



MONTHLY ACTIVITY REPORT

To: AArk Steering Committee
From: AArk Staff
Subject: AArk monthly activity report for October 2007
Date: 6 November 2007

Note: these reports document efforts that are underway; people seeking additional information should contact kcز. These monthly reports are now archived online at <http://amphibianark.org/monthlyreports.htm>

General updates from the amphibian community

- “[Immunity](#)” has been reported in some *Litoria* species introduced into New Zealand, i.e., infected animals that are treated and recover cannot be infected again. The researchers have suggested that it is the treatment (an antibiotic called chloramphenicol) that has imparted immunity. This would be an interesting find, as antibiotics are usually only effective on bacteria, and even then, only as a treatment, not a permanent cure. It remains to be disproved that it is not simply natural immunity in these taxa, some relatives of which have recovered naturally in the wild. However, if they are correct, then at the very least we have a treatment for chytrid that is less expensive than the current one (itraconazole), although vets are already warning that chloramphenicol “*has been banned for most uses in the US because of toxicity*” and “*this drug sometimes causes bone marrow suppression in people and therefore its use in human medicine is restricted, and there might be some issues with "safety" if OSHA were to get involved.*”
- Numerous papers/commentaries on amphibian chytrid and immunity published in latest issue of [Animal Conservation](#).
- Recent estimates of extinction rates suggest that what amphibians are facing now is, at the conservative end, [200-2700](#) times higher than anything they have faced in their 360 million-year history, with upper estimates at [~25,000-50,000](#) times higher.
- New genetic [study](#) suggests that amphibian species diversity, at least in one region of Amazonia-Guianas and perhaps much of the Neotropics, is likely **twice** what is currently known.
- Link between fertilizers and [malformations](#) published.
- Philadelphia Zoo seeks [Curator of Amphibians](#)
- “The IUCN/SSC Amphibian Specialist Group (ASG) is pleased to announce a new round of [Seed Grants](#). These are intended as one-time awards of between \$500 and \$2000 for the support or initiation of research that furthers the ASG’s mission to conserve biological diversity by stimulating, developing, and executing practical programs to study, save, restore, and manage amphibians and their habitats around the world.”
- Laboratory Animal Science Association to host [1-day meeting](#) 22 November including lectures on lab amphibian management, genetics, and health issues.
- ASG is still seeking an Executive Director (see announcement in [Froglog](#)).
- Baba Dioum said: “In the end we will conserve only what we value. We will value only what we understand. We will understand only what we are taught or allowed to experience.” What are the children of Hawaii being taught about amphibian conservation when Hawaiian authorities bribe them with video games to lead a cruel and ineffective [campaign](#) to kill introduced coquis.

Amphibian Ark is a partnership between the World Association of Zoos and Aquariums (WAZA), IUCN/SSC Conservation Breeding Specialist Group, and IUCN/SSC Amphibian Specialist Group.

CURRENT

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

- Kevin Z is working with appropriate regional representatives on a partner database of Asian amphibian contacts to complement online Latin American version.
- Kevin Z working with CBSG Brazil on a Brazilian partner database, which already has over 300 contacts!

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

- Richard and Kevin J are working with colleagues to convert the European and Malagasy species prioritisation lists into the same format as the American/Puerto Rican one and with the latest version of the tool.
- AArk officers are developing a plan for prioritization of workshops in Latin American countries with greatest numbers of threatened species. Plans are developing rapidly for prioritization workshops in Costa Rica, Mexico, Venezuela, Colombia, and Panama.
- The species prioritization tool has been translated into Spanish, thanks to Jorge Rodriguez. This will be very helpful for use during prioritization workshops in Spanish-speaking countries, with the first use of the Spanish version being in Costa Rica, 31st October - 3rd November. The data collected in the form can be easily translated back to English so it can be incorporated into the global dataset.
- A Sri Lankan prioritization workshop led by Richard is scheduled for early December, and an Indian one led by Sanjay Molur in late December.
- A Malaysian prioritization workshop led by Kevin J is scheduled for January, and Richard will lead a prioritization workshop in South Africa in February.
- One or both Taxon Officers will participate in an upcoming workshop to (1) Develop a set of population management guidelines for establishing and then sustaining captive assurance populations, and (2) Identify what research is needed to deal with unresolved issues surrounding population management of AArk populations. This workshop is kindly hosted by San Diego Zoo.
- Richard is working with colleagues at ZSL to develop standard best-practice amphibian quarantine and chytrid monitoring protocols building upon our still growing understanding of epidemiology of chytridiomycosis.
- Kevin Z working on final draft of Kihansi spray toad PHVA workshop final report.

