

CBSG UPDATE



Announcements

May 2012

Annual Meeting Registration

CBSG's 2012 Annual Meeting will be hosted by Zoos Victoria and Melbourne Zoo in Melbourne, Australia, 4-7 October 2012. To register and see tentative working groups, visit <http://www1.zoo.org.au/waza/index.html>. Early bird registration ends 31 May, so be sure to register soon for the special rate!



Mid-year Strategic Committee Meeting

CBSG's Mid-year Strategic Committee (SC) Meeting was held on 18 April 2012 in Buenos Aires, Argentina, and was generously hosted by TEMAIKEN Zoo. Eighteen participants, including guests from WAZA, Houston Zoo, ISIS, ALPZA, Buenos Aires Zoo, and TEMAIKEN Zoo, were warmly greeted by TEMAIKEN staff, including Chief Executive Officer Damián Pellandini, who opened the meeting.

The meeting began with reports on the progress in our efforts to increase our profile, productivity, and capacity for innovation in order to increase our impact on species conservation. An update was also given on SSC activities, including CBSG's contribution to the SSC/Global Species Program Strategic Plan. Significant progress was made on the agenda for the 2012 Annual Meeting in Melbourne on 4-7 October. The meeting theme is *Linking in situ and ex situ conservation: Integrating across the SSC*, and for the first time we will invite all IUCN SSC members in the region to join us. CBSG Australasia is taking the lead on developing the meeting content. Additionally, the group discussed the complexities surrounding the scheduling of future Annual Meetings, which will be a key topic for the next SC meeting in Melbourne on 4 October.

Many thanks to all participants and to TEMAIKEN Zoo for their hospitality and the lovely guided visit through their truly beautiful park.



Recent Workshops

Strategic Planning for the Institute for Conservation Medicine, Saint Louis Zoo

Staff at the Saint Louis Zoo have actively worked in the field of conservation medicine for more than 20 years. To build on their success, the zoo launched the Institute for Conservation Medicine (ICM) in 2011, appointing Dr. Sharon Deem as the Institute's first director. The Institute is designed to complement many other programs at the zoo, including the WildCare Institute, the Research Department, and the Department of Animal Health. Dr. Deem and her colleagues recognize the need for developing collaborative teams – from both within and outside the zoo community – to perform the research that may be translated into successful wildlife conservation and public health actions.

Zoo and ICM staff held a workshop at the Saint Louis Zoo on 14-16 March, which included 44 participants from the Saint Louis Zoo, the Saint Louis and Midwest region, and other parts of the United States. This workshop focused on discussions of conservation medicine and One Health, the types of partnerships necessary to create effective conservation medicine teams, and the why and how of establishing a Midwestern Regional Consortium of Conservation Medicine. CBSG was asked to design and facilitate the meeting, emphasizing an exploration of the types of research the consortium could undertake and the best organizational structure to move their work forward.

Conserving Djibouti's Priority Land Animals

From 26-29 March 2012, the workshop "Conserving Djibouti's priority land animals" was held in Djibouti, hosted by the Djibouti Ministry of Housing, Urbanism and Environment, and jointly organized by CBSG (Europe and Brasil networks), the IUCN/SSC Strategic Conservation Planning Sub-committee, the IUCN Eastern and Southern Africa Regional Office (ESARO), the IUCN/SSC Equid, Antelope, Cat, and Galliform Specialist Groups, Association DECAN (DECouvrir et Aider la Nature), The World Pheasant Association, Association Beauval Conservation et Recherche, and ZooParc de Beauval. The workshop was preceded by a one-day seminar that provided an overview of conservation issues for



Djibouti and the Horn of Africa in general, and of the conservation status of, and threats to, the Djiboutian land animals that were the subject of the workshop: Djibouti francolin, Somali wild ass, Grevy's zebra, gerenuk, beira, beisa oryx, Soemmering's and Pelzeln's gazelles, Salt's dik-dik, leopard and cheetah.

In accordance with the approach described in the SSC handbook for *Strategic Planning for Species Conservation*, the workshop began with developing a vision for Djibouti's natural heritage as a whole, and long-term general goals were formed per taxon or species of interest. Thereafter the participants first developed objectives and actions on a threats basis, later regrouping into taxon-specific groups to ensure that no taxon-specific priorities were overlooked. Participants also developed detailed GIS maps of species of interest. The workshop was extremely successful thanks to the hard work and dedication of all participants, the sizeable commitment of all relevant ministries, and the impeccable hosting and organization. The results of the workshop can be expected to provide a good basis for achieving the vision that was identified during the workshop, that "Djibouti's rich natural heritage, particularly species of global, regional and national importance and their ecosystems, are conserved and their resilience enhanced, thus serving as a model for sustainable development in the Horn of Africa."

Zoo Involvement in Avian Conservation

On 19 April, CBSG Europe facilitated a workshop on zoo involvement in avian conservation, organized by the EAZA Bird Taxon Advisory Groups and hosted by Weltvogelpark Walsrode (Germany). Approximately 100 participants from both European and non-European countries discussed how to improve zoo involvement in



Photo By Ann-Katrine Garn

captive breeding of avian species for conservation. The workshop began with a series of presentations by representatives from EAZA, IUCN-SSC, BirdLife International, World Pheasant Association/IUCN-SSC Galliformes Specialist Group, Wildfowl & Wetlands Trust, IUCN-SSC/Wetlands International Flamingo Specialist Group, Environmental Change Institute, ZGAP and Stiftung Artenschutz, CRAX Brasil, University of Sao Paulo, Durrell Wildlife Conservation Trust and San Diego Zoo Global. These presentations highlighted new and ongoing initiatives in bridging *in situ* and *ex situ* conservation, existing projects that provide insight, and challenges and opportunities for the future.

