

Meeting Minutes

Recorded by Ginger Elliott – African Lion Safari

Date of meeting: October 7th, 2022

Who attended the meeting? What CAZA institute are they from?

1. Amy Chabot - African Lion Safari
 - a. Ginger Elliott
2. Jeff Mitchell - Saskatoon Forestry Farm Park & Zoo
3. Donnell Gasbarrini - Toronto Zoo
4. Angie - Science North
5. Adam Grottoli - Assiniboine Conservancy
6. Menita Prasad & Jonah Miller - Greater Vancouver Zoo
7. Vicky Carriere - Parc Omega
8. Catherine Shier - Edmonton Valley Zoo

Contact information for main speakers:

- Donnell Gasbarrini, Toronto Zoo Adopt-A-Pond Coordinator, dgasbarrini@torontozoo.ca
- Amy Chabot, Director of Conservation Research, African Lion Safari, achabot@lionsafari.com

Reminders:

- Please sign-up for a meeting to present your facility's conservation efforts:
<https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/12E9HRlxI7DUTC-pKjs5duTOd122nTCX6/edit?usp=sharing&oid=109353037694980929168&rtpof=true&sd=true>
- The 2022 CAZA Conference will be hosted by BC Wildlife Park in Kamloops, October 18 - 20, 2022 registration is now open.

Meeting resources:

Poll Results: https://docs.google.com/document/d/1U0YzfF2EKNfEV4S-dF_ucqclul12xUI/edit?usp=sharing&oid=109353037694980929168&rtpof=true&sd=true

Contents of Mural:

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1NU3s6hp4XZoxNBNwqZ7F00oLSnYslc06/edit?usp=sharing&oid=109353037694980929168&rtpof=true&sd=true>

Mural:

<https://app.mural.co/invitation/team/cazaconservationcommittee2814?code=b31aa6c4f44d4769897bc5d4843eba43&sender=u2149a504ee63abba917c1814>

Recording:

https://drive.google.com/file/d/18ySuNpdyElaD1b6TG7iPgv9Tg40J_2I4/view?usp=sharing

Meeting summary:

2:00pm Meeting called. Brief hellos.

2:05pm Donnell Gasbarrini, Toronto Zoo Adopt-A-Pond Coordinator, Community Initiatives

Hello, I'm Donnell from TZ. I work coordinating the Adopt-A-Pond program where we run a variety of community or citizen science. We have a few on-going long-running and newer projects. I may be going fast through all this but please I would love to discuss this further and please reach out to talk after this meeting in any capacity.

I shall talk specifically about Frog Watch and Turtle Tally

Frog Watch is focused on amphibious but focally frogs and toads. Part of a national effort to survey amphibians. There is a frogwatch for every province in North America and we coordinate and share our data accordingly.

We collaborated in 1999 where information used to be handed to us on physical information sheets. As of 2018 we have been using an app. Most info comes from a data or sound clip.

We can see a plethora of data has been collected via the app or browser admission page. We can see from our data that certain species are repeatedly documented and others that are not, partially due to life histories but also conservation status. We get a lot of American Toads, Leopard Frogs, Green frogs, Spring Peepers, however we do always have some that come in as unknown.

When data comes in we try to verify every submission but we can't with certainty always identify submissions which are labeled as unknowns, data to support these include: videos, pictures, sound clips and written logs. In the ballpark of 500 frog and toad observations each year.

Throughout the province we are having a pretty good scope of Ontario from where people are living as opposed to just in our direct vicinity.

For Turtle Tally the concept is similar, but this initiative is different in that it was born out of Adopt a pond in 2003. You can use the same apps and browsers as frogwatch, the difference is in the program name defining taxa. Really great photos, really fun to go through but time consuming. But one of the things we try to ensure is that communication with the individuals submitting data is employed

We generally get more turtle observations (over 1000) than frog observations. We do have some expected trends, so we don't see cryptic as much. Notably we have included Red-Eared Sliders as there is a large invasive population in southern Ontario and determined they needed their own category. These submissions are reviewed in the same way and it does result in some unknowns. Similarly to Frog Watch where the observations are coming from disperses through Ontario.

Our app has been crafted for community engagement to try and aid and encourage participation. On all our submissions we have a release for photo use. Each user on each photo may choose to release the image or not. The app further contains identification guides including names represented in english, scientifically, mohawk and ojibway, we felt it was important to

incorporate these in our most recent iteration. For frogs and toads there is a sound library for identification. The app records individual data on their account so they can look back at their personnel observations. As I mentioned before we can verify information with individuals who submit data. We also try to show our support by having appreciation events for those who contribute to the project and keeping up communication that time and efforts are valued.

We often see a trickle effect, people are interested, they report turtles, then they support crossing signs.

A lot of the info on the app is great but we also have physical materials for offer. All around it has been a fabulous community initiative.

There has been amazing success but also some trials:

- + We get way more data then we could on our own
- + Repeated engagement
- + Control and security of data
- With that data we must take the time too verify and quality control the data
- Funding, a struggle to maintain year after year
- Tech maintenance, most of our team are biologists (external app team)

+/- Accessibility, some people have good wifi access others don't, some have phones etc.

+/- Redundancy, iNaturalist, eBird, moving forward time to seriously consider

All just to say, with doing this on our own platforms there are amazing benefits and other restrictive resources and elements that we have had to work through. So please reach out if you would like to discover more or talk about this. Thank you for having me speak today.

Adam: What has your engagement with Ontario Nature been as they also have an app that correlates with iNaturalist.

Donnell: Yes, the projects have run slightly side by side, when they moved to coordinate their data with an inaturalist their exponential database was aided but also the challenge with the app grew. So keeping separate

Amy: Despite that I see value despite redundancy, do you think there's a special niche with the program that iNat doesn't fill?

Donnell: A niche in terms of data but also in the engagement portion. As far as we know from community science the ability to keep the community involved . We are trying to identify is ther something more we can be teasing out? We have to balance whether you can take too much or ask for too much.

Ginger: Two questions, one have you seen any axanthic frogs in the data? Second, I would think the program has benefits when it comes to recognizing uncharismatic fauna!

Donnell: A lot of people have a turtle story from somewhere in their life, so once you can point out key features differences, people jump on board. The info in the hands of those in the environment. At our appreciation day it's almost conference style and we invite people to

discuss with volunteers the conservation situation which further educators and inspires the community. The change will come when people from all skill sets and all walks of life participate.

Amy: Fantastic, thank-you so much Donnell. I definitely have further thoughts so I will reach out, but we shall let you go and switch gears.

2:36pm Amy Chabot, Results of last meetings poll

So I have cast on the screens the results of last meeting's anonymous poll. We had good responses as the poll was open for a week. For the conference it appears approx. half of us will be there.

There seems to be a lot of existing focus on Canadian species, which goes back several years ago to a previous CAZA meeting, so what are we focusing on and how can we collaborate. As results suggest we are all interested in collaborating on species we have ex situ in our current collections.

Based on the poll there is overwhelming support to move forward with developing TAGs for Canadian species in Canada. SO please review the provided information in resources (above) we will move forward at the conference October 20th.

Please note, even if you can't be at CAZA on the 20th in person, Ginger Elliott will be there to ensure virtual voices are heard.

ADJOURNMENT: 3:00pm

Next Meeting Date: Thursday, October 20th 2022 at Kamloops conference, times TBD

***We will have a virtual component for members unable to travel at this time!**