

## Zoo leaps into action for frogs

22/05/2008

News from Paignton Zoo Environmental Park

Fantastic Frogs, Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> May – Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> June



Paignton Zoo Environmental Park is leaping to the aid of frogs during the May half term.

Paignton Zoo is supporting the EAZA (European Association of Zoos and Aquaria) Amphibian Alarm campaign, designed to raise awareness of the plight of frog species around the world.

Fantastic Frogs (Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> May to Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> June) is spawning a whole week of activities for visitors of all ages. There will be froggy themed story-times and arts and craft activities for the under fives in Hullabaloo, Monday to Friday, 11:00am to 4:00pm. Older children will be able to find out about both native and exotic frogs in the Discovery Centre.

There will also be arts and crafts activities for the over fives in the Ark. Zoo educator Ruth Young said: "Everyone likes making things so I thought it would be fun to do this for visitors over five, too!"

The Lily Pad Leap will see people jumping from pad to pad, starting by the entrance to the miniature railway. People will be able to take part in return for a donation towards the frog campaign.

Look out too for the frog money boxes, a spot the frog game, colouring sheets and dot to dot sheets for sale. Volunteers will be selling frog badges on behalf of the campaign and a Fantastic Frogs trail will be available to download from the Zoo website or to collect from the Zoo entrance. Pin badges and other froggy items will be on sale in the Zoo shops.

The frog theme will continue through the summer. Adopt any amphibian in the Zoo and it will include a donation of £5 towards the campaign. The Zoo's Wild Week – the new name for the popular August summer school - will also have a froggy theme, including a sponsored leap and a frog picnic featuring edible frogspawn and frog biscuits.

Paignton Zoo and Living Coasts, both registered charities, have pledged £3,000 towards the amphibian campaign. Paignton Zoo aims to set up additional captive breeding facilities to accommodate endangered amphibians.

Amphibians have been around for 400 million years. They've seen the rise and fall of the dinosaurs and lived through climate changes and mass extinctions that exterminated up to 90% of all animal species on earth. Habitat loss and degradation is the major threat to amphibians, but a disease caused by the chytrid fungus is devastating populations.