

A Frog Fit For a Prince: Naming a new amphibian species in honor of Charles, Prince of Wales

Amphibian Ark representatives gathered at Highgrove House, the country home of Prince Charles, near Tetbury, England, to celebrate the conservation contribution of a rainforest hero and raise the profile of a critically imperiled group of vertebrates. And what better way to raise the profile of a frog than to name it after a Prince.



Seal of Highgrove, country residence of Prince Charles near Tetbury, England. Photo compliments WAZA.

Dr. Luis Coloma of Centro Jambatu in Ecuador and an ARK partner published the scientific description of a

new species of tree frog, *Hyloscirtus princecharlesii* in honour of His Royal Highness Prince Charles and his outstanding to save rainforests globally.

Habitat loss threatens Amphibians that are extremely endangered terrestrial vertebrates so saving rainforests and other important habitats is crucial for protecting amphibians. Prince Charles' Rainforest Project saves rainforests and is one of the most active of the rainforest funds. That is why Dr. Coloma named his new species of tree frog after Prince Charles. It is the scientific name, in Latin, which will continue to honor Prince Charles' efforts forever.

Amphibian Ark (AARK), one of the leading amphibian conservation organizations in the world today, organised an event to honor Prince at his Highgrove House residence. AARK,



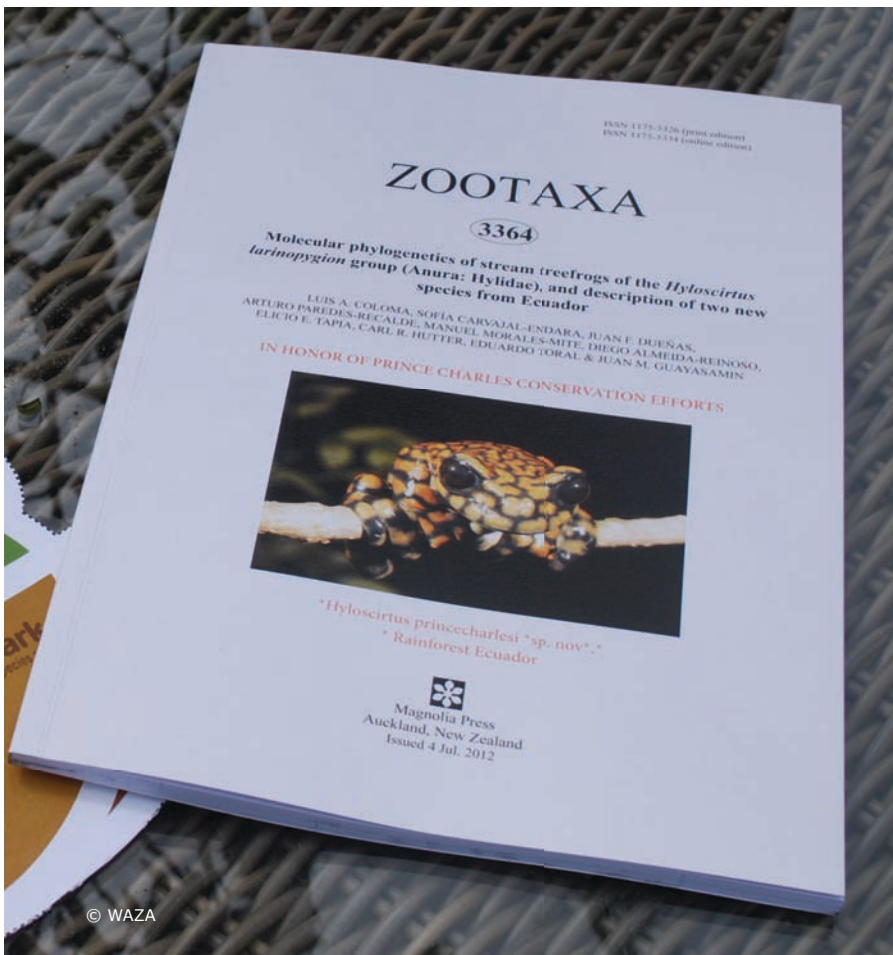
WAZA, and CBSG along with the IUCN SSC Amphibian Specialist Group have been long term partners in the effort to save amphibians.



