

## National Reptile Breeders' Expo (NRBE) Auction

### **NRBE auction to benefit amphibians.**

*By Dustin Smith*

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Centrolene ilex

Photo courtesy of the Gladys Porter Zoo. Every year, thousands of dollars destined for high-profile conservation programs are raised at the National Reptile Breeders' Expo benefit auction in Daytona Beach, Fla. Keeping with tradition, proceeds from this year's auction will be used to create, landscape and maintain amphibian breeding ponds at the Costa Rican Amphibian Research Center in Costa Rica. Funds will also help continue Costa Rican efforts to captive breed and release many native amphibian species, including some that are critically endangered.

Center director Brian Kubicki said efforts there are currently self-funded mostly through book sales. However, scientists estimate 1,900 of the world's frogs, toads, newts, salamanders and caecilians are threatened with extinction. Valiant conservation action in protected areas is needed immediately.

About two hours from San José, Costa Rica, the center was established in the late 1990s when Kubicki bought about 200 acres of partially disturbed rain forest adjacent to protected forests. He then set out to create, maintain and preserve rain forest habitat for the unique and declining species of herpetofauna found there, including more than 60 documented amphibian species.

So far, Kubicki has established breeding pools for 15 amphibian species, including the critically endangered lemur leaf frog (*Hylomantis lemur*). You can help to create, expand and maintain more breeding ponds by donating items for this year's benefit auction. Please bring these items to the expo, or e-mail me at [chondro\\_13@yahoo.com](mailto:chondro_13@yahoo.com) for more information.

Please join us on Aug. 22 for the benefit auction. There will be a silent and live auction with live reptiles, art, books and many more herp-related items.