
To: AArk Steering Committee
From: AArk Staff
Subject: AArk monthly activity report for May 2008
Date: 16 June 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

- Amphibian chytrid and ranavirus have been declared 'notifiable' diseases by the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE). This means member countries will have to declare annually the status of these diseases in their country and what they are doing to control them. It might also allow for health certification requirements to be applied to the international trade in live amphibians and their products, which could greatly limit such trade and its potential to transfer these diseases.
- [Laboratory tests and field studies conducted by James Madison University \(JMU\) researchers continue to show promise that probiotic bacteria can be used to help amphibian populations, including the endangered yellow-legged frog, fend off lethal skin diseases.](#)
- [The Identification of 2,4-diacetylphloroglucinol as an Antifungal Metabolite Produced by Cutaneous Bacteria of the Salamander *Plethodon cinereus*](#)
- Endangered Species Bulletin [amphibian issue](#)

Amphibian/Herp Meetings

- Joint [Meeting](#) of Ichthyologists and Herpetologists in Montreal 23-28 July
- 6th World [Congress](#) of Herpetology in Brazil 17-22 August
- [Symposium](#) to create a national strategy for declining Chilean amphibians in Santiago TBD September
- X [Reunión](#) Nacional de Herpetología in Mexico 6-9 October
- VIII Latin-American [Congress](#) of Herpetology in Cuba 24-29 November

Funding available

- The next CBOT grant application deadline is 15 July 2008. To make sure that the best amphibian proposals are endorsed by an IUCN/SSC group, TAG, SAG, SSP etc. (a requirement), we are attempting to share and evaluate proposals among CBSG, ASG, and the AZA Amphibian TAG, making sure that the best get our endorsement and as many as possible are covered by other thematic groups (e.g., CAPs, SAGs, etc.). Projects for amphibians seeking endorsement should submit their applications to [Kevin Z](#) by 1 July 2008.
- 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](#).
- With the pending extinction of Panamanian golden frogs in the wild, [Project Golden Frog](#) has created the [Atelopus Conservation Trust](#) and is offering \$5,000 grants to support conservation management and research of any species of *Atelopus*. Applications are due 1 July 2008.

- 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 Panama, India, Sri Lanka, Peru, Indonesia.
- For 2 Brazilian students to travel to the amphibian husbandry course in Toledo this November
- For workshops and facilities in [Costa Rica](#).
- 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% YOTF Campaign Manager Lesley, 50% Program Director Kevin Z, and any/all of a Training Officer.

Vacancies

- Detroit Zoo seeks [Curator of Amphibians](#).
- 4-year Ph.D. position at Ghent University to study "Virulence mechanisms of *Batrachochytrium dendrobatidis* in the pathogenesis of chytridiomycosis in amphibians". Position closes 20 June 2008; contact Prof. [Frank Pasmans](#)

CURRENT

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

- Gerald Dick (WAZA) is leading efforts on a resolution calling for support of ACAP from the IUCN secretariat, commissions, and members.
- We are collecting results from an e-survey for the *ex situ* community to evaluate recent and planned amphibian conservation activities.
- Changes to the AArk Executive Committee and new Steering Committee members are being finalized and will be announced shortly.
- Joe Mendelson to attend and present at joint meeting of academic herp societies in July 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](#))

- 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.
- Kevin J led a prioritization workshop in Hong Kong 22-23 May at Ocean Park, Hong Kong. The scope was Hong Kong and Guangdong provinces, and twenty-two participants from seven organisations participated. Participants came from Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department, Amphibian Ark, the Chengdu Institute of Biology of the Chinese Academy of Science, Hong Kong University, Kadoorie Farm & Botanic Garden, Ocean Park Hong Kong, and the South China Institute of Endangered Animals. 66 species were reviewed during the workshop, with three being identified as being in immediate need of help, and a further seven priority species identified.
- Kevin J also led a prioritization workshop in Thailand covering 147 Thai species May 27-29, which was held at the Faculty of Forestry, Kasetsart University. Most of the country's leading herpetologists were present, including representatives from museums, universities, the wildlife department and the five Thai zoos.
- We are trying to arrange a prioritization workshop in Brazil after the World Congress.

