin-American [Congress](#) of Herpetology in Cuba 24-29 November

Funding available

- ASG calls for [proposals](#) for up to \$30,000 matching funds for critical habitat protection, no deadline
- Columbus Zoo continuously accepts applications for grants and emergency grants and has a strong record of supporting amphibian conservation work. For more information, contact [Rebecca Rose](#), Field Conservation Coordinator.
- Emergency funds are also available through [Memphis Zoo](#) and [Disney](#).
- Other grant opportunities are described in Appendix 3 of [AZA Amphibian Resource Manual](#).

Funding needed

- For species rescues in eastern Panama ([Houston budget proposal](#))
- For species prioritization workshops in India, Sri Lanka, Indonesia.
- [For 1 Brazilian student to travel to the amphibian husbandry course in Toledo this November;](#)
- AVZA (Venezuelan zoo association) seeks \$2,000 to develop amphibian-specific educational posters and coloring books for school children.
- Other partnership opportunities are available in [Latin America](#) and [Asia](#).
- For AArk officer support, including 25% Taxon Officer Kevin J, 50% Program Director Kevin Z, and any/all of a Training Officer and YOTF Campaign Manager.

Vacancies

- Detroit Zoo seeks [Curator of Amphibians](#).

CURRENT

AArk Coordination (compiled by AArk Program Officer [Kevin Zippel](#)).

- Ron Gagliardo has left the Atlanta Botanical Garden, where he built one of the world's premier amphibian conservation programs. He will no longer represent *Botanic Gardens Conservation International* (BGCI) on the AArk Steering Committee. Ron will now be based at Zoo Atlanta and will function half-time as the AArk Training Officer and help with other capacity building efforts as well.
- Gerald Dick (WAZA) is leading efforts on a resolution calling for support of ACAP from the IUCN secretariat, commissions, and members.
- We are collecting and analyzing results from an e-survey for the *ex situ* community to evaluate recent and planned amphibian conservation activities.
- Don Church attended the World Congress of Herpetology in Manaus to promote conservation research, management, and YOTF participation among that community.
- Vast majority of AArk coordination efforts going into enabling partners for the YOTF campaign and various capacity building efforts.

Taxon Survival Efforts (compiled by AArk Taxon Officers [Kevin Johnson](#) and [Richard Gibson](#))

- A prioritization workshop led by Luis Carrillo is planned in Peru for 10-14 September, thanks to the Philadelphia Zoo for funding.
- Arrangements are continuing for a prioritization workshop in Indonesia in October.
- The Panamanian species prioritization workshop is scheduled for 10-12 November.
- Kevin is angling for a prioritization workshop in Brazil in March 2009. A preliminary meeting with *in situ* biologists is planned for this November when he is there to give a presentation at Sao Paulo Zoo.
- Robert and Richard are in the very early stages of considering a prioritization workshop for Central African species in Cameroon next year, probably April 2009.
- Completed versions of the prioritization data from various workshops are available on the [Amphibian Ark portal](#)
- On behalf of the AArk Cryobiology Advisory Committee, San Diego Zoo is accepting amphibian tissue samples for cell culture. The [protocol](#) is available online. These cell lines will provide valuable material for research and preserving genetic diversity. If an invaluable animal dies in captivity, or you encounter a freshly dead specimen of a rare species in the field, please consider utilizing this free service. Biopsy kits are available through the contact information in the online protocol.
- Washington State University offers services including DNA extraction from swabs or tissue samples and real-time PCR quantification of chytrid fungus and ranavirus with each sample run in triplicate. Sample processing will be \$10 per sample for Federally-funded projects or \$11 for non-federally projects. For more information, please contact Andrew Storfer (astorfer@wsu.edu).

Training & Other Capacity Building (compiled by AArk staff)

- Durrell Wildlife Conservation Trust to lead an [amphibian biology and conservation course](#) in Bolivia 29 September – 5 October 2008.
- Husbandry course planned for Indonesia in October 2008.
- Kevin Z, Joe Mendelson and Ron Gagliardo will teach at 7th AZA [Amphibian Biology, Conservation & Management](#) course in Toledo 8-14 November 2008. Special thanks to Toledo Zoo for continuing to host this course.
- Advanced husbandry course planned for Malaysia in November 2008.
- Husbandry course tentatively planned for Peru in November 2008.
- Husbandry course planned for Brazil in March 2009.
- Husbandry course planned for China sometime in 2009.

- EAZA plans for at least 10 amphibian husbandry courses all over Europe are at various stages of development, all of which will be organized and run by graduates of the Jersey ACH course run earlier this year.

