

CBSG UPDATE



April 2007

Member Updates

SSC Online Membership Registration

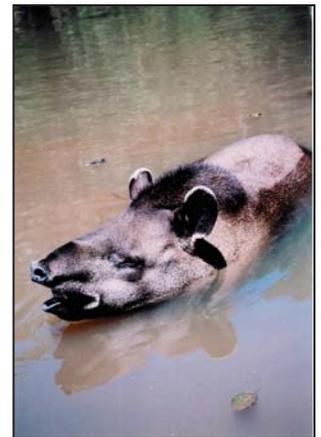
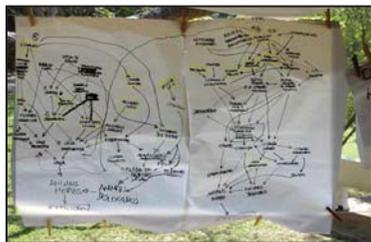
We are working with the Species Survival Commission to fix problems that many of our members experienced when attempting to register with the SSC. The SSC will contact our members again as soon as these problems have been resolved. Thank you very much for your patience as this new registration system is installed.



Recent Workshops

Lowland Tapir PHVA

At the First International Tapir Symposium in 2001, the IUCN Tapir Specialist Group decided that Population and Habitat Viability Assessment (PHVA) workshops would be the most appropriate methodology for the development of action plans for each of the four tapir species. Since then, CBSG has facilitated PHVA workshops on the Malayan tapir (2003), mountain tapir (2004), and Baird's tapir (2005). In April of this year, CBSG Brasil facilitated the final workshop in this series -- for the lowland tapir. This PHVA workshop brought together 70 participants representing the 11 range countries to create a prioritized action plan for lowland tapir conservation in South America, focusing on conservation in the wild as well as captive population management, education, capacity building, research priorities, research gaps, and funding.



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Exploring Captive Options for Beach Mice

Seven subspecies of beach mice (*Peromyscus polionotus*) inhabit the white sand dunes of coastal Alabama and Florida. Development of this prime beach real estate and other threats have left beach mouse populations vulnerable to the effects of hurricanes and associated population crashes, leading to declining populations and local extinctions. At the request of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS), CBSG convened a workshop in March to explore the feasibility of developing a captive management program for beach mice. Eighteen FWS staff and external experts gathered to analyze short-term and long-term captive options, including the pros and cons of each approach, conservation benefits, risks, knowledge gaps, and estimated resources needed. Eleven strategies were considered, both proactive and reactive, and included an in situ management only option. Working groups developed recommendations for each subspecies for further consideration by FWS. This represents the fourth beach mouse workshop conducted by CBSG and follows a PHVA and two subsequent PVAs for the Alabama beach mouse.



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Butler's Garter Snake PHVA

CBSG worked with the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR) to conduct a Population and Habitat Viability Assessment for Butler's garter snake (*Thamnophis butleri*) near Milwaukee, WI in early February. The workshop featured participation by a group of private landowners that have been concerned about the future of their property in the context of garter snake conservation. Based on intense discussions throughout the workshop, the full body of participants recognized the need to develop innovative ways to deal with sharing the financial burden of species conservation on private property. In addition, participants developed a detailed methodology to prioritize habitat patches on the basis of their biological and sociological characteristics – thereby identifying important conservation sites while simultaneously attempting to reduce the impacts of those activities on private landowners.



Gerenuk Biomaterials Disease Risk Assessment Workshop

The gerenuk (*Litocranius walleri*) is an African antelope that is the subject of a cooperative breeding effort among North American zoos. However, the risk of foot and mouth disease among animals destined for introduction into the captive population makes importation of the animal extremely difficult. In lieu of importing a live animal, importation of semen collected from wild males is seen as a valuable alternative, but this process also carries risk of disease transmission. To analyze the relative risks posed by these alternative methods, CBSG facilitated a small gathering of experts in gerenuk biology, wildlife disease epidemiology, and veterinary medicine at the White Oak Conservation Center near Jacksonville, FL. The preliminary analyses conducted at the meeting have been valuable in improving our understanding of how to assess risk of such disease transmission, and how to modify current gerenuk importation regulations in the context of minimizing these risks. A follow-up meeting, designed to come up with definitive recommendations for safer importation protocols, will be held in late June at White Oak.



