

A FEW WORDS FROM THE PRESIDENT

President's Message

Trisha Crowe, Project Manager, Houston Zoo



Happy 2022, all! Here we are starting off another year with Covid still in the headlines. It is no consolation to those who have lost friends or family members, or have been effected by the stress this pandemic has caused, but I am hoping that there might finally be a light at the

end of the tunnel as people continue to get vaccinated and Omicron builds "herd immunity".

We all continue to be challenged by this "new normal" long after we hoped we could get back to some semblance of the way things were. Staffing shortages have hit all sectors, and our facilities are no exception. The fatigue that we are all experiencing is real, and it is okay to feel this way. Being patient and empathetic with one another right now is as important as it has ever been.

The Board, our sponsors, and our presenters valiantly led us through 2021 with our great virtual conference sessions and a fantastic virtual silent auction. As we move into 2022, I have spent a good bit of time

thinking about how the Board can continue to improve AZFA for all of us. The conclusion I came to is that it might be best to just ask you all.

- What is most relevant right now in your day-to-day work?
- What information do you wish you had?
- How can AZFA support you in your efforts?
- What content would you like to see in future issues of the Outlet?

Please email or call me with any thoughts you have: tcrowe@houstonzoo.org / 412-716-5736.

We also ask for your help in continuing to promote and grow our organization by encouraging new members to join us. If you are already a member, please consider serving on a committee. It is a great way to meet cool people who have experience in the field. And we just might have a little bit of fun while we work together!

We are very excited to start preparing for a return to an in-person conference this year October 9th - 13th in Denver, CO. Being able to spend time face-to-face with vendors, sponsors, and colleagues is something that we perhaps took a little bit for granted before the

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pandemic, so we are really hoping to see you in person this year. Start thinking about it now and mark it on your calendars!

I know that here at the Houston Zoo we are busier than ever, with maintenance and capital projects buzzing into the New Year, which also happens to be our Centennial year. You may hear more about the Houston Zoo this year than you would care to, but we are very

proud of our Zoo and are proud to be connected with you all through AZFA. If you are in the area, give me a shout. I would be happy to show you around the campus.

I imagine it is just as busy a time for all of you, but I hope that you got a little bit of "R&R" over the holidays. Remember to take care of yourselves and each other!

JOHN BALL ZOO

John Ball Zoo First Zoo in World to Receive SITES Gold Certification for Sustainability

John Ball Zoo's meerkat habitat was awarded SITES Gold certification under the Sustainable Sites Initiative (SITES) rating system. SITES is the most comprehensive program recognizing sustainable landscapes for their exceptional planning, design, construction, and maintenance.

SITES certification is given to landscapes, site infrastructure, and spaces that demonstrate a high level of environmental and social sustainability. SITES Gold certification for the meerkat habitat makes John Ball Zoo the first zoo in the world to receive this recognition.

Administered by Green Business Certification Inc., SITES offers a comprehensive rating system designed to distinguish sustainable landscapes, measure their performance and elevate their value. SITES certification is for development projects located on sites with or without buildings; ranging from national parks to corporate campuses, streetscapes to homes, and more.

The Sustainable SITES Initiative is a rating system similar to LEED. SITES projects use fewer resources by using materials with recycled content, durable and reclaimed materials, and the use of regionally sourced supplies and materials.

By building a meerkat habitat to SITES certification, John Ball Zoo is reducing water demand, filtering and reducing storm water runoff, providing wildlife habitat, reducing energy consumption, improving air quality, improving human health, and increasing outdoor recreation opportunities.

While the exhibit creates an amazing view of meerkats and their exhibit partner, the African cape porcupine, it is the many features guests do not see that makes the exhibit unique. One, is the on-demand manual irrigation system that uses 100% native plantings. Some of which were grown from locally harvested seeds from Plaster Creek Stewards. The space uses rain gardens and leaching basins for storm water, and has a living green roof and solar panels on the exhibit canopy to offset outdoor lighting needs. During construction, recycled materials were used whenever possible, and CO2 emissions were eliminated through the use of an Energy Recovery Ventilation unit. This innovative habitat also integrates play for



children to mimic meerkats behavior, along with a pathway that is accessible.

