

# You don't have to kiss them, just be thankful they're here

## Frog population at Swaner Nature Preserew grows

By JASON STRYKOWSKI  
Of the Record staff

Most of Park City's newest residents take up housing in condos or restored historic homes, but the Columbia Spotted Frogs repopulated throughout the Swaner Nature Preserve were dropped off in one-foot squared metal and mesh boxes.

The Spotted Frog, on the short list of the 15 amphibians native to Utah, is high on the list of threatened species for the state at a Tier 1 classification, the most threatened a species can be at the state level. This frog has been a resident of the Utah for the past 15,000 years, but over the last century development and major changes to its habitat have severely reduced the population of the seven-to-10 centimeter amphibian.

Recently, the Department of Natural Resources and the Swaner Nature Preserve identified a positive result of their repatriation efforts: They found three egg masses. Just as they sound, egg masses are collections of frog eggs left by females that contain hundreds of individual eggs. In this case, volunteers and scientists found some 700 eggs.

In all likelihood, according to Chris Crockett, native aquatic

biologist for Department of Natural Resources for the State of Utah, those eggs were laid by females repatriated to the Swaner Nature Preserve in 2004. Thanks to long winters and other contributing factors, it could have easily taken these frogs some four years to reach their reproductive maturity and lay eggs.

Of those eggs, Crockett estimates that only about one to five percent will reach maturity. Ultimately, in order to achieve sustainable genetic diversity and build a population capable of surviving on its own merits, some 50 to 100 frogs will have to populate the preserve.

The Department of Natural Resources began to reintroduce these frogs to Swaner in 2004 after an intensive study to identify regions that best met their needs. Swaner, said Crockett, made an ideal spot for them to repatriate the frogs because of both the habitat and the volunteers and staff who work for the preserve. Maybe most importantly, Swaner will continue to be protected for the foreseeable future.

On Thursday night, Crockett and Swaner staff led a hike through the preserve to visit some of the tadpoles left there. Both young children and adults had the opportunity to get a close-up look at these nascent amphibians, in some sense acting out the greatest benefit that a new population of these frogs might bring back to Utah.



Columbia Spotted Frogs and their tadpoles are the newest residents to the Swaner Nature Preserve. The first eggs left by these frogs were discovered recently.

According to Crockett, more tourism dollars are generated by wildlife viewing than hunting and frogs usually hop fairly high on the list of anticipated species.

Ecologically, the repatriation of these frogs represents part of an environmental healing process taking place on a much larger scale. Usually considered indicators of ecological health, frog populations are strongly tied to both water availability and quality. Some frogs, who breathe through their skin, make a direct

through the size of their population. If a frog population can be sustained at the Swaner Nature Preserve, that group would serve as evidence that the once drained plot of farmland had fully recovered to a sustainable wetland.

Swaner plans to hold other events in tribute to the Columbia Spotted Frog in the future. The last event held by the EcoCenter, filled up several days in advance, mostly due to children who love frogs and salamanders. For more information, visit [www.swanernaturepreserve.org](http://www.swanernaturepreserve.org).

# Air quality an Olympic worry

Graham Dunbar  
Associated Press

LAUSANNE, Switzerland (AP) — International Olympic Committee president Jacques Rogge said Thursday that air pollution will not damage the Beijing Games.

"We are confident that atmospheric pollution will have no major impact on the Olympic Games," Rogge told The Associated Press in an interview, less than a month before the opening of the Aug. 8-24 event.

In 10 days, Chinese authorities will act to improve Beijing's notoriously poor air quality by starting to take more than 1 million cars off the city's streets, and closing down factories and heavy industry in surrounding provinces.

The IOC medical commission has

said that problems with athletes' breathing might occur in endurance events of more than one hour, such as the marathon. If pollution levels exceed limits recommended by the World Health Organization, those events could be postponed and rescheduled.

"I don't think this is something that will happen very often," Rogge said.

He said the Olympics would also restore joy, hope and pride to a nation still coming to terms with a devastating earthquake in Sichuan province two months ago that killed nearly 70,000 people and left 5 million homeless.

"We would love the Games to give that back to them," Rogge said. "We should not forget there are still many people who suffer from the earthquake. This is today a nation in

mourning."

The earthquake and violence in Tibet, where state authorities clashed with protesters opposed to Chinese rule in March, has directed more of the world's attention on China than it perhaps wanted in its Olympics year.

Rogge insisted Thursday that despite journalists' fears of restrictions and censorship, the media would have freedom to move and work in Beijing.

"Never will the media have had so many possibilities as today," he said. "Nothing is perfect and we are pushing very hard to get the maximum out of it. Today I think any objective observer must say that this is something new and this is something that will have a lasting legacy in China."

Rogge said he hoped to see the

cleanest, most drug-free Olympics in modern times because of a comprehensive anti-doping program. A total of 4,500 doping controls will be carried out, including an improved test for human growth hormone.

The IOC has also promised to call in Chinese police to investigate suspected drug supply rings.

"I believe that today we are very, very close to the cheats," Rogge said. "I wouldn't say level par, but very, very close to the cheats and far closer than we used to be a couple of years ago."