Upcoming Workshops

JAZA Workshops

Representatives from CBSG, as well as from WAZA and ISIS, will be involved in a series of meetings coordinated by the Japanese Association of Zoos and Aquariums (JAZA) in May. CBSG activities will include a one-day workshop in Osaka on the amphibian extinction crisis, followed by presentations at the annual JAZA conference focusing on relationships between CBSG, JAZA and the world zoo community. Follow-up workshops on the amphibian chytrid fungus and on implementation of the World Zoo and Aquarium Conservation Strategy will be conducted in Tokyo.

PHVA for Threatened Prairie Dogs of Colorado

In Colorado, the Gunnison's (*Cynomys gunnisoni*) and white-tailed prairie dogs (*C. leucurus*) are threatened by shooting, habitat loss through oil and natural gas development, and catastrophic mortality from epidemics of sylvatic plague carried by fleas. To better evaluate these threats, CBSG is conducting a population viability analysis, to be followed in mid-May by a PHVA workshop. Participants in the PHVA will include cattle ranchers and other private landowners that have a long history of involvement in prairie dog management. Goals of the workshop are to revise the state's conservation assessment of the species, and achieve a more meaningful dialogue between wildlife management authorities and the broad diversity of private and industry-based stakeholders that engage in a variety of activities on the landscape.





Amphibian Updates:

How You Can Help – Children’s Author Donates Proceeds

In celebration of Be Kind to Animals week, the creators of the children’s illustrated chapter book *The Other Side of Yore* will be donating 50% of author/artist royalties to AArk (www.amphibianark.org) for books sold online from May 1 through 12. This 156-page book, about a heroic amphibian named Frawg who saves his fellow animals from a mysterious illness that is affecting the land, is written author J. Lyon Layden with 13 masterful illustrations by artist Kenny Savage. To read more about the book or place an order, please visit www.theothersideofyore.com. Links are provided for buying the book via Amazon.com, but you may also receive credit for this fundraising promotion by making your purchase via BookLocker.com, BarnesAndNoble.com, borders.com, Buy.com, bn.com, or any of the other online sellers of new books. In order to insure that your purchase is counted as having been placed within the given time frame, please send a receipt or proof of purchase to:

J. Lyon Layden
35 Sandpiper Road, Suite 201
Richmond Hill, GA 31324 USA

Amphibian Ark Steering Committee Meeting

The first meeting of the Amphibian Ark Steering Committee was held in February 2007, bringing together representatives from CBSG, WAZA, the IUCN Amphibian Specialist Group, regional zoo associations, and ISIS to meet with the three AARK staff members, to get buy-in on the new AARK constitution, and develop mission and vision statements for the new organization. The new steering committee discussed membership in AARK, the upcoming Year of the Frog campaign in 2008, and conservation plans for amphibians around the world. These discussions were continued in Rotterdam, the Netherlands in late April. Please check the AARK website for more details on conservation efforts for amphibians. <http://www.amphibianark.org/>



Colombian Amphibian Biology and Management Training



In 2006, the Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA) funded the participation of several Latin American students to its Amphibian Biology and Management Training Course. Several of these students have started their own training courses in their home countries, sharing what they have learned about amphibian husbandry. In February 2007, a four-day course was held in Cali, Colombia, with 100 students attending from Colombian zoos, universities and non-government organizations; 30 of these students stayed for additional applied and hands-on training. Kevin Zippel joined experts from four countries to conduct lectures in amphibian biology and management in captivity.