- 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](#)
- Kihansi spray toad PHVA [final report](#) accepted by Tanzanians.
- Joe, Kevin, and Ron are working with Houston Zoo staff to coordinate a program matching zookeepers and others with resources who are looking for field experience with field researchers re-assessing historic decline sites in Central America.

Training & Other Capacity Building (compiled by AArk staff)

- Kevin Z led a husbandry/conservation workshop at Cornell University on 10 May.
- Michael McFadden from Taronga Zoo in Sydney, Australia will lead a husbandry workshop in Thailand, June 4-6, 2008, with participants from the five Thai zoos, and a number of participants from the recent Thai species prioritization workshop. The course will be held at one of the zoos, and will be very much a “hands-on” course.
- Richard attended and chaired the EAZA Amphibian TAG meetings in Rotterdam where amphibian *ex situ* management, biosecurity, and AArk species priorities were the core subjects of discussion. In addition, 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.
- Kevin Z, and Joe Mendelson and Ron Gagliardo (both AArk Steering Committee) will teach at 7th AZA [Amphibian Biology & Management](#) course in Toledo 8-14 November 2008. Special thanks to Toledo Zoo for continuing to host this course.
- Husbandry course planned for Peru in November 2008.
- Husbandry course planned for Brazil in March 2009.
- Husbandry course planned for China sometime in 2009.
- Mesoamerican training course in preparation through [AMACZOOA](#); more details coming soon.
- Everyone is looking for “creative solutions” to fill the last AArk vacancy - Training Officer - and not break the AArk budget. We really need an institution to donate most/all of this position, as Brookfield, Chester, and Antwerp are doing for others.

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

- The Sigalla caecilian *Boulengerula niedeni* from Africa is critically endangered. Some *Boulengerula* display unique characteristics including juveniles feeding on the mother’s skin. As almost nothing is known of their biology, husbandry or captive breeding. Antwerp Zoo is developing a research program for their captive breeding using the common ‘Mikudu’ *B. uluguruensis*.
- There is a need to address the enrichment needs of amphibians in zoos. A guide for zoos to provide information for zoos on habitat enrichment, and to offer advice on research design and report styles is being produced. Please contact Robynn Ingle-Moller robynn.ingle@gmail.com, or Robert Browne with any relevant experiences, information, articles or reports.
- The survey of the research needs of zoos is in the final stages of compilation. This is being done in conjunction with a summary and guide for research possibilities for the EAZA with Gerardo Garcia. Please email any research priorities that you consider need canvassing to Robert.
- Robert is attending and giving a presentation at a meeting for German Zoos at Aquazoo in Düsseldorf about AArk programs, and to learn of their research priorities and challenges.
- Robert is attending the BioCryoBanks and Wildlife Conservation Workshop in Trier, Germany to further research and its practical application for biobanking of amphibian genetic diversity and variation.
- In conjunction with research collaborations Robert and researchers from China and Japan, and the USA

are producing a review article of the conservation biology of the giant salamanders.

Communications/Development (compiled by YOTF Campaign Manager [Lesley Dickie](#) & Taxon Officer [Kevin Johnson](#))

