

CONTENTS

From the Presidents Desk.....3
 La plume du président3
 Call for Nominations, CAZA Board of Directors5
 Mountain View Conservation and Breeding Centre: recovery of the Oregon Spotted Frog6
 Working the Media- Some Follow up Ideas.....8
 2009 CAZA Conference.....9
 Ottawa Report 10
 Rapport d'Ottawa 10
 Membership Services Committee Report.....15
 Buzzword Biodiversity.....17



Panamanian Golden Frog
 Panama's Golden Frog, *Atelopus zetekii*, considered a national icon and good luck charm, is now likely extinct in the wild because of chytrid fungus.

photo: Gerry Marantelli



Northern Leopard frog,
 (*Rana pipiens*)
 This species is endangered in the southern areas of BC and is found across Canada.



Oregon Spotted Frog *Rana pretiosa*
 Now found in only three sites in Canada, It is estimated that the species has been lost from more than 90% of its historic range in North America.

photo: Russ Haycock

CAZA STRATEGIC PLAN - CHARTING NEW DIRECTIONS

CAZA is charting new directions for its future. Our strategic planning committee and our Board of Directors are developing new and ambitious plans, but they need to be assessed and revised by the membership, and your input is essential. I am personally inviting all members of the Association to take part in this important process.

When I updated you in the last issue of the newsletter, we had just completed a very successful first strategic planning workshop. Since that time the committee has continued to work on the project and we have completed a second workshop and presented reports to go the Board at its midyear meeting.

CAZA's planning approach has three layers of detail: The highest level of planning, the Strategic Plan, addresses the issue of where the association is going over the long term and why and defines our beliefs and values.

The next level of planning is the Five Year Operations Plan which sets out how we address the goals identified in the Strategic Plan. A series of Objectives is identified for each goal, to be addressed during the five year period.

The final level of planning is the Annual Business Plan, which includes a three year projection to ensure that there is a logical and affordable progression on the issues identified in each annual business plan. The business plan will be approved at the fall board meeting each year.

Following the initial workshop, the committee held a teleconference to review and edit the draft plan. In addition an outside stakeholder consultation session was held with representatives from Parks Canada,

MISSION STATEMENT

To be a Canadian leader in the conservation of biodiversity by coordinating and supporting its members in the areas of education, animal management, scientific study and field conservation.

MOUNTAIN VIEW CONSERVATION AND BREEDING CENTRE: RECOVERY OF THE OREGON SPOTTED FROG

Denise L. Ewing
Endangered Species Animal Management

In 1999, the Oregon Spotted frog (OSF) was labelled an endangered species by COSEWIC (Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada) and the only species in Canada to receive emergency designation for its protection under SARA (Species at Risk Act). This action was primarily based on the decline in frog populations due to the loss of 90 percent of its original habitat.

Historically, the OSF extended from the southwest of British Columbia to the northeast corner of California. Today only fragmented populations exist in Washington, Oregon and the Fraser River lowlands of British Columbia leaving only three known sites inhabiting OSF's in BC: the Maria Slough, Seabird Island Reserve and the Canadian Forces Station. The once shallow wetlands favoured by this species have been altered significantly to allow for raising livestock, agriculture, roads and businesses in order to facilitate the needs for urban civilization.

This emergency listing prompted the formation of the Oregon Spotted Frog Recovery Team which consists of federal and provincial agencies, the Seabird First Nations Band, Mountain View Conservation and Breeding Centre and local zoological facilities. Their primary objective is to increase *R. petiosa* populations at current occupied sites and to establish new populations within the species' range. Their overall goal is to remove the OSF from the endangered species list. A captive-rearing program was initiated with the intent to provide young frogs with a "safety net" early in life. The recovery team would collect wild eggs, move them to protected facilities for over-wintering, then re-introduce juvenile frogs back to their original site. Having approximately only 350 frogs left in the wild there was no time to lose; the recovery program had to move quickly to save the species.



Netting the Oregon Spotted Frogs

Mountain View Conservation and Breeding Centre has participated in the OSF recovery program since 2003. Each year they accept eggs to captive-rear over the winter. This past fall I was asked to participate in processing this year's frogs' prior to their annual release. Having worked for years with a variety of tropical frog species', given the opportunity to help a local species and work with my colleagues in this effort was something I could not pass up. Upon arriving I met with a number of staff and volunteers whom I would work closely with over the next four days. Our task was to capture, count, weigh, measure and tag each frog prior to their release. Throughout this process it was critical to limit the amount of stress on the frogs as possible.

MOUNTAIN VIEW CONSERVATION AND BREEDING CENTRE: RECOVERY OF THE OREGON SPOTTED FROG

The frogs are housed in large outdoor tanks within a fenced area for safeguarding against predators. Each tank is marked numerically and frogs are identified by their tank number. The water levels are considerably deep in the tanks, however, in the Fraser lowlands during winter and spring runoff water levels increase significantly. Simulating this environmental condition in captivity is important for this highly aquatic species' as it provides the opportunity for young frogs to exercise and can support a significant layer of leaf litter (> 15cm.) on the bottom of the tank for frogs to hide from conspecifics. Each tank is equipped with floating islands made of Styrofoam board carrying mosses and native flora. This is to encourage terrestrial behaviour and assist in keeping the bacteria in-check. As we netted the frogs' we found considerable variation in the size as well as the number of frogs in each tank (Fig. 1). Adult Oregon Spotted Frogs in BC can reach 70 mm. (L) from snout to rump. These frogs are still young and have light olive green colouration on their dorsal region. They do not obtain their typical brown spots until they reach sexual maturity which is approx. 3 years of age. They are then transported from their tanks to an indoor area for measuring, weighing and identification process (fig. 2). We documented each frog's characteristics while the veterinarian tagged them with a "Visible Implant Elastomer" tag. The tag is a color dye that is injected under the skin between one of the toes of the hind foot. This does not harm the frog but its metallic color can be located during field observations in low light conditions.



Measuring the frogs prior to release

Mountain View was a hive of activity during the four day window we had for the processing. Additionally, at the same time the recovery team were on site engaged in the future planning for the frog. Over the course of the next few days we would have processed hundreds of frogs and next week they will be transported to their original site for release and begin in their new journey. After release, field observations will begin to examine their behavioural ecology and growth patterns over the long-term. For captive management I look forward in seeing a Studbook so that individual survivorship and captive care can be fully documented over time for this species.

Mountain View Conservation and Breeding Centre have currently released over 500 frogs annually, exceeding other participants. Considering this species' sensitivity to environmental change and the limited amount of data pertaining to captive management before the recovery program was initiated, this is quite an accomplishment and is due to their enthusiasm and commitment involved in this project. I thank Mountain View for this opportunity and plan to continue to assist my colleagues in this effort.