

Preface

The EAZA Executive Office is proud to present this first online version of the EAZA Yearbook. This is the first edition that has been produced online from start to finish. The annual reports have been collected from the TAG chairs, EEP coordinators and ESB keepers through the online report generator, the editing by the Yearbook team was done online and finally the Yearbook is completely and solely published online. We have saved printing of some 850,000 pages altogether, which fits well with EAZA's green policy. Furthermore, online data collection meant that the installation of software on several hundred computers in EAZA member institutions could be avoided. Online production of the Yearbook is far less costly, especially in the long term.

As always the Yearbook contains the annual reports from EAZA's Taxon Advisory Groups (TAGs), European Endangered species Programmes (EEPs) and European StudBooks (ESBs) and continues to be the world's most exhaustive publication on both species management in zoos and aquariums and *ex situ* conservation. In contrast with previous editions, this EAZA Yearbook covers two years (2007 and 2008) instead of one. The main reason for combining the annual reports for these years into one biennial report was to reduce the backlog in producing the EAZA Yearbook. A total of 317 reports are included: 36 TAG reports, 157 EEP reports and 124 ESB reports. Overviews of EAZA members, breeding programmes and non-EAZA EEP participants as per 31 December 2008 are included in the second part of the Yearbook.

We would like to thank all TAG chairs, EEP coordinators and ESB keepers for their great cooperation in providing the annual reports and their flexibility in helping us to address some of the teething problems related to the first edition of the online report generator. The EAZA Yearbook is really your publication. Thank you very much indeed!

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Cover Illustration

Blue-spotted stingray (*Taeniura lymma*), courtesy of Katy Duke, The Deep – Hull (UK).

In 2007-08 the first two ESBs run under the umbrella of the EAZA/EUAC Fish and Aquatic Invertebrate TAG were established, namely the Zebra shark (*Stegostoma fasciatum*) ESB and the Blue-spotted stingray (*Taeniura lymma*) ESB.

Blue-spotted stingray is a species about which relatively little is known but that is very popular within public aquariums. Collection of wild animals to supply the marine ornamental trade is listed as a major threat to their long-term sustainability in the wild. Despite this fact survival of the animals under human care is very poor. For these reasons it was decided to establish an ESB for this species. The goals of the Blue-spotted stingray ESB are as follows:

1. To start one of the first examples of a breeding programme within the European aquarium community on a fish species.

2. To put breeding programmes for aquatic animals higher on the agenda for aquaria.
3. To prepare and maintain an inventory of all blue-spotted stingrays within Europe.
4. To understand the husbandry problems of this species, and prepare husbandry guidelines.
5. To establish one or two breeding groups within Europe to achieve successful breeding.

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