Research Efforts (compiled by AArk Research Officer [Robert Browne](#))

- The Science and Research section on the AArk web site is growing and presenting a number of valuable methodologies. The 'Reproduction techniques' section now includes details for the hormonal induction of reproduction.
- The first general meeting of the Amphibian Ark Crybanking Advisory Committee (AACAC) will be held on the 24th September. This will lead to a global program to cryobank the genetic variation of amphibians. Cryobanking will greatly reduce the cost and increase the security of both *ex situ* and *in situ* conservation breeding programs for amphibians.
- A survey in Iran shows a continuing decline of the quality of the mountainous habitat of amphibians through drought, irrigation and pollution. Several zoos, institutions and private breeders are working to establish conservation breeding programs for Iranian species.
- The survey of the amphibian research efforts and needs of zoos is in the final stages of compilation. This is being done in conjunction with the production of a web based guide for amphibian research in zoos.

Communications/Development (compiled by AArk staff)

• The AArk 2008 YOTF campaign:

- Entire team planning YOTF activities at annual meetings of CBSG and WAZA in Adelaide
- Kevin Z and Jeffrey Bonner met with a mother-daughter PR/development team from New York City to begin developing plans to translate the awareness campaign into a focused fundraising campaign; more exciting details coming soon.
- Kevin Z gave YOTF presentations at National Zoo and NY's Upstate Herpetological Association.
- Team working on materials for World Conservation Congress, including poster for session and video clips for SSC exhibit.

• [PSA Launched to Help Amphibians](#)

• The AArk website:

- The site is now available to visitors in China (the previous server was banned by China), and work has begun on the Chinese versions of the web site. Two versions are being developed in parallel, one in Simplified Chinese and one in Traditional Chinese.
- **Research pages:** We have started building a number of [research pages](#), and these will grow over the coming weeks. Thanks to Robert Browne for compiling the data for these pages.
- **Website languages:** [Spanish](#) and [German](#) are available with Chinese coming soon.
- **InfoPack:** [Portuguese](#), [English](#), Chinese [traditional](#), Chinese [simplified](#), [Japanese](#), [German](#), [French](#), and [Spanish](#), are available. We also have a few regional InfoPacks available: [EAZA](#) and [AZCARM](#) (in Spanish); regional representatives who would like their region's InfoPack on the web please send it to [Kevin J](#). The AArk Mask (two versions in English and one in Japanese), and the AArk Banner (24x60inches) with the campaign slogan are also available for [download](#).
- **Online Petition:** An online petition urging politicians and parliaments of the world to commit resources for urgent global action is now available [online](#). The petition is available in English and German, and is currently being translated into Spanish. It is also available in [French](#) on the WAZA website. So far, [5,367](#) signatures have been received via the online petition.
- **Videos online:** A number of videos, including Jeff Corwin, Kevin Zippel and others are available [online](#). Sir David Attenborough records [interview](#) for YouTube. Jean-Michel Cousteau records [PSA](#) for YouTube.

- **News From the Zoos:** The new page [News From the Zoos](#) is ready for all regional associations who want to post information about their YOTF activities. Currently there are links to each region's web page but those who want AArk to create a new page for them please send the information to [Lesley](#). You can also send to Lesley the [names of the regional representatives](#) for the YOTF campaign if not listed on the website.
- **Visitors:** Site visitation has increased this month.

Month	Visits	Month	Visits		
Oct-06	306	Jul-07	2,420	Jun-08	41,567
Nov-06	331	Sep-07	4,754	Jul-08	36,924
Dec-06	302	Oct-07	6,228	Aug-08	41,371
Jan-07	336	Nov-07	9,972		
Feb-07	4,122	Dec-07	10,191		
Mar-07	2,574	Jan-08	31,076		
Apr-07	2,763	Feb-08	32,636		
May-07	2,816	Mar-08	20,716		
Jun-07	3,361	April 08	47,600		
Aug-07	4,587	May-08	47,864		

- A summary of the most visited pages during **August** shows that the Year of the Frog pages continue to be the most visited, followed by the online petition and the videos page:

English site		Spanish site		German site	
Web page	Views	Web page	Views	Web page	Views
home page	16737	home page	827	home page	826
yearofthefrog.htm	5565	YOTFinfopack	735	yearofthefrog.htm	449
YOTFinfopack.htm	2410	yearofthefrog.htm	897	frog_gallery.html	138
online-petition.php	2443	frog_gallery.html	149	attenborough.htm	133
donations.htm	1027	downloads.htm	135		
frog_gallery.html	1266				
chytrid.htm	1328				
50ways.htm	1060				
YOTFgoals.htm	776				
shop.htm	812				

- **Fundraising and sponsorship**

- Jean-Michel Cousteau will be speaking about amphibians at the National Association of Biology Teachers Association meeting in Memphis with half of ticket sales and auction proceeds coming to AArk.
- Our wonderful friends at Froguts Inc. have very generously offered to give a free copy of their virtual dissection software to any interested AArk partner institutions. You can review the product at www.froguts.com, and request your copy from David Hughes, Co-Founder Froguts Inc. david@froguts.com.

