

NEWQUAY ZOO PRESS RELEASE

Leap to the Rescue!



Arrow Poison Frogs (Photography by Michelle Turton)

There is a great **hoppportunity** on the 29th February at Newquay Zoo to join staff as they launch their awareness and fundraising for the EAZA (European Association of Zoo's and Aquaria) Amphibian Campaign 2008. There will be fascinating talks, animal encounters, information on display plus special badges made by volunteers. Costing just £1 each this will help get the fundraising started.

Amphibians are declining rapidly, one third to one half of all amphibian species are threatened with extinction, with probably more than 120 already gone in recent years. Habitat loss and degradation is the major threat associated to the declining population of amphibians but the rapid dispersal of the fungal disease caused by the chytrid fungus is one of the most disturbing. Scientists believe many species may go extinct before we are able to act. But there is one option currently available which can save hundreds or even thousands of species if we act rapidly, that is: captive breeding. Zoos, aquaria and botanical gardens play a crucial role in bringing a solution, they can provide *ex situ* breeding grounds and experience for the immediate conservation action

needed before hundreds of species disappear. The global zoo and aquarium community has taken on the challenge The present EAZA Year of the frog Campaign 2007/8 was developed to support the global and regional initiatives to save amphibians.

Amphibians matter because they play a crucial role in the ecosystem, performing pest control duties important to agriculture. Their skin produces substances that kills microbes and viruses, offering promising medical cures for a variety of illnesses.

Biologists refer to amphibians as “nature’s indicators”: as they are among the first species to be affected by environmental stressors, so when they show a decline, it serves as a warning to other species, including humans.

For further information please visit www.eaza.net.

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For further information please contact Michelle Turton on michelle.turton@newquayzoo.org.uk.

Newquay Zoo is part of the Whitley Wildlife Conservation Trust, education and conservation charities dedicated to protecting our global wildlife heritage. Registered charity number 300923.

Newquay Zoo is a member of the British and Irish Association of Zoos and Aquariums (BIAZA). BIAZA represents its member collections and promotes the value of good zoos and aquariums. For further information please telephone 020 7449 6351 (www.biaza.org.uk). The zoo is also a member of EAZA, the European Association of Zoos and Aquaria (www.eaza.net).

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