

Project Update: August 2016

The first half of this 1-year project has been full of news. This is the continuation of a project already financed by a previous RSG. So far, we have developed the first population model in the Darwin's frogs, which also includes the effects of chytrid infection on host survival. Sadly, our results suggest that this disease has the capability to drive the extinction of local populations of *Rhinoderma darwinii*. These findings were recently presented in the 8th World Congress of Herpetology in China (Fig. 1) with the talk entitled: "Disease-induced extinction in an apparently stable host-parasite system: mark-recapture methods reveal population effects of chytrid infection in a terrestrial amphibian". Also, we began the survey of beliefs and attitudes of people towards amphibians in Southern Chile (Fig. 2); a preliminary report is being prepared and will be released soon in Spanish and English. We have put a lot of effort in the outreach activities in order to raise public awareness towards Darwin's frogs and amphibian conservation at both the national and international scales. In this venue, we have released two short documentary showing the Darwin's frogs and their habitat and also the activities of this project (available at: www.ranitadedarwin.org; very soon with subtitles in English). So far, these videos have received more than 3,000 reproductions in the social networks (Facebook and Youtube)! As you can imagine, this has been an exciting year for us and our collaborators. We are working hard to expand our modelling framework in order to provide a better understanding of the chytridiomycosis in this endangered and singular frog. Always with the ultimate goal of providing management alternatives in order to enhance the conservation of the Darwin's frogs and other amphibians around the globe.

If you are interested in this project and want more information about it, please do not hesitate in contact me throughout my e-mail: andresvalenzuela.zoo@gmail.com



Figure 1. Andrés presenting the first results of this project at the 8th World Congress of Herpetology, TongLu, China, August 2016.



Figure 2. Survey of beliefs and attitudes of people towards amphibians in Southern Chile.