

CBSG UPDATE



December 2007

Member Updates

Vortex available on CBSG Website

The *Vortex* software and manual is now available for free download on the CBSG website as well as the original *Vortex* site. [Click here](#) to view the website and download the software.



Recent Workshops

Green Toad PHVA

The green toad (*Bufo viridis*) is considered Critically Endangered in Sweden. In spite of habitat restoration, large-scale captive rearing and reintroduction efforts, it has not been possible to establish self-sustaining wild populations. The [CBSG Europe](#) network conducted a PHVA for this species was on 5-8 November 2007 at [Nordens Ark](#) to determine the best conservation strategies. This was the first PHVA conducted by the CBSG Europe network staff alone, and it was a great success.

Possible conservation scenarios were modeled using *Vortex*, and many scenarios projected the eventual loss of several populations. The PHVA participants generated alternative scenarios and actions that could be taken to improve the probability of population survival. Modelling will continue after the PHVA, based on specific questions from the other working groups in the coming months. Further modelling will also try to answer questions regarding minimum viable population sizes, reintroduction strategies and proposed management strategies. The results of all of the simulations will be discussed in working groups, and necessary action steps will be identified. The final report and action plan should be available in March 2008.



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Giant Panda Captive Population Management

In November, CBSG attended the annual conference of the Chinese Committee of Breeding Techniques for Giant Pandas in Chengdu, China. This conference marked the 20th anniversary of the Chengdu Research Base of Giant Panda Breeding. Building upon our involvement with this program in recent years with support from the [Smithsonian's](#)



[National Zoo](#), CBSG led workshop participants through a discussion of captive population goals, studbook update and analysis, and development of breeding recommendations for the upcoming 2008 breeding season. Population growth continues, with 242 giant pandas (210 in China and 32 outside of China) now held in 42 facilities. Gene diversity remains high (97%) with very low levels of inbreeding. Research, training, and outreach efforts continue to grow, complementing continuing advances in captive management and reproduction.

Rio Grande Silvery Minnow PHVA

The Rio Grande silvery minnow (*Hybognathus amarus*) occurs in only one stretch of the Rio Grande River in New Mexico, representing less than 10% of its former range. The species was listed as federally Endangered in 1994, and remains threatened in part by destruction and modification of its habitat due to dewatering and diversion of water, water impoundment, and modification of the river.

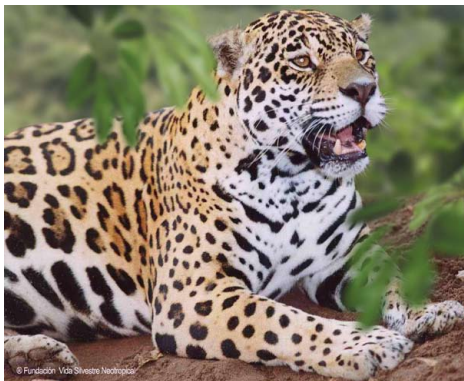


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The Middle Rio Grande Endangered Species Act Collaborative Program invited CBSG to conduct a PHVA for the minnow. In preparation for this PHVA, a series of meetings were held to develop a population viability analysis for the species. PHVA workshop participants used these results to create water management strategies for the species and its habitat. The CBSG Facilitation Team included Dennis Hosack and CBSG Member Brock Blevins (Omaha's Henry Doorly Zoo), who had both participated in CBSG's Facilitation Training course held in Omaha earlier in the year.

Mexican Jaguar PHVA

In November 2007, CBSG Mexico conducted a PHVA focused on jaguars throughout their range in Mexico. Mexican jaguar populations are becoming increasingly fragmented, and there is a need for a country-wide conservation plan to preserve them. Thirty-five people, including field biologists, NGO representatives, hunters, and government representatives from México and the United States, worked together to analyze the different jaguar populations throughout



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Mexico, assess population viability, and propose the best strategies for conservation of the species in each region.

Recommendations from the workshop included: establishing regional strategies for jaguar conservation; crafting agreements between government branches to mitigate their impact on jaguar habitat, and creating a federal fund for jaguar conservation. Based on the PHVA results, the Mexican NGO, Naturalia, is focusing its conservation efforts in protecting the northernmost jaguar population in Mexico. Naturalia developed an ambitious strategy to protect the species and is buying land with suitable and viable habitat for jaguar preserves.

Facilitation Training in Brazil

Our capacity building and training efforts continue with CBSG's most recent training course – a facilitation skills training course held in October at the IPE Research Center in Nazare Paulista, Brazil. Thirteen Brazilian biologists, including members of the CBSG Brasil team, attended the four-day course that provided the opportunity to discuss and practice facilitation tools in working group settings. This course follows a Vortex training course held at the IPE Center in 2005 which was attended by many of the same participants, completing this training series in CBSG's workshop tools. Similar courses in facilitation and/or Vortex modeling are being considered in South Africa and North America in 2008; please contact Kathy Traylor-Holzer (kathy@cbsg.org) for more information.



Upcoming Workshops

Ogasawara Wood Pigeon PHVA

The Japanese wood pigeon (*Columba janthina*) is currently divided into three subspecies, with the subspecies (*C. j. nitens*) inhabiting the remote Ogasawara islands given the highest conservation priority because of its very small population size (probably fewer than 100 individuals) and the degree of genetic divergence from its nearest neighbors. Major threats to the species include predation by feral cats and rats, and loss of available habitat.

CBSG has been invited by the local and provincial government authorities to conduct a PHVA workshop for this critically endangered taxon. CBSG headquarters staff will work with CBSG Member and Strategic Associate Jon Ballou (National Zoo) and our colleagues in the CBSG Japan Regional Network to design and implement a conservation planning workshop on the remote island of Chi-Chi Jima. Specific attention will be devoted to promoting active involvement of local people in species conservation efforts, and to properly integrating management of both wild and captive populations.

Conservation Planning for Gibbons in Indonesia

Seven gibbon taxa are distributed across Kalimantan, Java, Sumatra and the Mentawai Islands of Indonesia, all of which were recently reassessed as Endangered by the IUCN Red List. CBSG has been invited to design and facilitate a conservation planning workshop for all Indonesian gibbon species, in conjunction with the Indonesian Primatology Association and PHKA. Organized and funded by the Perth Zoo, this workshop is scheduled for February 2008 near Bogor, West Java. The intent is to build upon past primate workshops and conservation assessments and develop a comprehensive plan to guide future conservation efforts for gibbons in Indonesia.



Amphibian Ark Update

Year of the Frog Calendars

Amphibian Ark is selling 2008 wall calendars via its website to raise funds for priority amphibian conservation projects, including efforts to conserve the large-crested toad. To learn more or buy a calendar, visit the [Amphibian Ark website](#).

New Year's Events – Global Leapfrog

To raise awareness of the 2008 Year of the Frog campaign, a global event that links zoos, countries and continents is planned for 31 December 2007. The children's game Leapfrog is played in a number of countries and will be used as a part of this event.

Children in each zoo would be invited to form 'teams' to play leapfrog at 11:00 local time. Each zoo can arrange press coverage in advance, and can arrange the event to reflect their local audience.

To participate or request further information please contact: Dr Lesley Dickie at Lesley@AmphibianArk.org

