

IRCF ON THE MOVE

IRCF Conservation Champion Award: Stesha Pasachnik

Stesha Pasachnik is the first recipient of the new IRCF Conservation Champion Award. Stesha received the award to allow her to travel to the IUCN Iguana Specialist Group Meeting in Puerto Rico to present critical information about the status of *Ctenosaura* and to generate conservation interest in the genus. Stesha spent six months in Honduras from February 2006 through July 2006 collecting data (see article on p. 264), and will return again next year to continue her efforts.



MARE RUMIT

Stesha Pasachnik, from the University of Tennessee, will be working with Zootropic collecting tissue samples of *Ctenosaura palearis* for genetic analysis in 2007. Stesha, the first recipient of the IRCF Conservation Champion award is shown here holding a *Ctenosaura similis* on the island of Utila, Honduras.

Project Heloderma: Meeting in Guatemala City

A Project Heloderma meeting was held at the Zootropic office in Guatemala City, Guatemala on 26 September 2006 to discuss the next phase of the project and the distribution of funds collected from the Daytona Expo auction. Attending the meeting were Rodrigo Botran, Luis Alvarado, and Daniel Ariano from Zootropic, Brad Lock from Zoo Atlanta, and John Binns from the IRCF.

Action priorities discussed included: Environmental education, research, land acquisition, and the *in situ* breeding facil-

ity. Resolved were: (1) Continuing support for educational material, such as 1000 T-shirts to be distributed to local schools in the Motagua Valley, an awareness poster, school supplies, and other handout materials. Five hundred dollars was allotted, with additional funds covered by individual fundraising campaigns. (2) Support for research equipment needs through 2007; \$2,500–3,000 was allotted to purchase 15 radio-tracking transmitters, handheld GPS units, and AVID chips. Not funded but discussed as a potential independent campaign was the need for a field vehicle and compensation for a local field assistant. (3) The major decision from the meeting was approval to purchase a 285-acre plot of land (\$30,000) as a reserve and breeding facility site. The remaining balance of auction funds (\$12,500) was allocated toward this purchase. Project Heloderma partner San Diego Zoo has since contributed \$5,000, and Toronto Zoo and Jacksonville Zoo also have promised contributions. The remaining funds needed to purchase this critical property amount to about \$11,000. Please visit IRCF.org for more information. (4) The breeding facility was not discussed in any detail to avoid sidetracking the meeting's purpose. Some of the basic topics discussed were construction of the facility with the aid of local labor, facility location at the base of the property, on-going research to determine breeding strategies, long-term ideas about a visitor attraction such as the Grand Cayman Blue Iguana Breeding and head-starting facility.



JOHN BINNS

The Project Heloderma meeting ran late into the evening. Pictured from left are Brad Lock, Zoo Atlanta, Luis Alvarado, Zootropic, Rodrigo Botran, Zootropic, and Daniel Ariano, Zootropic. Not shown, John Binns, IRCF.

The IRCF, Zoo Atlanta, and Zootropic once again thank all the contributors and volunteers from the Daytona Expo auction as well as the San Diego Zoo for contributions; together these have already made a significant impact on Project Heloderma's progress towards saving the Guatemalan Beaded Lizard.

Project *Ctenosaura palearis*: A Chance for Survival

While visiting Guatemala, John Binns, IRCF, opened a separate discussion about *Ctenosaura palearis* (the Paleate Spiny-tailed Iguana, also known as the Guatemalan Black Iguana), proposing the inclusion of a recovery action plan for this species under Zootropic's umbrella. *Ctenosaura palearis* appears on the IUCN Red List as Critically Endangered, and its known distribution range lies within the same area of the Motagua Valley as that of the Guatemalan Beaded Lizard. Specifically, the recovery action plan would involve the inclusion of *C. palearis* in Zootropic's educational program, the development of a research component with the aid of college students, and a primary focus on utilizing the breeding facility to raise animals for repatriation as soon as possible.

The proposal was unanimously accepted. Since returning from Guatemala, Daniel Ariano and field assistant Gilberto Salazar have located four males and one female *C. palearis*, and currently are monitoring these animals. Paola Coti, a Guatemalan undergraduate college student, has already taken the initial steps to develop her research program (Daniel Ariano is her advisor) to determine distribution, ecology, and the conservation status of *C. palearis*. Stesha Pasachnik, University of Tennessee, will be assisted by Zootropic to obtain permits to take *C. palearis* tissue-samples during her 2007 visit to the Motagua Valley. Stesha is working on *Ctenosaura* genetics.

Within a short few months, Zootropic has provided hope for this species' future, after an extended period during which no action was being taken

to save this species. Currently this is an unfunded project, and the ongoing work is being conducted without compensation. The IRCF website will soon have a section dedicated to the project in order to disseminate information and provide



DANIEL ARIANO

In their initial effort to locate the Guatemalan Black Iguana (*Ctenosaura palearis*), Daniel Ariano and Gilberto Salazar found four males and one female. The male depicted above is one of the individuals currently under observation.

a port to receive contributions. If you are interested in contributing to this effort, please contact John Binns (jfb@ircf.org).

