

DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENT PRESS RELEASE

The Montserrat Department of Environment publishes a brochure highlighting the critically endangered Mountain Chicken (*Leptodactylus fallax*).

The Mountain Chicken Project, funded by the UK Darwin Initiative and executed by the Montserrat Department of Environment and Durrell Wildlife Conservation Trust, has published a brochure aimed at raising awareness of the critically endangered Mountain Chicken on Montserrat.

The Mountain Chicken is a critically endangered terrestrial frog existing in small populations found only on Dominica and Montserrat. Current threats include habitat loss, predation by invasive species and the recent attack of the chytrid fungus (*Batrachochytrium dendrobatidis*).

The 7-panel brochure folds out to an 11 by 17 inch poster that briefly describes the frog's habitat and its preferred dietary habits and includes a picture of a healthy Mountain Chicken, showing its moist textured skin, colour and distinctive markings on its hind legs. The brochure also explains how frogs benefit mankind through insect control, and the benefits of frogs to scientific research.

A set of pictorial inlays and text briefly describe the devastating impact the chytrid fungus is having on the species and the signs and symptoms of the fungus including the dry, red appearance of the skin, ulcers on the toes and the discolouration of the eyes.

The brochure also mentions the scientific research taking place on Montserrat and how this research will contribute to the management of the frog on Montserrat and Dominica.

Brochures will be distributed to schools, government institutions and NGOs and displayed in frequently visited public areas. Electronic copies will also be available online at www.gov.ms and www.mountainchicken.org.

The Department of Environment would like to thank the public for its support of the Mountain Chicken Project to date. For more information or to report an encounter with the frog (whether by sight or sound) you may contact the Department at telephone number 491 9278.

Gerard A L Gray
DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENT

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