- **The AArk 2008 YOTF campaign:**
 - The 5 for Frogs Summer Campaign information was forwarded to all regional coordinators. Our colleagues in South Asia stepped forward immediately to translate the documents to make them locally specific and applicable and they are now being used as part of their summer campaign. Thanks to Sally Walker and her colleagues. Colleagues in BIAZA Marketing group are also looking to make the Five for Frogs materials UK specific as are colleagues in Costa Rica.
 - New updates on their campaign activities have been received from Acopozoa, the Colombian Zoo Association and these are now available on the AArk website
 - Lesley contributed an AArk news update to AZA Amphibian Newsletter
 - Lesley continued development of the joint Amphibian Ark/ZSL/WCS amphibian symposium in London in November 2008
 - Lesley continued development of the Linnean Society of London amphibian one day meeting
 - Froglife, a registered UK charity, sent out an email encouraging all their registered supporters to sign the global amphibian petition. Thanks to Froglife for all their good work for amphibians and for supporting the Year of the Frog campaign
 - Numerous commercial organizations continue to approach AArk with collaborations and Lesley is investigating some of these.
 - Dealt with numerous emails and enquiries in relation to the YoTF campaign
- **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. AArk would like to thank Joann Chang from the Taipei Zoological Foundation, and Xiaohong Wang from the Training Program of China, Zoo Atlanta, Sue Zhu from Taronga Zoo in Sydney, and Xiaoyu Wang from the Care For Frogs website (www.frogvilla.com) for their help with the translations. These versions of the site should be available by the end of June.
 - **Website languages:** [Spanish](#) and [German](#) are available with Chinese coming soon.
 - **InfoPack:** [Portuguese](#), [English](#), Chinese [traditional](#), Chinese [simplified](#), [Japanese](#), [German](#) and [Spanish](#), are available with French promised soon. 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), 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, 3,307 signatures have been received via the online petition.
 - **Videos online:** A number of videos, including Jeff Corwin, Kevin Zippel and others are available [online](#). Recent additions include media coverage of the ARAZPA YOTF launch, and footage of the last Panamanian Golden Frogs in the wild from David Attenborough's recent documentary. 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 seems to have increased dramatically this month, the first full month after moving the site to a new server. There were 47,600 visits, resulting in 57,613 page views.

Month	Visits	Month	Visits
Oct-06	306	Jul-07	2,420
Nov-06	331	Sep-07	4,754
Dec-06	302	Oct-07	6,228
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

The most visited page, continues to be the Year of the Frog page, and the associated Year of the Frog InfoPack page.

- **Fundraising and sponsorship**

- 11 frog call ringtones are available for sale via the AArk web site - http://www.amphibianark.org/ringtone_code.html . Currently, these are only available for phone carriers in the US and Canada, but it is hoped that they will be available in other countries soon.
- 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. Lesley made a number of contacts with zoos in US and Asia to ascertain their interest in the HOPart project
- 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](#).
- The auctioning of our first species is complete and raised \$5,500 for conservation of Ecuadorian species. Next on the block is an undescribed [collared frog](#) (*Mannophryne* sp.) from Venezuela. 3 more species will follow in July, August, and September, with the September auction to be featured in an upcoming issue of *Men's Journal*.
- We are working on a proposal to Tiffany's for a line of frog items to benefit AArk.

- **from WAZA**

- As of June 10, a total of 395 institutions and organisations had informed WAZA of their participation in the Year of the Frog campaign. Most registrations from Germany (60), United Kingdom (49), Canada (24), France and Colombia (19 each), and Australia (18).
- On Tuesday 25 May, the WAZA Side Event dealing with the amphibian crisis took place at the CBD Conference of the Parties at Bonn, Germany. Speakers were Gerald Dick of the WAZA Executive Office, Jamie Copsey of Jersey Zoo, Lorenzo von Fersen of Nuremberg Zoo and Thomas Ziegler of Cologne Zoo. Year of the Frog f flyers were distributed at the Plaza of Biodiversity exhibition.
- The ex situ Workshop held from 13 to 15 June 2008 at Aquazoo Düsseldorf (Germany) was attended by about 30 participants.

- About 30 “donation frogs” were ordered by German zoos, wildlife parks and animal parks.
- Stiftung Artenschutz has produced a flyer and a poster (PDF available upon request) in German for zoos keeping exotic amphibian species, to be used mainly by the larger zoos participating in EAZA’s frog alarm campaign. Print run was 130’000.
- The German Wildlife Parks Association has produced a similar flyer on native species, which will be used also by the Austrian and Swiss Zoo Associations, by the German Animal Parks Associations, institutions of the VDZ, and by WAZA. WAZA, OZO and zooschweiz have ordered 10,000 copies each, The total print run was 240’000. (PDFs available upon request)
- Everyone continues to answer dozens (hundreds?? many!) of email/phone queries regarding amphibian conservation, program development, press, proposal reviews, etc. Some media include: E: The Environmental Magazine, The NewsHour with Jim Lehrer (PBS), Ibero American University, EarthSky.org, ScienceLine.org, The Globe and Mail (Canada), Scientific American, Discovery News, Animal Planet.