Dr. Luis Coloma guards his publication and other gift to the Prince. Photo compliments WAZA.

AARK was created by CBSG and WAZA at an annual mid-year meeting of the two organisations in Australia several years ago.

The event at Highgrove also featured the presentation of His Royal Highness with a signed copy of the ZOOTAXA publication that features Prince Charles tiny namesake. Dr. Kevin Zippel, AARK Director, presented the Prince with a commemorative gold medallion from the Royal Mint. Another gift was a glass replica of the frog donated by the Frabel company of Atlanta. Dr. Onnie Byers was present to represent the Conservation Breeding Specialist Group and IUCN and Dr. Gerald Dick to represent the World Association of Zoos and Aquariums, both among AARK's principle founders.





Dr. Kevin Zippel, AArk Director, presented the Prince with a commemorative gold medallion from the Royal Mint. Photo compliments WAZA.



The Prince was oh so delighted to be presented a frog of glass representing *Hyloscirtus princecharlesii*, although later he claimed to have a frog in his throat. Photo WAZA.

Representatives of Chester Zoo and Kew Gardens (Dr. Gordon McGregor Reid, Dr. Gerardo Garcia, Barbara Smith, and Madeleine Groves) were also there having played a vital role in bringing the event to fruition.



Onnie Byers, Chair, CBSG, has been dedicated to AArk since inception. Photo WAZA.

Onnie Byers, asked to share her feelings about this wonderful event, said: "One of the things I am proudest of is CBSG's role in the establishment of the Amphibian Ark and the identification of Kevin Zippel to lead it. The commitment and contribution of the AArk team to amphibian conservation is inspiring." She described the wit and wonder of the Prince stating "at the event the Prince winked as he said, 'this is one species we're going to have to protect. You wouldn't want a species named after you and then have it go extinct!' She said "when he was presented the beautiful glass replica of the frog, he was really touched ... "there's a lump in



Dr. Gordon McGregor Reid presents Prince Charles a copy of the publication which features this new species named after him. Charles seemed overwhelmed by this honour, but he got over it and had a great time.

my throat” he said, ... it must be a frog. Onnie commented that “the event was surprisingly informal, the Prince was thoroughly engaged and sincerely interested in the frog and its habitat, and our interaction with him was far more meaningful than I imagined it would be. Gordon, Kevin and Luis were amazing in their roles as emcee, AArk leader, presenter, and amphibian scientists.

Gordon Reid (above) was much involved in AArk during his WAZA Presidency and appreciated the great event. He said “Prince Charles was in a particularly relaxed and friendly mood, chatting away to all in our delegation in a wee private session. The sun shone, the WWF ‘Green Ambassador’ staff were cooperative, the children looked great in their frog masks, the media turn-out was excellent and the ‘Prince and Frog’ story has now spread across the planet. We all had our turn in the spotlight but Luis and Kevin had to be the media stars! The glass frog was a fantastic prop to have ... and we were all relieved to pass the intact glass frog, gold medal and signed zoological publication over to a rather worried-looking official for formal registration in the Royal Collections ... yes, let him now take the strain of keeping them safe in perpetuity! It was a fantastic team effort. I would just like to thank everyone involved for all the time, skill, perseverance and energy that each of you put in to make this such a great success!”

Gerald Dick, Executive Director, WAZA, (right) has continued to play a major role in the Amphibian Ark. He also played a role as Royal warrant of appointment

for photography (!) and shared many photos of superior quality along with Arthur Edwards. Gerald commented: “For WAZA it was great to see HRH Prince Charles being in support of amphibians and rainforest conservation as well as hearing the appreciation for the zoos’ educational activities within the decade on biodiversity”.





Amphibian Ark Photo Montage



Onnie Byers (CBSG), Gerardo Garcia (Chester Zoo), Luis Coloma (AArk, Fundaciòn Otonga), Kevin Zippel (AArk), HRH The Prince of Wales, Barbara Smith (Chester Zoo), Gerald Dick (WAZA), Madeleine Groves (Kew Gardens) © Arthur Edwards