

EDITORIALS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

NON-PEER REVIEW SECTION

ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM  
ON NATURAL HISTORY AND CONSERVATION  
OF AMPHIBIANS AND REPTILES  
AT THE 6<sup>TH</sup> WORLD CONGRESS OF HERPETOLOGY

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In September 2007, a symposium proposal for the 6<sup>th</sup> World Congress of Herpetology (WCH), to be held in Manaus, Brazil during August 2008, was submitted by organizer Bob Brodman, and co-organizers Bob Murphy and Ben Bell, on behalf of the Editorial Board of *Herpetological Conservation and Biology* (HCB). The development of this idea generated a great deal of enthusiasm among the HCB editorial staff and the international researchers who agreed to be presenters. WCH announced in late November that our proposal was accepted, so we are happy to announce that HCB will sponsor our first ever international symposium on herpetological conservation biology. Topics will focus on life history, ecology, field studies, wildlife management, and conservation of amphibians and reptiles. The main goal of the symposium will be to demonstrate the importance of natural history to conservation efforts worldwide. The fact that many species of amphibians and reptiles are threatened with extinction has been widely reported (Houlahan et al. 2000; Gibbons et al. 2000; Stuart et al. 2004). What is often understated in these conservation assessments, however, is that one in four amphibian species worldwide (IUCN, Conservation International, and NatureServe. 2006. Global Amphibian Assessment. Available from <http://www.globalamphibians.org/summary.htm> [Accessed 22 December 2007]) one in six squamate species in the New World (IUCN Species Survival Commission. 2007. IUCN Red List of Threatened Species. Available from [http://www.natureserve.org/aboutUs/iucn\\_red\\_list\\_2007.jsp](http://www.natureserve.org/aboutUs/iucn_red_list_2007.jsp) [Accessed 22 December 2007]) are listed as data deficient. These data deficient figures are much greater than for mammals (5.3%) and birds (0.8%) (Bury 2006). Baseline and long-term natural history information are

essential for informed conservation efforts, and much conservation activity relies on understanding life history dynamics (Bury 2006; Fitch 2006). Yet we lack this important information for thousands of species of amphibians and reptiles.

A second goal of the symposium is to strengthen the ties between HCB and its co-sponsor WCH. HCB plans to publish the proceedings, which gives WCH delegates an opportunity to publish peer-reviewed articles that are free to anyone with an internet connection. Because HCB is able to publish in a rapid and timely manner, we can quickly make an impact on the conservation of amphibians and reptiles with the swift publication of symposium proceedings. The symposium topic follows from the mission statement of HCB and gives us an opportunity to inform the international herpetology community about our journal and the practical importance of natural history research. The international symposium also mirrors the international flavor and scope that our journal has taken in its brief history (Saumure 2007). The symposium will have a diverse lineup of researchers representing at least 17 nations from six continents. We are working to finalize the list of presenters with the goal of creating taxonomic and geographic balance.

**Presentation topics will include:**

- \* Life history (reproduction, physiology, etc.)
- \* Sampling (design, techniques)
- \* Inventory and long-term monitoring
- \* All aspects of ecology, especially field studies
- \* Management case studies, conservation assessments, and action plans
- \* Amphibian and reptile declines and impacts from pesticides, harvests, and disease

- \* Genomics and conservation genetics
- \* Literature trends on natural history research in herpetology.

**LITERATURE CITED**

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