Training & Other Capacity Building (compiled by AArk staff)

- Everyone is looking for “creative solutions” to fill the last AArk vacancy - Training Officer - and not break the AArk budget.
- Kevin Z, and Joe Mendelson and Ron Gagliardo (both AArk Steering Committee) instructed at 2nd 2007 AZA [Amphibian Biology & Management](#) course in Toledo 14-19 October. The next one is scheduled for 12-18 April 2008. [Grants](#) are still available for international students, but space is otherwise nearly full.
- Kevin Z is working with AVZA/ALPZA on a training course at Valencia Aquarium later this month.
- Sally Walker (AArk Steering Committee) will host/help coordinate Durrell [Amphibian Biodiversity Conservation](#) training course in India 10-16 December 2007.
- Kevin J is working with SEAZA on a husbandry workshop at Zoo Negera in January 2008.
- Tentative plans are being made for a husbandry workshop in Johannesburg in February 2008.
- Richard is working with Durrell’s Gerardo Garcia and others to implement EAZA-wide amphibian husbandry training, designed to build capacity within the EAZA region and beyond. This course is scheduled for March 2008.
- Kevin Z might lead “mini-curso” training workshop at Annual Conference of Brazilian Association of Zoos in April 2008, or possibly a full week-long course thereafter.

- Mesoamerican training course in preparation through [AMACZOOA](#); more details coming soon.

Communications/Development (compiled by AArk Communications & Development Officer [Lisette Pavajeau](#) and YOTF Global Campaign Manager [Lesley Dickie](#))

- **The AArk 2008 YOTF campaign:** Lesley Dickie of the Zoological Society of London has joined the AArk team on a part-time basis to serve as YOTF Global Campaign Manager; Lesley can be reached at Lesley@AmphibianArk.org. An additional 46 images have been added to the collection of images for use in the 2008 Year of the Frog Campaign. These images were generously donated by Lydia Fucsko, of the Amphibian Research Centre, in Melbourne, Australia. All of Lydia's images feature native Australian frogs. The image collection can be found at: <http://zims.isis.org/aark/YOTF%20Campaign%20Pack%20images/Forms/AllItems.aspx>
- **New Year's Eve events:** Lesley is working with Jörg Junhold and Fleishman Hillard to coordinate a series of events, based around the children's game of Leapfrog, on New Year's Eve at zoos and aquariums around the world to mark the beginning of the 2008 Year of the Frog. More information will be available shortly and interested zoos should contact Lesley Lesley@AmphibianArk.org.
- **The year of the frog web page www.2008yearofthefrog.org:** Many updates have been made to the campaign's website. Now you can download the infopack in several languages (English, Chinese, Japanese and Spanish will be ready this week) and the campaign media kit www.amphibianark/YOTFinfopack.htm. We have some regional infopacks available: EAZA and AZCARM (in Spanish), and regional representatives can send us their region's InfoPack to put them on the web. You can also see the names of the regional representatives www.amphibianark/YOTFcontacts.htm, letters from supporters: www.amphibianark/YOTFletters.htm, you can purchase the AArk YOTF calendar and much more to come. **Reminder to Steering Committee representatives:** please send to Lisette the names of your regional representative for the YOTF campaign if not listed on the website.
- **Translation of the web site and infopack:** We are still working on the translation of the website to German and hopefully we will get the Spanish translation very soon.
- **Zoo Marketing Conference:** Jörg Junhold presented on YOTF at the 6th International Conference on Zoo Marketing and Public Relations in Johannesburg 9-12 October.
- **2008 IUCN Conference in Barcelona:** We are still waiting for an answer from the organizers.
- **Media Coverage month of October:** "GREEN HOLIDAY GIFTING, Help put a Frog on the Amphibian Ark" Press release by Fleishman Hillard for Holiday Gift Givers posted at www.amphibianark.org; "Amphibian Ark puts frogs in the spotlight at Jackson Hole Wildlife Film Festival - Program Officer Kevin Zippel Raises Awareness of Global Amphibian Crisis, Educates Conservationists, Major Media Outlets, Filmmakers, Students" Press Release by Fleishman Hillard www.amphibianark.org. All media coverage and press releases now may be found at: www.amphibianark.org/aarkpress.htm.
- **Sponsors:** Ed's Fly Meat will donate \$1 to AArk for every *Drosophila* culture sold online www.edsflymeat.com beginning in January
- **Emerging Wildlife Conservation Leaders:** Kevin Z and Lisette are working with the Emerging Wildlife Conservation Leaders team reviewing 12 applications on model program to raise awareness and funds to help 1 Latin American zoo to build capacity to save 1 priority species from extinction. The team has drafted an AArk 2008 [Year of the Frog calendar](#) as one of their fundraising tools, with production to begin in November. If you are interested in ordering calendars to sell at your institution, please contact Payal Kapoor p.kapoor@conservation.org. For a preview of the calendar and PayPal payments go to www.amphibianark.org. We have confirmed orders for 3000 calendars!
- **Web page:** Visitors to www.amphibianark.org reached to 5,984 visits during the month of October, this is the highest number of visitors we've had since the creation of the site. So far, the average of visitors per