- HOPart: IUCN Asia regional office is planning at least six high-profile gala art auctions in key locations around the world in late 2008 to raise \$1-4 million for AArk and other ACAP activities.
- Business partners selling items and donating a percentage of the profits to AArk can be found in our online [shop](#). AArk now has an [account with MissionFish](#) to accept donations from eBay sellers, and also with [Network For Good](#) and [Just Give](#).
- All frog naming auctions are on hold while we consult with outside experts about maximizing our returns.
- We are working on a proposal to Tiffany's for a line of frog items to benefit AArk.
- Our partners at Mythix.com have organized a number of [concerts](#) in October/November to benefit AArk and other wildlife conservation organizations.
- **From WAZA**
 -
 - Everyone continues to answer dozens (hundreds?? many!) of email/phone queries regarding amphibian conservation, program development, press, proposal reviews, etc.

Travel and Workshop Schedule

This schedule changes frequently; contact the AARK Staff for further details.

Dates	Meeting Description	Location	AArk Staff, SC member, affiliates
SEPTEMBER 2008			
4	YOTF speaking engagement, Central Michigan University	Mount Pleasant, MI, USA	Zippel
4-6	Mesoamerican amphibian conservation strategy meeting	San Pedro Sula, HONDURAS	Mendelson
6	Development meeting	New York, NY, USA	Bonner, Zippel
10-12	prioritization workshop	PERU	Carrillo, Sarmiento
OCTOBER 2008			
2	YOTF speaking engagement, Cuyahoga Valley Natl Park	Cleveland, OH, USA	Zippel
5-14	IUCN Congress	Barcelona, SPAIN	Lacy, Reid
6-9	Mexican Herp Congress	Hidalgo, MEXICO	Mendelson
17	NABT National Conference	Memphis, TN, USA	Cousteau
16-19	CBSG Annual Meeting	Adelaide, AUSTRALIA	Johnson, Linden, Zippel
19-23	WAZA Annual Conference	Adelaide, AUSTRALIA	Linden, Reid, Zippel
27	YOTF speaking engagement, Illinois Audubon Society	Deerfield, IL, USA	Zippel
28	YOTF speaking engagement, Chicago Zoological Society	Chicago, IL, USA	Zippel
30	YOTF speaking engagement, Ithaca College	Ithaca, NY, USA	Zippel
TBD	prioritization workshop	INDONESIA	Johnson
TBD	husbandry workshop	INDONESIA	McFadden
NOVEMBER 2008			
5-7	Biodiversity conservation meeting	Sao Paulo, BRAZIL	Zippel
6	Frog Symposium Meeting, Linnean Society of London	London, ENGLAND	Gibson
8-14	AZA Amphibian Biology & Management	Toledo, OH, USA	Gagliardo, Mendelson, Zippel
10-12	prioritization workshop	PANAMA	TBD
11	YOTF speaking engagement, Chicago Zoological Society	Chicago, IL, USA	Lacy, Rabb
18	Satellite media tour	New York, NY, USA	Corwin, Zippel
20-21	Frog symposium, Zoological Society of London	London, ENGLAND	Gibson, Johnson, Mendelson, Zippel
24-29	VIII Latin-American Congress of Herpetology	Topes de Collantes, CUBA	Mendelson
TBD	Advanced husbandry workshop	Kuala Lumpur, MALAYSIA	Gaikhorst
DECEMBER 2008			
8-9	Nat'l Council on Science and the Environment conference	Washington, DC, USA	Mendelson, Rabb
APRIL 2009			
18-24	AZA Amphibian Biology & Management	Toledo, OH, USA	Gagliardo, Mendelson, Zippel
TBD	species prioritization workshop	CAMEROON	Browne, Gibson



MONTHLY ACTIVITY REPORT

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Up to \$50,000

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Chicago Zoological Society
Columbus Zoo & Aquarium
Conservation Breeding Specialist Group (CBSG)
Saint Louis Zoo
SeaWorld & Busch Gardens
World Association of Zoos & Aquariums (WAZA)
Zoological Society London

Up to \$10,000

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Denver Zoo
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Omaha's Henry Doorly Zoo
Paignton Zoo
The Living Desert
Zoologischer Garten Leipzig

Up to \$5,000

Al Ain Zoo & Aquarium
American Frog Day 2007
BIAZA
Binder Park Zoological Society
Bristol Zoo Gardens
Cleveland Metroparks Zoo & Cleveland Zoological Society
Disney's Animal Kingdom & Animal Programs
Galveston Chapter of the AAZK
International Herpetological Symposium
Marwell Zoological Park
Nordens Ark
North American Amphibian Conference
Ocean Park Conservation Foundation
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Rosamond Gifford Zoo
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Singapore Zoo
Tokyo Zoo Conservation Fund
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Up to \$1,000

Birmingham Zoo & Birmingham Zoo Chapter AAZK
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ED's Fly Meat
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Up to \$100

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Meredith Mahoney
Bonnie Styles
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Karen A. Witter



***And in memory of pioneering
biochemist and amphibian
biologist John Daly***

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