

Some highlights of Monthly Activity Report of AArk

www.amphibianark.org

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

General updates from the amphibian community News/Publications

- Evidence for a fundamental and pervasive shift away from nature-based recreation"
- Audio: Frogs: A love story from The Environment Report
- Video: Frogs – A sticky situation from Planet Bonehead

Meetings

- Oregon Zoo to host 7 April workshop on regional amphibian declines with emphasis on habitat management.
- 6th World Congress of Herpetology in Brazil 17-22 August
- VIII Latin-American Congress of Herpetology in Cuba 24-29 November

Funding available

- AZA announces CEF Amphibian Fund, due 4 April 2008. This program is now backed by a \$250,000 donation from Disney – apply now!
- 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.
- With the 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.

Vacancies

- Philadelphia Zoo still seeks Curator of Amphibians.
- Detroit Zoo seeks Curator of Amphibians (starting in April 2008).

CURRENT

The AArk 2008 YOTF campaign:

- After Lesley gave a presentation at the Royal Veterinary College, London, UK, the student Zoological Society has set up a small grant programme for any RVC student to undertake amphibian related research as part of their degree. Lesley to liaise with new AArk Research Officer to help direct the kind of projects most suitable and useful.
- Lesley has received some updates from zoos around the world in February and will be contacting all regional coordinators to solicit feedback on the Leap Day activities – images of events and activities are always extremely helpful.
- Liaising with Frozen Ark colleagues at ZSL over possible amphibian materials for the ARK.
- The British and Irish Association of Zoos and Aquariums, in conjunction with the All-Party Zoo and Aquarium Interest Group of the UK Parliament, had a frog conference on the 26th February at the Palace of Westminster. Lesley and Gordon Reid both gave presentations and Lesley brought a frog and toad from London Zoo for the politicians to meet. Charles Walker MP, the Chair of the All-Party Group, was very pleased with the event and also the tremendous response to the Early Day Motion, which now has 261 supporting signatures. Congratulations to Miranda Stevenson and team at BIAZA for working with Mr. Walker on advancing political support in the UK for the Year of the Frog!

- Lesley gave a presentation on Amphibian Ark and the YOTF at a members event in ZSL London Zoo, distributed further information and had many willing signatories for the petition.
- Lesley met with ZSL herpetology colleagues and an events team to investigate organizing a 2008 Year of the Frog 'ball' in London in November 2008. This is progressing well.
- Possible HOPart event at zoos around the world discussed with colleagues at IUCN Asia. IUCN Asia have developed the HOPart idea and are liaising with AArk to see how this can be progressed to locations.
- Negotiations with four publishing companies over various book deals highlighting Amphibian Ark, to be sold globally with a percentage of monies donated to AArk are ongoing.
- T-shirt designs have now been supplied from Peace Frogs, a US based ethical clothing manufacturer, and hopefully will go into production very soon. Lesley is looking at a few other possible products.
- Lesley supplied Amphibian Ark updates to AZA Amphibian Newsletter.

The AArk website:

- **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.
- **Videos online:** A number of videos, including Jeff Corwin, Kevin Zippel and others are available
- A new AArk Shop has been created on the web site, and it features a number of books and other products, with the associated companies donating a percentage of the profits to the AArk.
- **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.

The most visited page, not surprisingly, was the Year of the Frog page, and from this, the most downloaded file was the Global Info Pack. These two pages accounted for 14% of the number of page hits during February.

Fundraising and sponsorship

- 10 frog call ringtones are available for sale via the AArk 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.