

August 2008

Member Announcements

SSC Wiki Site

CBSG, with the generous assistance of our ISIS colleagues, have helped bring wiki technology to the SSC. A wiki is a web page that can be created and edited by many people. When done well, wikis can be fun while at the same time condensing the understanding of many people from all walks of life on a single, very serious subject.

The [SSC wiki site](#) is designed to collaboratively create a compelling, persuasive statement on the value of species conservation. Dr Holly Dublin, Chair of the IUCN Species Survival Commission, will share this statement with thousands of people attending the World Conservation Congress in Barcelona in October 2008.

We encourage all of our members to visit the wiki site, read the statement, and add your contributions. A link to the wiki can also be found on the [CBSG website](#).

CBSG Annual Meeting

The CBSG Annual Meeting will be held in Adelaide, Australia in less than two months time! If you have not registered for the meeting, we hope you will do so soon, as specific details about the meeting are being sent to registered participants. The meeting will be held 16-19 October, and working group topics will include ex-situ population management tools, amphibian conservation, Indian Zoo conservation breeding programs, mass collaboration tools and conservation medicine. For more details about the meeting including the agenda and working group descriptions, or to register, visit the [Annual Meeting website](#).

Recent Events

Tasmanian Devil PHVA

The Tasmanian devil (*Sarcophilus harrisi*) has suffered significant population decline in recent years due to an infectious cancer called Devil Facial Tumor Disease, which generally proves fatal within months of contracting the disease. Average sightings of devils have declined by 53% over the past 10 years, devil populations have declined by over 90% in some areas, and species extinction in the wild is projected within 25-30 years.



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At the invitation of the Tasmanian Minister for Primary Industries and Water, CBSG facilitated a PHVA workshop focusing on the development of insurance populations of Tasmanian devils. In early July 2008, 40 experts involved in Tasmanian devil conservation gathered in Hobart, Tasmania to discuss parameters for building a disease-free captive population and to set priorities for creating “virtual islands” and free-range enclosures to house disease-free populations of Tasmanian devils under less management-intensive conditions. Issues related to captive management, meta-population integration, disease management and reintroduction were also discussed and prioritized, providing a framework for development of an effective Tasmanian devil insurance population strategy.

PVA Analysis for Brazilian Primates

CBSG Brasil and The Centro de Proteção de Primatas Brasileiros (Center for the Protection of Brazilian Primates or CBP) of the ICMBio – Instituto Chico Mendes de Conservação da Biodiversidade (Chico Mendes Center for Biodiversity Conservation) conducted a Population Viability Analysis Workshop for Endangered Brazilian Primates in July 2008 in João Pessoa, Paraíba State, in the northeastern Brazil. Four species of endangered primates were evaluated: the red handed howler monkey (*Alouatta ululata*), Coimbra's Titi (*Callicebus coimbrai*), the blond capuchin (*Cebus flavius*) and the black bearded saki (*Chiropotes satanas*). The country's main researchers working on each species were invited, and a total of 16 participants attended.

Baseline models were developed for each species, current population trends were examined for three of the four species, and the impact of current and potential threats were discussed and examined. All participants felt that they gained a better understanding and a new perspective on their species. Many came out of the workshop with new research ideas and hypotheses to be tested and studied in the field. A report of the workshop is being compiled and should be available before the end of the year. The CBP plans to continue the partnership with CBSG Brasil to hold more PVA workshops for endangered Brazilian primates and use them as a tool for future development of species action plans.



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Vortex Training in Europe

In early August 2008, CBSG staff conducted a Vortex training course in Antwerp, Belgium organized by CBSG Europe. Nine participants from seven countries with diverse backgrounds in zoo population management, academia, and field research attended the hands-on training course. Topics included the construction of baseline population models, sensitivity testing, and the development of more complex models to evaluate management options such as translocation, reintroduction and genetic management. This was the first Vortex training course held in Europe, and additional training courses will be offered in Europe as the need arises. This course was held as part of CBSG's ongoing effort to increase modeling and facilitation skills among our CBSG members and colleagues in conservation.



Aruba Conservation Plan Workshop

Just last week, CBSG staff traveled to Aruba to facilitate a workshop to produce a broad, comprehensive strategic plan for conservation of the country's wildlife. A diverse group of stakeholders including biologists, government agency representatives, teachers, NGOs, zoo professionals and others, from Aruba, Bonaire, Curacao, Holland, Venezuela, and the USA, crafted a vision for the future of the island's flora and fauna, and developed a set of detailed actions for realizing that future. For more information about this workshop, visit the [WildAruba website](#).



Upcoming Workshops

Green Macaw PHVA

In 2006 a CAMP for the parrot species of Costa Rica was held at Simón Bolívar Zoo, San José, Costa Rica. One of the recommendations of this workshop was to have a PHVA for the most threatened species, the great green macaw (*Ara ambiguus*). Threats to the species include habitat loss, disease, the pet trade, and accidental deaths caused by humans. This workshop will be organized by the Mesoamerican Psittacids Network and CBSG Mesoamerica, and held at La Selva Biological Station, Sarapiquí, Costa Rica in late September 2008. Participants from Costa Rica, Honduras, Nicaragua, Panama and Colombia will attend, representing all of the range countries of the species.



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