



## Newsletter No.2. December 2007 - February 2008

**Editorial by Jeff Bonner - Chair of the Amphibian Ark Executive Committee :** The launch of the Year of the Frog, at the WAZA annual meeting in Budapest, was an enormous success! The highlight of the conference was a series of workshops focusing on the reasons for the dramatic decline in amphibian life, the response by the conservation community and, finally, the nature of the AArk Year of the Frog campaign. This is, of course, the first truly global campaign in the history of the zoo and aquarium community.

### Who We Are

Amphibian Ark was created in 2006 by the IUCN/SSC Conservation Breeding Specialist Group (CBSG), the IUCN/SSC Amphibian Specialist Group (ASG) and the World Association of Zoos and Aquariums (WAZA) to develop, support and promote *ex situ* activities that lead to the conservation and survival of amphibians. The Amphibian Ark's vision is: World's amphibians safe in nature and its mission: Working in partnerships to ensure the global survival of amphibians - focusing on those that can't be safeguarded in nature. For more information about our organization please visit our web site at [www.amphibianark.org](http://www.amphibianark.org).

### News

#### Species Prioritization Workshops by AArk Taxon Officers Richard Gibson and Kevin Johnson

Species Prioritization workshops have been very successful during the last four months. AArk officers have been developing prioritization workshops in 10 countries around the world with the greatest numbers of threatened species.

Kevin Johnson and Richard Gibson led utilization of the species prioritization tool at the AZA meeting in Fort Worth, Texas - USA, in the month of August, covering North America, Puerto Rico and Mexico. Kevin Johnson lead the prioritization workshop in Costa Rica in October, and by the time this edition is being issued the Colombia and Venezuela workshops are being held under the coordination of ALPZA and facilitated by Luis Carrillo (Africam Safari, Mexico) and Gerardo García (Durrell Wildlife Conservation Trust, UK). There are also plans for prioritization workshops for India and Sri Lanka amphibian species in December, and in South Africa in February. During the extensive testing of the prioritization tool at the Fort Worth meeting, a priority list for North America and Puerto Rico was agreed and later refined following further adjustments to the prioritization process which grew out of its comprehensive testing at this workshop. An error in its structure became apparent which led to knowingly mis-scoring some species. Richard met with Graeme Gillespie in early September to determine the best way to fix this problem and, with subsequent email discussion among other members of the original team from Panama, agreed a 'final' format for the prioritization tool in which emerging threats to species (over-looked in, or arising since, the GAA) will only be taken into account in the question concerning Threat Mitigation in order to

avoid misleading over-scoring. The species prioritization tool has been translated into Spanish, thanks to Jorge Rodriguez (from Costa Rica). 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, Colombia and Venezuela in October/November. Country-level species prioritizations sheets have been prepared.

#### Global Campaign Manager for the 2008 Year of the Frog

- Dr. Lesley Dickie was appointed Global Campaign Manager for the 2008 Year of the Frog Campaign. Lesley works at the Zoological Society of London, however, 50% of her time has been drafted to the Amphibian Ark to help during the campaign. Lesley is joining us with ample experience from her activities as co-chair of the 2006/07 EAZA Madagascar Campaign. In her new role she will be setting up stand alone events over the course of the year to highlight the amphibian extinction crisis and the solutions. In addition, she will liaise with all regional coordinators for more global coordinated events across regions and multiple institutions. For more information please contact: Lesley Dickie <[Lesley@AmphibianArk.org](mailto:Lesley@AmphibianArk.org)>.

#### Global Info Pack in Different Languages

The YOTF Global Info Pack is now available in several languages: English, Spanish, Chinese and Japanese. For download go to: [www.2008Yearofthefrog.org](http://www.2008Yearofthefrog.org) or [www.amphibianark.org/yearofthefrog](http://www.amphibianark.org/yearofthefrog). There you will also find regional InfoPacks, key messages, media kits, logos, media releases, etc. The 2008 Year of the Frog web page is constantly updated and you will find more and more material for your campaign along the year 2008.

#### Training & Other Capacity Building by Richard Gibson, Kevin Johnson & Kevin Zippel

- Richard Gibson and Gerardo Garcia ran a 1-day theoretical and practical workshop at Durrell Wildlife Conservation Trust (Jersey, UK) on amphibian disease, biosecurity and field/lab handling and swabbing protocols for UK zoo and aquarium staff.
- Kevin Zippel, Joe Mendelson and Ron Gagliardo (from the AArk Steering Committee) led the 2nd 2007 AZA Amphibian Biology & Management course in Toledo, Ohio
- Currently, Kevin Zippel is at the Valencia Aquarium in Venezuela running a husbandry training course and species prioritization workshop organized with the collaboration of AVZA (Asociación Venezolana de Zoológicos y Acuarios) and ALPZA (Asociación Latinoamericana de Parques Zoológicos y Acuarios).

*Additional training courses have been planned for the next months: India for South Asia Amphibian Biodiversity Conservation, Malaysia for SEAZA training, husbandry workshop in Johannesburg, February 2008. EAAZA Amphibian Biology & Management 12-18 April 2008, AMACZOO preparing Mesoamerican amphibian training course (dates to be defined).*