



**amphibian
ark[®]**

2018 annual report

vision

The world's amphibians thriving in nature

mission

Ensuring the survival and diversity of amphibian species focusing on those that cannot currently be safe-guarded in their natural environments



assessment & planning

We began our second decade with a Strategic Planning meeting which reviewed progress to date and adjusted our course for the future. AArk staff and advisors were joined by colleagues from the broader amphibian community: Dr. Ariadne Angulo, Co-Chair of the IUCN SSC Amphibian Specialist Group (ASG); Dr. James Collins, Arizona State University; Dr. Brad Wilson, Atlanta Botanical Garden; Martín Zordan (formerly Executive Director of ALPZA, now Conservation Coordinator for WAZA); and Ben Tapley (ZSL and Co-Chair of the ASG Captive Breeding Working Group). Our sincere thanks to the above for their time and contributions. Sadly our long term advisor and supporter, Dr. George Rabb, was not with us. We continue to miss his wisdom and encouragement.

Assessment of the effectiveness of AArk's core programs - Conservation Needs Assessments (CNA), Training and Capacity Building, Seed Grants, and Communications - led to changes in each, and we're looking forward to even better results in the years ahead.

conservation grants

AArk Seed Grants have been key components in the development of many range-country captive breeding programs. Not all programs have flourished, however, with some organizations unable to acquire the additional funding necessary to keep programs going strong. In 2018, as part of the development of a more extensive Conservation Grants Program, AArk extended its Seed Grant (renamed Start-up Grant) Program to provide opportunities for up to two years of additional funding, contingent upon meeting the objectives of the initial seed grant and evidence of securing complementary funding. As with initial seed grants, extension grants are subject to a competitive review process.



In 2018 Start-up Grants (\$5000) were awarded to:

- Rescuing the Argentine Marsupial frog (*Gastrotheca gracilis*)
- Return of the Patagonia Frog (*Atelognathus patagonicus*) to Laguna Blanca
- A Conservation Program for Durant's Rocket Frog (*Aromobates duranti*) – Venezuela

And the first Extension Grant (\$4000) was awarded to:

- Head starting pool frogs (*Pelophylax lessonae*) for reintroduction in the UK

Increasingly AArk is working to link *ex situ* and *in situ* conservation efforts. Thanks to a very generous donor, AArk was able to provide support to programs in Madagascar, Argentina, Bolivia, Costa Rica and Venezuela to expand breeding facilities, restore and protect previously degraded habitat, monitor reintroductions, and develop educational programs for local communities.

conservation needs assessments

First developed in 2006, the CNA tool has since undergone substantial modification and was formally described in a publication in 2018, *A process for assessing and prioritizing species conservation needs: going beyond the Red List*. Early in 2018, the first joint Red List Assessment (RLA) & CNA workshop assessed 167 Malaysian amphibians. Since then additional modifications have better integrated the two processes, increasing RLA/CNA workshop efficiency. CNAs for Malaysia, Colombia, Korea, the Seychelles, and North America salamanders were completed in 2018. Results for these and previous CNAs can be found at www.conservationneeds.org.



training & capacity building

AArk's training programs continue to receive excellent reviews. A 2018 Neotropical Amphibian Management and Conservation Course was held in conjunction with the Universidad del Valle de Guatemala. The goal of the training course was to build capacity among biologists and other professionals within the Mesoamerican region by providing the technical skills necessary for the long-term management of *ex situ* assurance populations of endangered amphibians. Twenty-three professionals from Guatemala, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Panama, and Mexico, representing twelve different institutions, attended the course. A new unit in 2018 on program development, is designed to assist program managers in planning for their programs over the long term.

"This is one of the best courses I have ever attended. With a very good balance between theory and practicals, I am sure that the acquired knowledge will help me in the development of my professional career and in the conservation of the threatened amphibians of Guatemala."

Jennifer Hernández - Universidad del Valle de Guatemala

communications

Working with partners at Unite for Literacy, AArk published 5 online children's books about amphibians. *Amazing Amphibians* helps children learn what's special about amphibians. *Fantastic Frogs*, *Super Salamanders*, and *Secret Caecilians* provide a more in-depth look at these groups, and *Amphibian Heroes* highlights just a few of the scientists working diligently to conserve amphibians. Each book provides activities for children that help them learn more about amphibians, the conservation challenges facing them, and what children can do to help. The books are available free of charge at www.uniteforliteracy.com/aark/arkbooks.



outreach

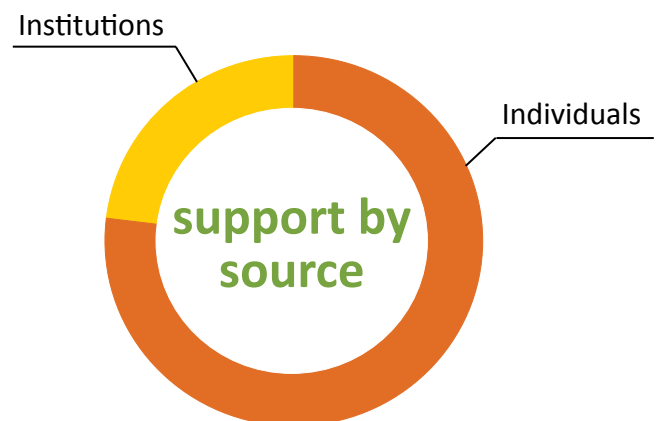
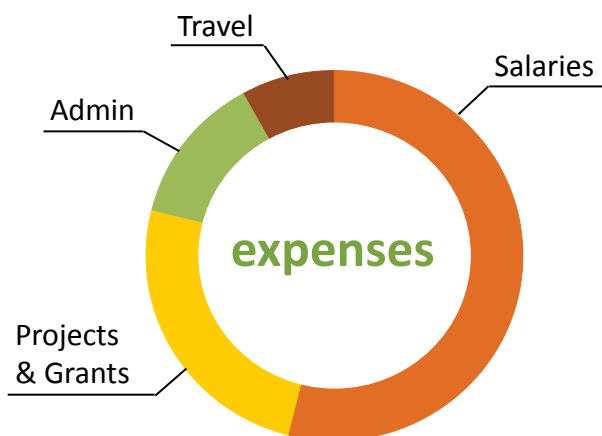
Subscriptions to the quarterly AArk newsletter increased in 2018, and our Facebook page now has nearly 8,000 followers. In 2018 we developed several “WhatsApp” groups to facilitate communication with programs managers in Latin America. New information on amphibian husbandry and veterinary management is added to the AArk website on a regular basis: www.amphibianark.org.

AArk has been working with the IUCN SSC Amphibian Specialist Group (ASG) to develop the Strategic Conservation Planning chapter for the upcoming revision of the Amphibian Conservation Action Plan (ACAP) and an AArk program officer co-chairs the ASG Captive Breeding Working Group.

looking ahead in 2019

- Continuing expansion of the Conservation Grants program to include a mentorship grant, and an emergency grant
- Introduction of the George B. Rabb Fellowship
- An online Amphibian Reintroduction Course
- RLA/CNAs for Honduras, Papua New Guinea, and more
- Further improvements to the Conservation Needs Assessment

finances



2018 amphibian ark donors

The work of AArk is possible due to the generous core support of:

above \$200,000

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amphibian ark
Keeping threatened amphibian species afloat

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