**Amphibian Bloat Supplemental 2/6/2023**

*For Extreme Situations*

Although extremely risky, at times we have needed to aspirate fluids or gas from bloated tadpoles and frogs to prevent imminent death. Severely bloated tadpoles that can no longer swim below the surface of the water to feed and frogs with a severely swollen abdomen preventing them from being able to feed are both candidates for this procedure.

**Caution**: Puncturing of a bloated tadpole or frog is a risky procedure and should only be done as a last resort if veterinary care is unavailable. When puncturing a bloated tadpole or frog, it is possible they may completely rupture, causing irreparable damage. If the needle is plunged too deeply, damage to internal organs can occur. If not treated with prescribed antibiotics, or at least methylene blue or silver gel, after this procedure is performed, the site of the puncture can become infected.

**For tadpoles** we will wear gloves and place the tadpole belly-up on a wet paper towel and work quickly, so the tadpole does not suffocate during the procedure. It helps to have a second person to gently pour some water with a 3ppm solution of methylene blue over the tadpole during this time. We normally take the syringe and 32G needle (assembled, with the cap of the needle off) and gently push it into the bloated area just until the needle is under the surface of the skin. Then, the plunger of the syringe is gently and slowly pulled back until most of the air or fluid is removed, pulling the needle out before it gets close to the internal organs. Not all of the air needs to be removed, just enough so the tadpole can swim down to the bottom of the container to eat. The tadpole is then placed back into the water and dosed with enough methylene blue to tint the water, similarly to the color of butterfly pea tea. The regular treatment for bloat is then followed.

**For frogs, this procedure is almost never needed unless the frog cannot feed.** If needed, the frog is immobilized via holding its back legs, then turning onto its back on a moist paper towel. We have to be extremely careful not to exert too much pressure or it can break the fragile legs of the frog. The needle is inserted just below the skin and about 2-3 of the air or fluid is aspirated, after which the needle is removed, and the frog is treated for bloat using the normal procedures. The puncture wound is treated with silver gel for 3-4 days until healed.