

CBSG UPDATE

Member Announcements

2010 CBSG Annual Meeting

The next CBSG Annual Meeting will be held in Cologne, Germany on 14-17 October 2010. The meeting hotel is the [Hotel Maritim](#), located near the famous Cologne cathedral and our host organization, the Cologne Zoo. The meeting program will include intensively managed populations for conservation, species conservation planning tools, and climate change. More details will be available soon on the CBSG website, and in future Updates.

Recent CBSG Projects

National Conservation Action Plan for Chimpanzees in Tanzania

CBSG recently collaborated with The Nature Conservancy (TNC) and the Jane Goodall Institute to assist these organizations in the development of a national conservation action plan (CAP) for chimpanzees (*Pan troglodytes*) in Tanzania. With input from the core planning team, CBSG conducted a Population Viability Analysis (PVA) of chimpanzee populations across a range of population sizes, habitat types, and threat levels; PVA results and additional modeling efforts were then used by participants at the TNC-facilitated CAP workshop held in Dar es Salaam on 19-21 January. At the workshop the viability of chimp populations and habitats were assessed, primary threats such as habitat conversion, charcoal burning and hunting were identified, and management actions to address those threats were recommended. This national CAP builds upon previous TNC CAPs for select chimp populations, synthesizing and incorporating additional analyses to develop a comprehensive national strategy for chimpanzees living in both protected and non-protected areas throughout Tanzania.



Facilitation Training for EAZA

- I learned a lot about the dynamics of a group and my own role, strengths and weaknesses in the group process.
- I am now more aware of how I am in a group and how I should sometimes be different. It was a real eye opener and something which I definitely think I can make use of in the future!
- I really felt these exercises were valuable and offered good practice and experience.
- It worked really well as a team-building exercise and will contribute to more productive and effective collaboration in the future.

These are just some of the comments received in response to the Facilitation Training Course conducted in January by CBSG and CBSG Europe for the staff of the EAZA Executive Office and two staff members of the Dutch Zoo Association. Eleven enthusiastic participants met at EAZA headquarters in Amsterdam for 3 days of training in interpersonal communication, rational problem solving, active listening, divergent and convergent thinking skills, conflict management and consensus building. It was a pleasure to work with EAZA and Dutch Zoo Association staff and is rewarding to know that they found what they learned to be useful in both their personal and professional lives.

Vortex Training Course in Costa Rica

On 22-25 February CBSG and CBSG Mesoamerica conducted a four-day Vortex population modeling course at Simon Bolivar Zoo in San Jose, Costa Rica. Participants included researchers, wildlife managers and veterinarians from universities, NGOs and zoos. Many of the participants were new to CBSG tools and processes, and were able to begin construction of models based on their own data during the course.

Dwarf Caiman PVA

In January, CBSG Brasil held a meeting in Corumbá, Mato Grosso do sul, with researchers from Embrapa Pantanal (government Research Institute of the Pantanal) for a preliminary meeting to organize the dwarf caiman (*Paleosuchus palpebrosus*) PVA. The dwarf caiman is widely distributed throughout northern and central South America. However, specialists are witnessing local extinctions. In March a second meeting took place in Manaus, Amazonas, with researchers from Embrapa Pantanal and INPA (National Institute for Research in the Amazon). Crocodile population dynamics are challenging to say the least, and as data sets were analyzed, it emerged that Dr Campos has almost 25 years of capture/re-capture of marked Caiman *C. yacare* in a study area and has been monitoring nests for about the same amount of time. We therefore decided to focus on analyzing this data set. Results from this work can then be used to understand the data set from *P. palpebrosus*. Another meeting is scheduled for early April. Results from this work will be presented in the Crocodile Specialist Group meeting that will take place in Manaus in September.



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Mate Choice Symposium

As collaborators on an IMLS (Institute of Museum and Library Services) National Leadership grant to explore mate choice issues in *ex situ* population management, the Saint Louis Zoo and CBSG organized a Mate Choice Symposium at the Saint Louis Zoo on 12-15 March. Attended by 70 participants, this workshop brought together top researchers in the field as well as population managers for a symposium, followed by a working meeting to discuss the mechanisms and management opportunities related to mate choice, and how mate choice might be incorporated into our current breeding strategies. Key research questions and potential research models were identified to explore these issues across a range of mammal and bird species. Promising ideas will be explored further for possible implementation.



Waterbird Mortality in the Upper Midwest

Major mortality events have been observed during migration in recent years in several species of waterbirds, particularly the lesser scaup and American coot, in the north-central U.S. These deaths have been attributed to



toxic amounts of trematode parasites ingested by birds feeding on exotic faucet snails (*Bithynia tentaculata*), which serve as hosts for trematodes. At the request of the U.S. Geological Survey, CBSG facilitated a workshop on 16-17 March in Wisconsin, gathering researchers and wildlife managers to share current research efforts and findings related to this parasite-snail-bird cycle. Workshop participants compiled their collective knowledge to identify probable factors affecting this cycle, identified critical data gaps, and developed a list of research ideas to address key questions important to developing effective management actions for these species.