Travel and Workshop Schedule

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

Dates	Meeting Description	Location	AArk Staff, SC member, affiliates
JUNE 2008			
4-6	Husbandry workshop	THAILAND	McFadden
6-8	YOTF speaking engagement, NAAC	Erving, MA, USA	Zippel
12-18	Society for Conservation Biology	Chattanooga, TN, USA	Mendelson
13	YOTF speaking engagement, Seneca Park Zoo	Rochester, NY, USA	Zippel
18-20	Trier University Symposium: Cryobanks	Trier, GERMANY	Browne, Reid, Ryder
18-21	YOTF speaking engagement, IHS	Nashville, TN, USA	Zippel
27-29	Amphibian training seminar	Stuttgart, GERMANY	Dollinger?
TBD	Prioritization workshop	PERU	Carrillo
JULY 2008			
23-28	joint meeting of academic herp societies	Montreal, CANADA	Mendelson
26-27	YOTF speaking engagement, The Wild Center	Tupper Lake, NY, USA	Zippel
TBD	prioritization workshop	INDONESIA	Johnson
TBD	husbandry workshop	INDONESIA	McFadden
AUGUST 2008			
17-22	6th World Congress of Herpetology	Manaus, BRAZIL	Church, Gagliardo
SEPTEMBER 2008			
4	YOTF speaking engagement, Central Michigan University	Mount Pleasant, MI, USA	Zippel
OCTOBER 2008			
5-14	IUCN Congress	Barcelona, SPAIN	Lacy, Reid
6-9	Mexican Herp Congress	Hidalgo, MEXICO	Mendelson
17	NABT National Conference	Memphis, TN, USA	Gagliardo?
16-19	CBSG Annual Meeting	Adelaide, AUSTRALIA	Bonner, Dickie, Johnson, Zippel
19-23	WAZA Annual Conference	Adelaide, AUSTRALIA	Bonner, Dickie, Johnson, Zippel
28	YOTF speaking engagement, Chicago Zoological Society	Chicago, IL, USA	Zippel
TBD	advanced husbandry workshop		Gaikhorst
NOVEMBER 2008			
6	Frog Symposium Meeting, Linnean Society of London	London, ENGLAND	Gibson?
8-14	AZA Amphibian Biology & Management	Toledo, OH, USA	Gagliardo, Mendelson, Zippel
20-21	Frog symposium, Zoological Society of London	London, ENGLAND	Bonner, Dickie, Gibson, Zippel
24-29	VIII Latin-American Congress of Herpetology	Topes de Collantes, CUBA	Mendelson
APRIL 2009			
18-24	AZA Amphibian Biology & Management	Toledo, OH, USA	Gagliardo, Mendelson, Zippel
TBD	species prioritization workshop	CAMEROON	Browne, Gibson



MONTHLY ACTIVITY REPORT

Acknowledgements 31 May 2008

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Up to \$50,000

The Clorox Company
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

Allwetterzoo Münster
James Bramsen
Chester Zoo
Denver Zoo
Fowler Printing & Graphics
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
Disney's Animal Kingdom & Animal Programs
Galveston Chapter of the AAZK
Marwell Zoological Park
New Mexico Bio Park Society, Inc.
Nordens Ark
Ocean Park Conservation Foundation
Nick & Sue Pinder
Rosamond Gifford Zoo
Sedgwick County Zoo
Singapore Zoo
Tokyo Zoo Conservation Fund
Toledo Zoo
Toronto Zoo
Wildlife Conservation Society
Zoos South Australia

Up to \$1,000

Birmingham Zoo & Birmingham Zoo Chapter AAZK
Brookfield Zoo AAZK
Buffalo Zoo
Cameron Park Zoo
Kansas City Zoo
MARS Preservation Fund
Minnesota Zoo
New Mexico Bio Park Society
Rochester Museum & Science Center
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Sacramento Zoo
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Staten Island Zoo
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