

Froglife Big Saturday Talks in the Museum's Kanaris lecture theatre: 9/7/2011

11.30am – 12pm	Christopher Smith/ Amanda Bamford	Manchester Student/lecturer	Aquatic Carnivorous Plants
12 – 12.30pm	Katy Woodburn	Manchester PhD	Signal Crayfish
12.30 – 1pm	Vicky Ogilvy	Manchester PhD Froglife	Research with Belize Frogs
1 – 1.30pm	Anne Campbell	Cheshire Tortoise Group (BCG)	My Life with Tortoises – habitat, species, care and health issues.
1.30 – 2pm	Pete Liptrot	Bolton Museum Aquarium Curator	Bananas about Fish – the affects of farming on tropical aquatic environments and fish populations
2 – 2.30pm	Sam Taylor	Froglife	The amphibians in your garden - Things you can do to help
2.30 – 3pm	John Walker	Froglife	Toads on roads – native species conservation
3 – 3.30pm	Matt Wilson	The Manchester Museum	European species of amphibians and reptile predators
3.30 – 4pm	Andrew Gray	The Manchester Museum	The Manchester Museum's role in Amphibian conservation

**Manchester Museum Froglife Big Saturday – Details of some just of the talks below**

### **Vicky Ogilvy**

In the late 1980's, scientists began to discover that amphibians (frogs, toads, salamanders and caecilians) from all over the world were starting to go extinct at an alarming rate, but the reasons for these shocking declines were unclear at the time. Since then a killer fungus called *Batrachochytrium dendrobatidis* has been discovered in many amphibian species. This fungus, along with other factors such as habitat loss and pollution, have led to the extinction of more than 120 species since 1980, and currently nearly a third of amphibian species are at risk of extinction. So far, elimination of the fungus from wild amphibian populations has proved extremely difficult, and factors such as habitat loss are equally difficult to deal with quickly. Conservation of amphibians outside of their natural habitat has therefore become an important tool in preventing the extinction of some species. Unfortunately, many species are difficult to breed in captivity and little is known about the nutrients that amphibians require to keep them healthy. For her PhD, Vicky Ogilvy has been working with wild frogs in Belize, and frogs at Chester Zoo and the University of Manchester to find out how certain nutrients can affect health and reproduction in frogs. She was particularly interested in looking at how carotenoids, which are the pigments responsible for the orange and red colours of many fruits and vegetables, can affect the skin colour, health and reproduction of tropical tree frogs. Vicky's research has shown that carotenoids can dramatically affect skin colour, growth and reproduction in tropical tree frogs. Come along to her talk at Froglife's Big Saturday at the Manchester Museum (9<sup>th</sup> July) to find out more.

### **Bolton Museum – Curator of Aquarium Pete Liptrot**

The talk title will be as above, "Bananas About Fish", and will be about the species and environments that are found in those tropical regions from which everyday products on supermarket shelves originate (not just limited to bananas). It will hopefully provide evidence and incentive for the simple purchasing choices that the everyday consumer can make that will be of benefit to the wildlife and people of these regions (and also lower our own exposure to pesticides etc.) It's going to cover some of the species of fish (and other taxa) that can be found in tropical streams and the effect of intensive fruit/coffee/flower farming, hopefully with some data comparing this to watercourses adjacent to organic/fair trade producers.

### **Katy Woodburn - Manchester University PhD**

The American Signal crayfish was introduced into the UK in the 1970's. Stocks of the native white-clawed crayfish were declining due to disease, pollution and habitat destruction. It was hoped that the introduction of the Signal crayfish into fish farms would help with the growing demand for crayfish as a source of food. However, being avid climbers and with the ability to walk over land, the crayfish escaped from the farms and invaded many UK waterways where it outcompeted the native crayfish.

Whilst the Signal crayfish has been blamed for decreasing the diversity of UK lakes and rivers, it also plays a key role in many aquatic food webs. However, the crayfish diet of plants and animals does result in the uptake of metals such as aluminium. Therefore, my research is focused on aluminium uptake from contaminated food, the effect this has upon the Signal crayfish and the implications of this for the aquatic environment.

**Amanda Bamford, - Manchester University**

Beware! Lurking under that pond may be carnivorous plants! For example. Bladderworts are unique in that the underwater leaves bear small oval “bladders” that trap and digest small aquatic creatures that happen to swim by. The bladders suck in their prey and can move very fast (only ten to fifteen thousandths of a second). Bladderworts are usually found in quiet shallow, acidic waters and can form dense mats. Find out more about these and other carnivorous plants in this talk by one of our top lecturers from the faculty of Life Sciences.