Strategic Planning for the International Congress of Zookeepers

From its inception in 2000, the ICZ has had one goal - to improve the professionalism of zoo keepers worldwide, which would in turn improve animal welfare in zoos throughout the world. To assist in achieving ICZ's objectives, a strategic planning meeting was held in Singapore in February 2010, facilitated by CBSG. The ICZ and its 6,000 members will use the strategic plan made at this workshop to direct their organizational objectives in improving professional animal care, animal welfare, and increasing the professionalism and global network of the world's zoo keepers, while also reaffirming their commitment to the conservation of wildlife and their habitats.



Upcoming Meetings

Planning for *Ex Situ* Conservation

In December a collaboration among EAZA, CBSG Europe and the Royal Botanical Gardens (Kew), led by Bio Intelligence Service, an independent French environmental research and consulting firm, was contracted to draft a strategy for *ex situ* conservation programs for wild species in Europe for the European Commission (DG Environment). The objective is to identify the risks, needs and improvements to be made for the current projects, programs and legislation relative to *ex situ* conservation. The first planning meeting of the partners and the EC took place in February and the whole project will be completed in 2011.

Hyacinth Macaw Modeling

The hyacinth macaw (*Anodorhynchus hyacinthinus*) is the largest species of the family Psittacidae and is threatened by extinction. This species is particularly sensitive because of its low population size, limited distribution and highly specialized niche. Most of the hyacinth macaw population occurs in the Brazilian Pantanal. Between 95-100% of hyacinth macaw nests in the south-central Pantanal occur in cavities of adult manduvi trees (*Sterculia apetala*). The availability of suitable nesting sites likely constitutes one of the most important limiting factors for this species.

CBSG Brasil was approached by a graduate student who is evaluating the density, recruitment and survival of manduvi trees under different land management scenarios. CBSG and CBSG Brasil will assist with the development of a Vortex model for the manduvi trees and then with a model for hyacinth macaws to create a metamodel linking both of them. The idea is to present these models and results to land owners in the Pantanal to encourage adaptations to current land management strategies. Results from the model will also be presented to government authorities to influence public policies.

Northern Jaguar Conservation Planning Project

Over the past decade, a small number of individual jaguars (*Panthera onca*) have been seen in the mountains of the far southwestern United States. This discovery has prompted wildlife conservation organizations to argue in favor of the US government developing a recovery plan for the species, including the designation of critical habitat that is necessary for the survival of the species. After consideration, the US Fish and Wildlife Service will set up a Recovery Team and begin the process of critical habitat designation.



Based on successful implementation in the past of our PHVA process in the southwestern US in collaboration with the USFWS, CBSG has again been invited to help the Service and its collaborators develop a PHVA process for the jaguar of northern Mexico and the southwestern United States. We are in the very early stages of planning for this process, but we see this invitation as an exciting opportunity to expand the application of PHVA to the formalized identification and designation of critical habitat for endangered species. The main CBSG office will collaborate with our colleagues in CBSG Mexico on this project, as the primary population to be protected – and the source of the animals that make the occasional foray into Arizona and New Mexico – is found in northern Sonora.



Continuing Projects

Special Issue in *Cat News*

CBSG Brasil and the Cat Specialist Group are preparing a special issue in *Cat News* about methods used and results of the Jaguar National Action Plan that took place in November 2009. One of the interesting outcomes of the workshop was the application of the IUCN's Red List criteria to the Brazilian biomes. As a result, the species is considered Critically Endangered in the Atlantic Forest and Caatinga, Endangered in the Cerrado, and Near Threatened in both the Pantanal and Amazonia. Funding from the San Diego Zoo (USA) and Chester Zoo (UK) have been obtained to support this publication.

Scimitar-Horned Oryx Conservation and Reintroduction Workshop

CBSG facilitated a workshop in Al Ain, United Arab Emirates in November 2009 to assemble information on the status of captive scimitar-horned oryx worldwide, and to begin assembling information on potential reintroduction sites throughout its ancestral range. This workshop, generously funded by Al Ain Wildlife Park and Resort and the Sahara Conservation Fund, brought together nearly 30 experts from northern Africa, the Arabian Peninsula, Europe, and North America to discuss the ways in which captive oryx can most effectively serve as founder stock for reintroductions into countries like Morocco, Tunisia, Senegal, and Niger. Participants from the workshop are communicating through a special website created by CBSG Australasia as part of the planning process for a second workshop to be held in Algeria this April. Oryx habitat and distribution maps are being constructed, and biologists and risk assessment specialists are putting together preliminary population viability models that will be used to evaluate alternative reintroduction strategies among proposed sites across Sahelo-Saharan Africa. We will also be identifying and ranking biological and non-biological criteria to be used in the evaluation of alternative reintroduction sites as part of the final phase of recovery planning for the species.

A third meeting, perhaps linked to the proposed Conference of the Convention on Migratory Species in Libya, that will use the population viability models and the ranked criteria to choose optimal reintroduction projects in selected parts of the species' range.