

Captivity offers hope for endangered frogs

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Scientists at the San Diego Zoo are raising 65 mountain yellow-legged frogs, in an effort to stave off extinction for the dwindling species.

There are only about 150 to 200 of the frogs left in the wild, and with the creeks that serve as their habitat ravaged by drought and fire, that number is likely to decrease, The Riverside (Calif.) Press-Enterprise reported Sunday.

The scientists working on the effort at the zoo's center for Conservation and Research -- the first ever to raise the frogs from tadpoles in captivity -- hope they will be able to release the frogs into the wild once their habitat has stabilized to become more hospitable, the newspaper said.

The World Association of Zoos and Aquariums and three other international groups have designated 2008 the year of the frog, and conservationists worldwide will be working to protect the one-third of the planet's 6,000 amphibian species that face extinction.

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