



THE ZSL WILD SCIENCE PODCAST: SHOW NOTES

Episode: ZSL #053 – The Tiny Frog Facing an Urgent Crisis

Deep in the dense rainforests of southern Chile lives a tiny amphibian. Just 3cm long, expertly blending into the browns and green of the forest floor, with a narrow-pointed nose and angular body, the Darwin's frog is fighting for survival. Scientists at ZSL have spent more than 20 years working on a disease known as chytridiomycosis, which has devastated amphibian populations globally, to try and understand underlying drivers of the distribution, spread and impacts of the disease. In this episode, we hear about the work being done to protect and restore Darwin's frog populations, and how funding from the Postcode Lottery enables this vital research.

Overview

- 00:12** [Harriet McAra](#), Host of Wild Science, Episode introduction
01:21 [Dr Andrés Valenzuela-Sánchez](#), Research Fellow in Wildlife Health at ZSL
28:48 Will Humpington, Climate Change and Environment Advisor at the [Postcode Lottery](#)
33:35 Thank you and outro

Resources

- If there's a topic you'd like to hear on a future podcast, or if you'd like to share your thoughts, email the ZSL Wild Science Podcast at: wild.science@zsl.org
- Check out our science and conservation work at: www.zsl.org/Science or www.zsl.org/conservation
- Find out more about the Postcode Lottery's work supporting charitable causes: <https://www.postcodelottery.co.uk/charities>
- More about ZSL's relationship with the Postcode Lottery: <https://www.zsl.org/support-us/charitable-trusts-and-foundations>
- Find more information on amphibian chytridiomycosis: <https://www.zsl.org/what-we-do/projects/amphibian-chytridiomycosis>
- Darwin's frog vocal sac brooding behaviour: <https://www.instagram.com/reel/DZQGJR6FGgh/>
- The first time that chytridiomycosis is documented in a terrestrial species, having previously thought to be only transmissible through water: Valenzuela-Sánchez, A., Delgado-Oyarzún, S., Azat, C. et al. Localized transmission of an aquatic pathogen drives hidden epidemics and population collapse in a terrestrial host. *Nat Ecol Evol* 10, 308–317 (2026). <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41559-025-02930-1>
- Watch A Leap of Hope, a ZSL film capturing the rescue mission and 7000-mile expedition made by conservationists to protect the Darwin's frog: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fs1SIsOKRIk>
- Ranita de Darwin and their work in Parque Tantauco: <https://www.ranitadedarwin.org/en/rescatetantauco>

Get in touch

- Email wild.science@zsl.org with your questions, comments, and thoughts for future episodes!
- Find us @ZSLScience on X or @zslofficial.bsky.social on BlueSky and use the hashtag #ZSLWildScience
- Follow us on Facebook @ZSLScienceAndConservation