month is of 3,093. If we see the chart below we can notice that since February the number increased significantly.

Month	visits
Oct-06	306
Nov-06	331
Dec-06	302
Jan-07	336
Feb-07	4,122
Mar-07	2,574
Apr-07	2,763
May-07	2,816
Jun-07	3,361
Jul-07	2,420
Aug-07	4,587
Sept-07	4,754
Oct-07	5,984

- 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 or SC member
NOVEMBER 2007			
31 Oct-3	Costa Rica Species Prioritization Workshop	San Jose, COSTA RICA	Johnson
5-7	PARC Chytrid Conference	Tempe, AZ, USA	Mendelson
11-12	Colombian Species Prioritization Workshop	Bogotá, COLOMBIA	Sarmiento Parra
17-25	Venezuelan Husbandry Course and Prioritization Workshop	Valencia, VENEZUELA	Sarmiento Parra, Zippel
DECEMBER 2007			
10-11	AArk Population Management Advisory Group Meeting	San Diego, CA, USA	Johnson, Gibson
10-16	ABC India course	Kerala, INDIA	Walker/Molur
13	Amphibian Ark media tour	Bronx, NY, USA	Zippel
17-	Sri Lanka species prioritization workshop	Kerala, INDIA	Gibson, Molur
?	India species prioritization workshop	Bhubaneswar, INDIA	Molur
JANUARY 2008			
16-18	SEAZA Amphibian Workshop hosted by Zoo Negera	Kuala Lumpur, MALAYSIA	Johnson
31	Wisconsin Wetlands Association Annual Conference	Oconomowoc, WI, USA	Zippel
31	Houston Zoo YOTF fundraiser dinner/lecture	Houston, TX, USA	Gagliardo, Mendelson
FEBRUARY 2008			
TBD	Prioritization and husbandry workshops	Johannesburg, SOUTH AFRICA	Gibson
MARCH 2008			
?	EAZA amphibian management course	?	Gibson
30-Apr 5	Annual Conference of Brazilian Association of Zoos	Sorocaba, BRAZIL	Zippel
APRIL 2008			
12-18	AZA Amphibian Biology & Management	Toledo, OH, USA	Zippel, Gagliardo, Mendelson
17	Columbus Zoo/Ohio State University YOTF Event	Columbus, OH, USA	Zippel
MAY 2008			
JUNE 2008			
JULY 2008			
AUGUST 2008			
SEPTEMBER 2008			
OCTOBER 2008			
9	CBSG Steering Committee Meeting	Adelaide, AUSTRALIA	
10-12	CBSG Annual Meeting	Adelaide, AUSTRALIA	
12-16	WAZA Annual Conference	Adelaide, AUSTRALIA	
NOVEMBER 2008			
6	Frog Symposium Meeting, Linnean Society of London	London, ENGLAND	Gibson?
DECEMBER 2008			



amphibian ark
2008 YEAR OF THE FROG

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