

*For Immediate Release*

PRESS RELEASE

## **Capturing the Echoes of Lost Frogs: Illustrating Brazil's Lost Frog Species**

A groundbreaking project by Cal Poly Humboldt Biological Sciences Professor Pedro Peloso aims to resurrect the silent tales of frogs, salamanders and caecilians that have already vanished to raise awareness about the nearly 200 amphibian species at risk of disappearing forever.

The project, [Documenting Threatened Species](#) (DoTS), is a bold initiative to study, document and protect threatened species of amphibians in Brazil through the creation of a database and images of endangered amphibian species, and by bringing scientific knowledge to new audiences through lectures and activities in schools and communities.

"We are on a mission to breathe some life back into these lost amphibians. Through meticulous research and collaboration with artists, we aim to create modern, scientifically- accurate renderings of extinct or presumably extinct species from Brazil," says Peloso. He founded, directs and is the lead scientist of the project, which is supported by a large network of partners.

Brazil, a country renowned for hosting one of the world's richest biodiversity hotspots, is facing a poignant reality—some of its amphibian species are slipping away, possibly forever.

Amphibians stand apart from other animal groups as the most threatened of all—over 40% of species are at risk of extinction. Brazil stands as the global guardian of amphibian diversity, hosting one out of every eight species on the planet. Yet, this staggering diversity is rapidly diminishing.

According to the most recent numbers, Brazil is home to over 1,000 species of amphibians, many of which do not exist anywhere else on the planet. Of these, almost 200 are considered threatened with extinction. Moreover, many Brazilian amphibians are currently lost—they have not been observed in the wild in many years, sometimes decades. Alarming, 26 Brazilian species are considered as possibly extinct and two have been confirmed as extinct by amphibian specialists.

Distinguishing this project is the collaboration between scientists and artists, working in tandem to recreate portraits of these animals, for some of which not even old photographs exist.



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Peloso, amphibian specialist, and Cal Poly Humboldt Art Professor Brandice Guerra are hosting an [illustration internship](#) at the University with the goal to produce illustrations that are not only scientifically precise but also artistically distinctive. "Our vision is to transform these illustrations into an emotive exhibit, chronicling the tales of Brazil's vanished amphibians," Guerra says.

Art and science converge in Extintos, with the goal of engaging the public in a visually striking narrative that underscores the critical state of amphibian conservation. To achieve this goal, the leaders of the project have recruited illustration interns from a pool of highly qualified applicants from multiple countries. The first intern is Jamie Hefley, a recent graduate in Biological Illustration who is eager to bring some of these lost amphibians back to life through her drawings. "These illustrations should serve as a poignant reminder of the importance of preserving biodiversity and the collective responsibility we bear," says Hefley.

### **About the project**

"Extintos: Revealing the Beauty of Extinct Frogs from Brazil" is made possible through partnerships between the Departments of Biological Sciences and Art + Film at Cal Poly Humboldt and the Documenting Threatened Species Project ([www.projetodots.org](http://www.projetodots.org)). The project is supported by grants from the Maxwell-Hanrahan Foundation ([www.maxwell-hanrahan.org](http://www.maxwell-hanrahan.org)).

### **About the "Documenting Threatened Species (DoTS) project"**

DoTS is a bold initiative to study, document, and protect threatened species of amphibians in Brazil. Since its inception, the project has conducted 11 expeditions and photographed highly endangered and extremely rare species of frogs from all over Brazil, introducing many of these species to a global audience. The overarching goal of the project is to create awareness about amphibian extinctions through rigorous science and creative artistic expressions. The project is directed by Brazilian biologist and conservation photographer Pedro Peloso and is supported by a large network of partners (individuals and institutions).

For more information, visit [www.projetodots.org](http://www.projetodots.org).

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The Campo Grande Tree Frog (*Boana cymbalum*) was last observed in 1963 in the State of São Paulo. It is one of two species of frogs formally declared to be extinct in Brazil.

*Illustration by Jamie Hefley*





Once a common species in Itatiaia National Park, State of Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, the Itatiaia Highland Frog (*Holoaden bradei*) was last observed in 1976. This species is part of a lamentable trend, where a few frogs among many are believed to be extinct.

*Illustration by Jamie Hefley*





Illustrator intern, Jamie Hefley, works on one of her illustrations for the project “Extintos” that is highlighting amphibian declines and extinctions in Brazil.

*Photo by Kellie Brown.*



Jamie Hefley, explains her work and process to a crowd of students and faculty at a public talk at California State Polytechnic University, Humboldt.

*Photo by Pedro Peloso.*



Illustrator intern, Jamie Hefley, explains her work and process to a crowd of students and faculty at a public talk at California State Polytechnic University, Humboldt.

*Photo by Pedro Peloso.*





The Documenting Threatened Species (DoTS) Project is a bold initiative to study, document, and protect threatened species of amphibians in Brazil. The Rio Pomba Casque Headed Frog (*Nyctimantis pomba*), a Critically Endangered species from Minas Gerais, Brazil, is one of many rare species photographed the DoTS team.

*Photo by Pedro Peloso.*



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