



Species



Magazine of the
Species Survival Commission

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Special
quadrennium
issue

Reviewing
four years of
conservation
activity

Successes,
challenges and
future goals



Species 54

Contents

- 1 **SSC Quadrennium Report**
- 15 **Specialist Group Reports**
- 121 **Red List Authority Reports**
- 132 **Disciplinary Group Reports**
- 138 **Task Force Reports**
- 141 **Sub-Committee Reports**
- 148 **SSC Supporters**
- 150 **IUCN Global Species Programme Quadrennium Report**
- 155 **Publications Summary**

Species is the magazine of the IUCN Global Species Programme and the IUCN Species Survival Commission. Commission members, in addition to providing leadership for conservation efforts for specific plant, fungi and animal groups, contribute technical and scientific counsel to biodiversity conservation projects throughout the world. They provide advice to governments, international conventions, and conservation organizations.

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Cover Lesser Antillean Iguana (*Iguana delicatissima*) © Charles Knapp

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Water Deer (*Hydropotes inermis*). © Chen Min



Dragonfly Specialist Group



Activity Report 2009–2012

The Dragonfly Specialist Group has been involved in several Freshwater Biodiversity Projects coordinated by IUCN's Freshwater Unit in Cambridge: Arabian Peninsula, Western Ghats, East Himalayas, Indo-Burma, New Zealand. Assessments for Regions in South America are underway and will involve regional experts from the Dragonfly Specialist Groups.

The Africa Freshwater Assessment has been completed and a report published. The reception of this project has been good and it made it to the front cover of *Frontiers in Ecology and Environment* (10, 3) "Focus on African freshwaters: hotspots of dragonfly diversity and conservation concern".

Building on this success, K-D.B. Dijkstra and Michael Samways received a grant from the JRS Biodiversity Foundation to work with a team of MSc and PhD students to make all knowledge available online that is needed to use African dragonflies in environmental assessments, i.e. their identification, distribution, ecology and indication value.

Dragonflies are well represented in the Breaking Point Initiative: three species were selected for inclusion in the list of the 100 most critically endangered species, with *Risicnemis seidenschwarzi* from Cebu Island, Philippines, selected for a longer feature.

Matjaz Bedjanic was awarded a Rufford Small Grant for his project: "Distribution Atlas of the Dragonflies of Sri Lanka: focus on the globally endangered species included on The IUCN Red List of Threatened Species."

The Chair, Viola Clausnitzer, received the Harry Messel Award for "Conservation Leadership in recognition of her leadership of Odonata Red List assessments, especially in Africa, and her chairing of the SSC Dragonfly Specialist Group", during the SSC Chairs meeting in Abu Dhabi in February 2012. This prize is an honour for the entire group.

Members of the DSG participated at various meetings (global and regional scale), e.g. LIFE meeting in England, IPBES meetings in Bonn and Nairobi, IUCN SSC workshops in England and the USA.

Success stories

- Red List assessments for New Zealand, the Arabian Peninsula and parts of Southeast Asia.
- Distribution maps prepared for all African species.
- Front cover publication in *Frontiers in Ecology and the Environment* on African dragonflies.
- Harry Messel Award for Conservation Leadership for the group's chair in Abu Dhabi, Feb 2012.
- JRS Biodiversity Foundation grant for African dragonflies in environmental assessments.
- Rufford Small Grant for a distribution atlas of Sri Lanka's dragonflies.
- Highly cited Author Award for "Odonata enter the biodiversity crisis debate: The first global assessment of an insect group", by *Biological Conservation*.

Challenges

- The world's focus is still largely on fluffy-furry animals and spectacular projects. Invertebrates usually get less attention and far less funding for conservation or assessment projects. In many cases, we need information about the distribution, trends and conservation needs of the species, before we are able to work on conservation actions. A main focus will therefore be the high numbers of data deficient (DD) species among dragonflies.

Future Goals

- Secure more funding for surveys and the implementation of species specific conservation actions.
- Complete global dragonfly assessment.
- Focus on South America and Pacific Islands in respect of assessments and conservation initiatives.
- Update IUCN Red List assessments older than 10 years.
- Enhance national Red Listing projects.
- Merge existing data sets with the global IUCN Red List (e.g. North America).
- Allocate data to minimize the number of DD species.
- Preparation of a website to establish dragonflies as indicators for ecosystem health ('guardians of the watershed') in tropics.

Facts

Chair: Viola Clausnitzer who took over from Vincent Kalkman during the quadrennium

Red List Authority Focal Point: Frank Suhling

Number of members: 45



Agriocnemis bumhilli. © Viola Clausnitzer