The participants developed a vision for using captive breeding with zoo involvement as a conservation tool. They split into working groups to discuss three topics: 1) selection of species that would benefit from captive breeding for conservation; 2) collaboration between zoos and non-zoo organizations; and 3) interregional (global) collaboration among zoos. Each working group identified main problems in their field, solutions to help overcome these obstacles, and actions and responsibilities to ensure progress after the workshop. This face-to-face interaction and exchange of ideas between so many zoo and non-zoo organizations will prove valuable in developing a regional and global strategy for zoos in selecting the species that they can most effectively help conserve through captive breeding.

Scimitar-Horned Oryx Conservation Planning Meeting

CBSG has been part of a long-term project designed to restore the scimitar-horned oryx (*Oryx dammah*) to selected parts of its ancestral range across Sahelo-Saharan Africa. Working with the Sahara Conservation Fund, the Smithsonian Conservation Biology Institute, Marwell Wildlife, Al Ain Zoo, and many others, CBSG has facilitated planning workshops in the United Arab Emirates and Algeria. A third workshop was held on 2-4 May to begin the process of designing a reintroduction program for oryx in the area which the species was last seen in the wild – central Chad.

Species experts from Europe and the US and a diverse body of Chadian management officials met in N'Djamena, Chad, to formally agree on a process for moving forward with detailed reintroduction planning. Participants built a vision for the return of oryx to Chad, identified the challenges involved and carved out broad directions for future action. Most importantly, a declaration was developed and agreed to by all workshop participants, calling on the Government of Chad and its international partners to mobilize their collective resources in pursuit of oryx restoration. The Sahara Conservation Fund was identified as a principle external partner in this effort. On the recommendation of the Minister of the Environment, the President of Chad, Son Excellence Idriss Deby Itno, met with workshop representatives John Newby and Steve Monfort. The President is personally committed to conserving Chad's wildlife and in recent years laws have been enacted in support of this. This high-level endorsement of project goals will be critical to success and was welcomed by workshop participants.

Meeting of the Conservation Centers for Species Survival

CBSG participated in the annual meeting of the Conservation Centers for Species Survival (C2S2), held at the Wilds on 16-17 May. This group of large breeding centers – the Wilds, Smithsonian Conservation Biology Institute, Fossil Rim Wildlife Center, White Oak Conservation Center and San Diego Zoo Global – all have large tracts of land available to explore alternative forms of management of populations, including managing large numbers of a particular species. Topics of discussion included big herd management, strategies for population sustainability, and capacity building. CBSG is exploring ways to support C2S2's mission to create self-sustaining populations for select threatened species, including opportunities to integrate *ex situ* and *in situ* conservation planning activities.



Recent Training Activities

Facilitation Course in Jersey

CBSG (represented by Kristin Leus of CBSG Europe), Susie Ellis (International Rhino Foundation and former senior program officer of CBSG) and Jamie Copsey (Durrell Wildlife Conservation Trust) co-taught a 5-day course on Facilitation Skills for Conservation Managers as part of Durrell's International Conservation Training Programme. This edition took place 2-6 April 2012 at Durrell's International Training Centre on Jersey (Channel Islands, UK). The course is designed to foster the skills needed to facilitate meetings or workshops involving multiple stakeholders with potentially conflicting interests, and to provide the participants with the confidence to organize and conduct their own meetings and workshops tackling complex and contentious issues. During the course, the participants learned, and had ample time to practice, essential workshop facilitation skills, including decision making, conflict management, cross-cultural sensitivity, group dynamics, active listening, and consensus building. The 19 participants from 6 continents impressed the instructors with their enthusiasm, eagerness, and ability to learn and immediately apply a large amount of new tools and information. Conservation worldwide will be well served by the future efforts of these now skilled workshop facilitators! Help us spread the word for next year's edition of the course!

PMx Advanced Training

In May, CBSG assisted in an advanced training and development workshop for the PMx population management software program. Led by Robert Lacy and Jonathan Ballou and hosted by the Toledo Zoo, this workshop enabled about 20 population management advisors to review the new advanced features of the program in detail and discuss future PMx development and training within North America. A new version of PMx as well as an updated user manual will be released in the coming months.



Upcoming Workshops

Human-Animal Bonds

CBSG will help facilitate a workshop titled “The Human Animal Relationship: Positive Emotional Enrichment for Zoo & Aquarium Animals” on 24-25 May at Hunter College, New York. The workshop, organized by Diana Reiss (Hunter College), Jeffrey Bonner (Saint Louis Zoo), Paul Boyle (AZA), and Louis Dorfman (International Exotic Animal Sanctuary), will explore the topic of improving animal welfare through emotional enrichment for animals and positive human-animal relationships in zoos and aquariums, with a focus on how effective emotional enrichment manifests itself in specific species, animal care staff, and the public. Using the latest scientific information on the topic, and the insight and experience of the diverse range of participants, the workshop will identify specific tools and techniques that will improve the emotional lives of animals, and determine how to best implement and measure the success of these tools. The resulting action plan will be published in a report and presented in a session at the 2012 AZA Conference.



Thanks to our translators: Jean-Luc Berthier (French) and Celia Sánchez (Spanish).

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