

Announcements

Early Bird Registration for the 2015 Annual Meeting in Al Ain, UAE is Open Until 31 May

Registration for the 2015 CBSG Annual Meeting is now open! This year's meeting will be hosted by Al Ain Zoo in Al Ain, United Arab Emirates from 8-11 October 2015. We are in the process of creating an agenda that will take full advantage of the days we have together in Al Ain. Visit <http://www.alainzoo2015.ae/cbsg.php> to register for the meeting. The discounted price for early bird registration ends 31 May, after which regular registration continues until 31 July. We hope you can join us in Al Ain to make the 2015 CBSG Annual Meeting the best one yet!

Nominations Requested for International Award Honoring Conservation Innovators

Ulysses S. Seal's great passion and talent was his creative thinking about how new science could be most effectively applied to solving the problems of wildlife conservation. CBSG honors Ulie, the founder and first Chair of CBSG, by giving the Ulysses S. Seal Award for Innovation in Conservation to an individual who has made innovative, creative contributions to conservation science. We are accepting nominations for this year's award until 3 August 2015. Please visit <http://www.cbsg.org/ulysses-s-seal-award-nomination-form> to download the nomination form, which contains further details about how and where to submit your nomination.

Indian Rhino PVA Spurs Action Against Poaching

The results of an Indian Rhino PVA conducted by CBSG in 2014 are being used to call for increased anti-poaching efforts in Manas National Park in India. The PVA models suggested that unless poaching is significantly reduced, continued reintroduction of rhinos is unlikely to result in a viable population in the park. Referencing the Indian Rhino PVA workshop report, the UNESCO World Heritage Committee praised the efforts of the government of India so far while also recommending further steps be taken to protect Indian rhinos from poaching. This is a great example of how population modeling can pinpoint urgent threats to species and lead to conservation action.

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This symbol indicates that a project follows the One Plan approach to species conservation planning. Click [here](#) to learn more about the One Plan approach.





Arnaud pictured with David Attenborough

Arnaud Desbiez Wins a Whitley Award

Arnaud Desbiez, CBSG Brasil Convenor and Conservation Project Manager for the Royal Zoological Society of Scotland, recently won a Whitley Award for his pioneering work studying giant armadillos in Brazil's Pantanal. Arnaud is grateful to zoos for being the major funders of the giant armadillo project. You can read more about Arnaud's amazing contributions to conserving this species by clicking [here](#). Congratulations on this well-deserved recognition, Arnaud!



Recent Activities

Prioritizing Plants for the Rehabilitation of the Río Torres Basin

CBSG Mesoamerica was invited by the Universidad de Costa Rica, Universidad Estatal a Distancia, and Fundación pro Zoológicos to help organize and facilitate a prioritization process of tree and shrub species to be used for the rehabilitation of the Río Torres Basin in western Central Valley, Costa Rica. Twenty-eight participants representing 18 organizations attended the two-day workshop in April.

Amphibian Ark's Conservation Needs Assessment tool, which guides conservationists through a series of questions to identify priority amphibian species for specific conservation actions, was selected for use at the workshop. The tool's terms were modified to include additional questions for assessing plant species for restoration of a particular region, such as natural history, importance in habitat rehabilitation, and cultural context. Since these plant species are relatively common and are not in need conservation action, only relevant portions of the assessment process were used. The results of the prioritization will be used by municipalities and other institutions that manage nurseries to determine which plant species are best suited to help rehabilitate the Río Torres Basin, and also to educate the general public needing advice on their own projects.

The participants agreed that the tool was useful for assessing a large number of species in a short time. To improve future use of the tool, they recommended adding more criteria related to natural history, ecological importance, and other key topics to create a clearer justification for the final outcome.

CBSG Strategic Committee and Regional Network Meetings

At the end of April, members of the CBSG Strategic Committee from around the world converged on Minneapolis, MN, USA, for our mid-year meeting. We updated the Strategic Committee on our many ongoing projects and new initiatives, and they provided input and ideas on CBSG's future work.

Following the one-day Strategic Committee meeting, CBSG's regional branches and headquarters staff gathered to explore the ways we can continue to build capacity to enable us to meet demand for our conservation planning expertise. We strategized on how best to structure the offices in each region, shared useful tools and processes, and mapped out a number of key initiatives we will pursue in the coming years. We are grateful to all who dedicated their time and energy to join with us for these important discussions. Bringing together the core CBSG "family" re-energized and empowered us all as we continue our role as a leader in species conservation planning.



Fighting Disease in Bush Dogs

Although widely distributed across much of South America, bush dogs (*Speothos venaticus*) appear to be locally quite rare. The species lives in tight family groups of 4-10 individuals, and often uses burrows created by other mammals for thermal regulation during the day and for sleeping at night. These characteristics can facilitate introduction of disease into family groups, putting them at considerable risk for mortality and local extinction. Recently, researchers have become concerned after observing wild bush dogs with severe cases of sarcoptic mange, a skin condition caused by infestation by the mite *Sarcoptes scabiei*. In response, local management authorities invited CBSG Brasil and CBSG HQ to conduct a risk analysis exercise to better understand the transmission dynamics of mange and its demographic impact on localized bush dog populations. The workshop was held outside Sao Paulo, Brazil in March 2015, hosted by the National Center for Research and Conservation of Mammalian Carnivores (CENAP) with support for CBSG participation provided by the Aspinall Foundation.



Workshop participants analyzed bush dog viability using *VORTEX* and the latest version of the disease epidemiology software package *OUTBREAK*, which was originally developed with guidance by CBSG. The resulting models were crucial in helping researchers identify key factors influencing the introduction of mange into a bush dog group and its spread among the animals within that group. Based on these modeling results, researchers now have an opportunity to focus their studies on important epidemiological parameters of mange infection and how to minimize the spread of the disease, thereby helping to secure bush dog populations into the future.



Recent Publications

International Conservation Planning Workshop for the Hainan Gibbon

The Hainan gibbon is one of the most endangered primate species in the world, due primarily to past habitat loss and poaching. About 23-25 individuals remain, all in one population inhabiting the Bawangling National Nature Reserve (BNNR) on Hainan, China. An international species conservation planning workshop for Hainan gibbons was held from 18-20 March 2014 in Bo'ao, Hainan Province, China. The bi-lingual workshop report is now available at <http://www.cbsg.org/content/hainan-gibbon-international-conservation-planning-workshop-2014>.