NARBC, Anaheim, California: Ingenuity

On 8–9 September, with the entire staff committed elsewhere, IRCF didn't have the human resources necessary to man a booth at the NARBC in Anaheim, California. Improvising, Desiree Wong, IRCF Public Relations, loaded up her



Desiree Wong poses with new IRCF member, Nigel Marven.

messenger bag with IRCF material, armed herself with a camera, and headed for Anaheim. She secured five new members, including the well-known personality Nigel Marven, who praised IRCF's conservation efforts.

Indy Reptile Expo: IRCF Makes its Debut

Kacie and Joe Ehrenberger and Dee Asbury manned the IRCF booth at the Indy Reptile Expo in Indianapolis, Indiana, on 4–5 November 2006. Kacie, Joe, and Dee secured 15 new members and contributions towards our conservation programs. Thanks guys!



JOE EHRENBERGER

Kacie Ehrenberger, center and Dee Asbury, right, assist a new IRCF member in Indianapolis.



JOE EHRENBERGER

IRCF members Tell Hicks, left, Bob Ashley, center, and Joe Ehrenberger, right.

San Jose Reptile Show: Teaming-Up

Our first convention in the San Francisco Bay Area (San Jose, California, 11–12 November) was manned by the Binns family and Joel and Mason Friesch. This show was a joint venture with Michael Kern (The Gardens of Eden; www.TheKernFamilyZoo.com), who supported our efforts and donated the proceeds of his sales at the show to the IRCF. Thank you, Michael! Our *Cyclura* ambassador "Izzy" was on station for a total of 16 hours and drew massive



JOHN BINNS

Joel Friesch (behind the table at left) and Sandy Binns (right) are assisted by Joel's son, Mason (center).



JOHN BINNS

"Izzy" was on display each day for eight hours delighting visitors, including members of this family getting their first look at an adult Cuban Iguana.



JOHN BINNS

The IRCF booth attracted large crowds throughout the Show. Gang Chen, a photo-journalist and correspondent for the China News Service (far left), interviewed staff about IRCF conservation efforts.



JOHN BINNS

Sandy and John Binns's son, Don, and his fiancée Kim Claussen, took turns manning the booth. Don (facing forward) discusses the problems faced by wildlife today.

crowds. Sandy Binns gave two presentations on conservation awareness. The show resulted in 11 new members and contributions towards our conservation efforts.



JOHN BINNS

Sandy Binns gave two conservation presentations during the San Jose Reptile Show.

**Member Highlight:
Jake Edmondson**

Jake Edmondson, an enthusiastic high school junior in Virginia, aspires to be a herpetologist one day. He has joined the IRCF and is promoting membership at his school and at reptile shows in his community. His passion for reptiles is matched by his energy to sign up new members. Armed with copies of the Journal, membership forms, and brochures, he has attended shows, made presentations to his class, and is trying to get the local paper to publish his IRCF promotion efforts.

**Going, Going, Gone?
Animals on the Brink of Extinction
and How You Can Help.**

The clock is ticking: Can it be stopped? Many scientists believe that we are on the brink of a new mass extinction, with at least one million species in danger of not surviving to the end of the century. Can we turn the tide, changing the way we



Jake Edmondson, IRCF member, displaying a recent issue of the journal and wearing the limited edition Project Heloderma T-shirt, has been actively promoting the Foundation at his school and at local shows.

live and giving these creatures a chance? In the very first book of its kind, 100 conservation organizations from around the world each nominate a species — animal or plant — that it believes is most threatened. Every one selected received a two-page spread, with magnificent photography, fascinating facts, details on why it is endangered, and information on how we can save it. The book provides complete contact details for all featured organizations (including IRCF, which featured the Blue Iguana Recovery Program). (Think Books, hardback, illustrated, 216 pp., ISBN:1845250273).

**IRCF Staff Announcement:
Michael Kern, COO**

We are pleased to announce that Michael Kern has officially joined the IRCF as Chief Operating Officer. Michael has spent the last 24 years as partner with the global technology management and consulting firm Accenture, where he helped large Fortune 500 companies apply technology to create business advantages.

Michael is also an accomplished wildlife photographer and writer. He won the 2005 Nactus Award and two International Herpetological Symposium Best-in-Show Awards for his wildlife photography.



Additionally, his writing and photography have appeared in several leading nature and photography magazines. By adding Michael's fresh perspective, business acumen, ability to manage complex programs, and photographic and writing skills to the already strong team at IRCF, the organization will be able to address even more efficiently the conservation needs of reptiles and the ecosystems that support them. Michael, his wife Yukie, and their two boys Josh and Alex reside in Palo Alto, California.

