

8 September 2011

Greetings & Introduction!

Hello, FrogWatch™ USA Volunteers & Chapter Coordinators! Please let me thank you for the warm welcome I have received so far, as well as introduce myself to those of you I have not met or spoken to yet. My name is Rachel Gauza and I am the new Citizen Scientist Program Specialist with the Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA). I am a biologist, and prior to joining AZA, I specialized in monitoring and assessing freshwater stream systems and amphibians/reptiles, identifying sediment/stormwater best management practices, and spent some time surveying bats and songbirds.

Throughout these adventures in the field, I have had the opportunity to interact with the public in many different ways. Some of my first experiences as a field technician for the National Park Service cultivated my interest in public outreach and education. I quickly learned that citizen scientist programs offer one of the best ways to promote environmental stewardship as well as generate the robust and trustworthy datasets needed for some of today's most pressing environmental concerns. I have had the privilege of coordinating volunteers with the Maryland Stream Waders and the Maryland Amphibian Reptile Atlas, and look forward to working at the national level with a "new crowd" of volunteers and amphibian species! Citizen scientists share a mutually beneficial relationship with the researchers they work alongside, and I look forward to participating in FrogWatch USA with all of you!

Spring Peeper (*Pseudacris crucifer*)



Conclusion of the 2011 FrogWatch Season

As we enter September and students return to school, it's not just the playgrounds and swimming pools that are growing quiet! Many of you have noticed the frog activity at your monitoring sites tapering off. In Maryland, the cacophony of mixed species has given way to the occasional calling green frog and a few happy green treefrogs that seemed to enjoy the soaking rains associated with hurricane season.

The FrogWatch USA season is winding down and should be concluding as well. Please wrap up your observations and send your final 2011 data submissions shortly thereafter. Monitoring from January through August offers the best timeframe to capture peak frog and toad calling. It also helps you as a volunteer with an "off season" and well-deserved break and gives AZA staff a chance to review and analyze all the great data you collected!

2010 DATA SUMMARY NOW AVAILABLE!

Thank you to everyone who has participated in FrogWatch USA. The program would not be possible without you!

Please read the **2010 data summary online** to see some of the information we are learning from all your hard work: www.aza.org/frogwatch/

The 2011 data summary will be available later this fall.

DATA SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS

All data sheets should be submitted as soon as possible after each monitoring visit, but it's not too late to turn in any that may have accumulated.

Please submit observation datasheets and site registration forms to frogwatch@aza.org or via U.S. mail to

FrogWatch USA Coordinator
Association of Zoos and Aquariums
8403 Colesville Road, Suite 710
Silver Spring, MD 20910

Data Submission Notes

- A **site registration form** only has to be completed one time. There is no need to re-register your site each year, but please make sure you keep and record the same site name during each of your monitoring visits.
 - If you wish to update your site name or forgot the name used, please contact the FrogWatch USA Coordinator (frogwatch@aza.org).
- An **observation data sheet** should be completed for each site monitoring visit, whether you hear frogs and toads calling or not. An entry of "no species heard" (i.e., negative data) supplies very important information.
- **Download** the observation data sheets and site registration forms and learn more at: www.aza.org/current-frogwatch-volunteers/

HOST A FROGWATCH USA CHAPTER & BECOME A CHAPTER COORDINATOR

If you are part of an organization that would be interested in forming a FrogWatch USA Chapter, please contact frogwatch@aza.org. Details on requirements for hosting a chapter are available at: <http://www.aza.org/hosts-a-frogwatch-chapter/>.

Chapter Coordinator training dates are now being scheduled for late fall 2011/early winter 2012.

Zoos, aquariums, government agencies, conservation groups, nature or environmental education centers, and like-minded organizations are all welcome to apply! If you know of a group that might be a good candidate, please encourage them to contact us.

Announcing new FrogWatch USA Chapters formed in 2011!

We are proud to announce that **33** FrogWatch USA Chapters have formed so far!

The latest to join the network in 2011 are:

- **Fort Wayne Children's Zoo FrogWatch USA Chapter** – *Indiana*
- **Hoosier Upland Frogwatchers** (Monroe County Parks and Recreation) – *Indiana*
- **Brookgreen FrogWatch USA** (Brookgreen Gardens) – *South Carolina*
- **Oregon Zoo FrogWatch USA** – *Oregon*
- **FrogWatch USA Tampa** (Tampa's Lowry Park Zoo) – *Florida*
- **NMRMA FrogWatch USA** (National Mississippi River Museum and Aquarium) – *Iowa*
- **Wildlife Conservation Society Chapter** (Bronx and Queens Zoos) – *New York*
- **Peabody FrogWatch USA** (Yale Peabody Museum of Natural History) – *Connecticut*
- **Mystic Aquarium FrogWatch USA** – *Connecticut*
- **Utah's Hogle Zoo FrogWatch USA** – *Utah*
- **Kansas City Zoo FrogWatch USA** – *Missouri*
- **Zoo New England** (Franklin Park & Stone Zoos) – *Massachusetts*

Check in with your local chapter coordinators and be sure to keep an eye and an ear out for upcoming training sessions!

Online Infrastructure in Development for FrogWatch USA: Status Update

February's newsletter introduced you to National Geographic FieldScope (www.fieldscope.org), a web-based data entry, analysis, and mapping tool that supports citizen science projects. The application is being developed for FrogWatch USA through the support of a National Science Foundation (NSF) grant.

Staff members from AZA, National Geographic Society, and Program Evaluation and Educational Research (PEER) Associates are working hard to develop and finalize FrogWatch FieldScope and make it web-ready. Much of the online infrastructure has been developed, and there is continued discussion on how to enhance its usability and educational value. Social networking and community-building tools are also being discussed.

Historic FrogWatch USA data are being reviewed and readied for submission so that users can view and manipulate data in real time. A pilot of FrogWatch FieldScope is anticipated by breeding season 2012 and will be made available to a subset of FrogWatch USA participants. It is intended the FrogWatch FieldScope will be available project-wide in 2013, so stay tuned!



education

ASSOCIATION
OF ZOOS &
AQUARIUMS

I spy with my little eye...



A pickerel frog
(*Lithobates palustris*)!

Pickerel frogs are a fairly common and widespread species east of the Mississippi River. **Bonnie in Ellicott City, Maryland** spotted this individual hiding in the cool moist shelter offered by her garden hose caddy.

Pickerel frogs resemble leopard frogs, but note the squarish spots arranged in two roughly parallel lines down the back. Many adult pickerel frogs also develop yellow on the insides of their hind legs, just like the one Bonnie has pictured. And, as most of you know from monitoring, the calls of the species are quite different. Listen for the lazy, deep snore of the pickerel frog during your next wetland visit!

WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!

Share your FrogWatch USA experiences, questions, and photos with us, and your fellow FrogWatch USA Volunteers, by e-mailing frogwatch@aza.org. Newsletters are available for download at: www.aza.org/frogwatch-newsletters/.