"Let me give them the message both to viewers and to the athletes. They must be persuaded that the IOC will do everything that is humanly possible to have the cleanest possible games."



## Recycling tip of the week

Lawn Watering Is Restricted  
Submitted by Recycle Utah

We live in the high desert. Nature here never anticipated Kentucky Bluegrass, thousands of faucets, and miles of asphalt that raise the ambient temperature even more.

That's why water restrictions, both legal and self-imposed, are critical to Summit County's water supply. Here are some common sense things to do:

-Water every third day. Not every other day. That means twice a week. Your roots will grow deeper where to access moisture. (Ordinance in Park City).

-Water only between 8 pm and 8 am. Why let evaporation cost you money on

your water bill? (Ordinance in Park City) Inspect irrigation systems for leaks and proper spray patterns.

-Consider replacing your sprinkler heads with an underground drip system. Mulch around tree wells and flower beds to retain water there.

-Turn sprinklers off when it rains. Consider a "smart" evaporative controller that detects humidity and "knows" when it rains.

-Report malfunctioning and non-conforming water systems on public property to the water company.

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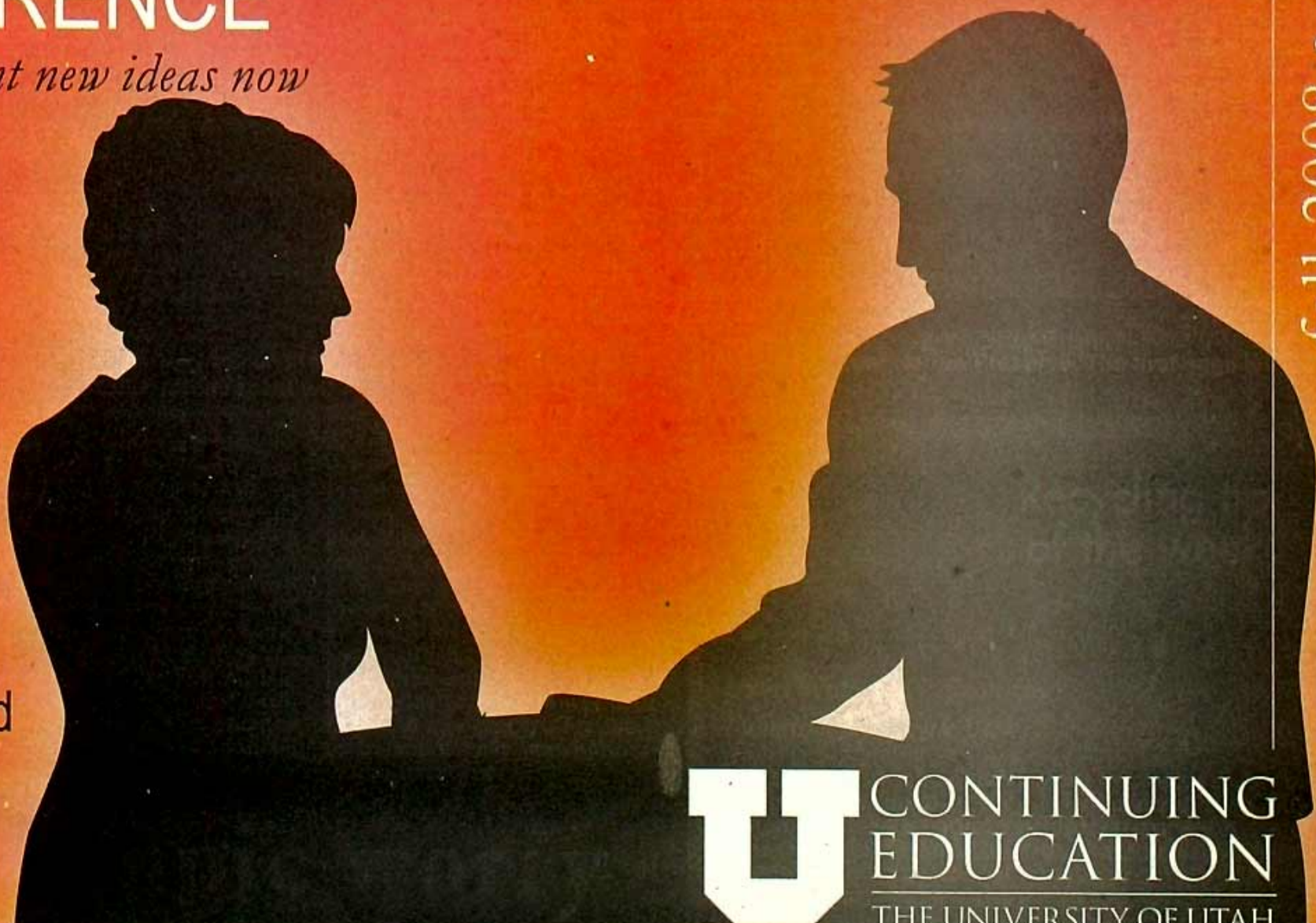
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