

Rick Hudson



Rick Hudson, Conservation Biologist, Fort Worth Zoo, 1989 Colonial Pkwy, Fort Worth, TX 76110; rhudson@fortworthzoo.org

Biography: Rick Hudson earned a degree in Biology from the University of Richmond in 1977 and began his zoo career in the Fort Worth Zoo's Department of Herpetology in 1980 where he served as the Assistant Curator for twenty years. He moved to the zoo's Conservation & Science Department in 2000 as Conservation Biologist. Rick has been active in AZA's reptile conservation programs, serving as co-chair of the Crocodylian Advisory Group and was the founder of the Lizard Advisory Group, which he chaired from 1990 – 2003. He currently serves as Species Coordinator for the Rock Iguana SSP. From 2001 – 2003 Rick served as chairman of the AZA's Field Conservation Committee (FCC) that developed the curriculum for an AZA course *Developing an Institutional In Situ Conservation Strategy*.

Internationally Rick is well known for his turtle conservation work through the Turtle Survival Alliance (TSA) which he Co-Chairs. In January 2001 Rick organized an IUCN Asian Turtle Workshop - *Developing Conservation Strategies Through Captive Management* - that led to the formation of the TSA, an IUCN partnership network for sustainable captive management of freshwater turtles and tortoises. Today the TSA emphasizes capacity building in range countries, primarily SE Asia, focusing on programs with a captive component. Providing conservation support for over half of the 18 Asian taxa recognized as critically endangered by the IUCN Red List, the TSA now has programs or projects in nine Asian countries and Mexico. Rick's professional memberships include the following IUCN Specialist Groups: Conservation Breeding, Crocodile, Reintroduction, Madagascar Reptile and Amphibian, Iguana and Tortoise and Freshwater Turtle.

Title of Paper: The Turtle Survival Alliance: A Coordinated Response to a Conservation Crisis

Summary: Formed in 2001 in response to the growing Asian turtle crisis, the IUCN Turtle Survival Alliance (TSA) was organized with the belief that captive populations had a crucial role to play in the survival of many species. Described as an *IUCN Partnership Network for Sustainable Captive Management of Freshwater Turtles and Tortoises*, the stated goal is preserving options for the recovery of wild populations. Built on the strength of partnerships, the TSA brings together a diverse range of talents and skills – veterinarians, zoo managers, serious private breeders, field biologists, research scientists, conservationists – all united to prevent turtle extinctions. While *ex situ* captive management of selected turtle species is still a major component of the TSA, in recent years the emphasis has shifted to capacity building in range countries, primarily

in Asia. More specifically the TSA's niche is in supporting existing range country facilities and programs with a captive component, i.e. headstarting, captive breeding, rescue. The receipt of a \$100,000 grant from the Batchelor Foundation in 2005 has allowed the TSA to vastly expand their support for *in situ* turtle conservation activities. Today the TSA is involved in ten Asian countries – India, Myanmar, Malaysia, Thailand, Vietnam, Cambodia, Philippines, Bangladesh, Indonesia and China – and southern Mexico and Madagascar. In the seven years that TSA has been in existence, the organization has developed into a global turtle conservation network and emerged as the recognized leader for turtle conservation action.