

WildCare Institute Update

June 2012

Created in 2004 to bring together conservation initiatives under a single organization, the Saint Louis Zoo WildCare Institute is dedicated to creating a sustainable future for wildlife and for people around the world. The Institute and its 12 centers take a holistic approach to troubled ecosystems by addressing three key ingredients in conservation success: wildlife management and recovery, conservation science, and support of the human populations that coexist with wildlife. Thank you for your interest in the WildCare Institute and the Saint Louis Zoo.

Here's the latest news on the Saint Louis Zoo WildCare Institute Center activities.



Center for American Burying Beetle Conservation

June 5 around 240
Saint Louis Zoo-bred
American burying beetles

were reintroduced in Southwest Missouri, marking the first time any federally listed endangered species has been reintroduced in Missouri. Five Zoo-trained staffers spent the day reintroducing the beetle through a project jointly managed by the Zoo's Center for American Burying Beetle Conservation; the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service; the Missouri Department of Conservation; and The Nature Conservancy. Staff from partner organizations and local volunteers also helped with the reintroduction. The partners in this first-ever reintroduction announced April 24 that the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service had granted permission for the project. The burying beetle is being reintroduced across the 4,040-acre Wah' Kon-Tah Prairie in St. Clair and Cedar counties on land jointly owned and managed by the Missouri Department of Conservation and The Nature Conservancy. Television, radio and print media carried news about the reintroduction, including coverage from two local National Public Radio stations—KWMU in St. Louis and KBIA in Columbia, Mo. Here's a link to that coverage: <http://news.stlpublicradio.org/term/american-burying-beetle>



Center for Conservation in the Horn of Africa WildCare Institute

Partner and Conservation Fellow, Grevy's Zebra Trust's Executive Director Belinda Low is celebrated in the new book, titled "Wildlife Heroes." Singled out as one of the 40 top wildlife conservationists of our time, Low is praised for her efforts to save the Grevy's zebra. Find out more at www.WildlifeHeroes.org.

One of this center's partners in the Bale Mountains, Ethiopia, is the Bale Beauty Nature Club. This club recently earned the prestigious 2011 Green Hero Award. This honor recognizes outstanding achievements on the regional and national level, specifically for the club's extraordinary efforts in engaging the communities surrounding the Bale Mountains National Park in environmental action and habitat restoration.

The Bale Beauty Nature Club—an enthusiastic group of students—has taken the initiative to launch a grass-roots environmental organization, with the stated vision of being an organization designed to inspire young people to resolve environmental challenges in their communities.

This 40-member group has:

- Provided indigenous seedlings to over 6,000 households to rehabilitate the town areas through their inventive house-to-house tree planting program.
- Opened a library in town with a large selection of environmental science and wildlife books and developed a photo and slide exhibition to promote



Saint Louis Zoo
WildCare Institute®

their club's activities, with the hope that they can encourage others to participate in conservation activities.

- Established an income-generating business focused on selling low-cost, fuel-conserving stoves to encourage the community to reduce their use of wood for fuel and so help slow down forest degradation.

As conservation programs are growing stronger, it is also important to engage and empower conservation leaders for the future. By empowering young people, from grade school to graduate school, to help both animals and people in need, healthy relationships between humans and animals are built and sustained.

Following is a link to the most recent newsletter of the Grevy's Zebra Trust; the Saint Louis Zoo is a major supporter of this trust: <http://cts.vresp.comc/?GrevysZebraTrust/02f5d157a4/e1c7cffceb/bc6c21b1dd>

Center for Conservation in Madagascar

The Saint Louis Zoo was a founding member of Madagascar Fauna and Flora Group (MFG)—an international consortium of zoos and other institutions formed in 1988 to help conserve the island's animal species through reproduction, field research and training programs for rangers and wardens, and through acquisition and protection of native habitat on the island. In 2003,

Saint Louis Zoo staff assumed the chairmanship of MFG, and its international office was moved to our Zoo. MFG is working with local villagers to restore Betampona's Zone of Protection. A forest's edge is subject to the brunt of weather conditions, encroachment of invasive plants, pollution and human disturbances. Degradation of the edge creates a new edge leading to a cycle of forest loss. Reforestation of the Zone is an important conservation initiative to protect the integrity of Betampona's 2,223-hectare (5,575-acre) lowland rainforest and the large number of animal and plant species that inhabit the reserve. The reserve protects one of the last remaining relicts of low elevation rainforests in eastern Madagascar.

Yet little has been published about the amphibian fauna of this rainforest. That has changed with a recently published article on "Biodiversity Conservation," co-authored by MFG staffer Jean Noel. This article offers a description of a long-term study (2004-2007) of the frogs in Madagascar's Betampona Natural Reserve and includes results from a 102-day survey of Betampona, when researchers looked for frogs.

The article indicates that although there are fewer species than were thought to be in the area, a total of 76 frogs have been found—with 24 of them in the Betampona Reserve. In addition, the authors note that Betampona is possibly the best-managed protected area in Madagascar.