Sustainable landscapes appreciate in value over time, rather than depreciate. John Ball Zoo's SITES gold-certified meerkat habitat will continue to have plants grow, soils improve, habitats develop, and in



turn, people are nurtured by this environment. These benefits we receive from healthy ecosystems are essential to the health and well-being of all life on this planet.

About SITES

SITES is a sustainability-focused framework that ushers landscape architects, engineers and others toward practices that protect ecosystems and enhance the mosaic of benefits they continuously provide our communities, such as climate regulation, carbon storage, and flood mitigation. SITES certification is based on a point system: the number of points that a project earns determines the certification level it receives. SITES is the most comprehensive system for creating sustainable and resilient land development projects.

www.sustainablesites.org

AZFA 2022 ANNUAL CONFERENCE CALL FOR PRESENTATIONS

AZFA 2022 Annual Conference Call for Presentations

The AZFA Program & Education Committee is seeking presenters for this year's in-person conference hosted by the Denver Zoo October 9th - 13th in Denver, Colorado.

We have had wonderful presenters step up to fill the void during our virtual conference sessions throughout the pandemic, and now we get to experience them live with the face-to-face interaction we have all missed. Please get in touch with sam.peterson@sazoo.org if you are interested in conducting a presentation or workshop, or if you have a particular topic to request. Conference tracks could include sustainability, professional development, safety and emergency response, house-keeping, exhibit design and project management, accreditation, life support systems, DEAI, and more. For examples of previous conference programs and sessions, please visit the conference page on the website.

The annual conference would not be possible without the participation and collaboration of the AZFA membership. Due to the difficulties of the pandemic, budgets and staffing constraints make that more challenging than ever this year but leading a presentation may help sway facilities to approve the funds or time off for members to attend. We appreciate everyone who volunteers their time and expertise to keep the program improving year after year. See you in Denver!



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Clark Waldram Conservation Fund

Patrick Paré, M.Sc. biologist Director, Conservation and Research Zoo de Granby

Migration monitoring of the Chimney swift: from Canada to Latin America

The Chimney swift is increasingly threatened throughout its range in North America (breeding grounds) and Latin America (wintering grounds). The lack of information regarding the species' migratory routes and wintering areas is a major limiting factor for the implementation of effective conservation strategies. The goal of this project is to track Chimney swifts during their migration to their wintering sites, using automated radio-telemetry via the Motus system <https://motus.org>.

As part of a project looking at the use of natural habitat during breeding season and migration monitoring, we are catching Chimney swifts in Quebec, Canada, and equipping them with nanotags (radio-tags). The aim of the present project was to add a new Motus tower to fill gaps in the network and be able to better track swifts' movements. This tower could be moved according to specific needs, in Quebec or in Latin America (Ecuador). The Motus network in Latin America, where the Chimney swift and other threatened bird species spend their non-breeding season, is still quite scarce. The project also aims at bringing together other organizations, such as the Chimney Swift Conservation Association (Texas, USA) and Reserva Las Galarias (Ecuador).

Conservation goals

- The Chimney swift is a bird species considered threatened in Canada (COSEWIC, 2018) and vulnerable worldwide (IUCN Red List of Threatened Species).
- The lack of information about migration and wintering areas (in Latin America) is limiting the species recovery.
- Tracking individuals across North and Latin America, using radio-telemetry, can help better understand their migratory routes, stopover sites and wintering areas.
- A better understanding of Chimney swifts' movements and important areas will help implementing more effective conservation strategies.
- As an international collaborative network using coordinated automated radio-telemetry, the Motus Wildlife Tracking System is supporting a wide array of conservation projects on different species in diverse countries.

The Zoo de Granby was awarded a funding of \$1,500 USD from AZFA, which covered partly the purchase of a Sensorgnome with 4 FUNcubes (CAD \$2,500; approximately \$2,100 USD) (Figure 1). This system allows to

collect detection data of 4 antennas (3 directional and 1 omnidirectional). The rest of the material necessary to complete the Motus tower was also purchased by the Zoo (total of ~CAD \$5,000): tripod, four antennas and associated cables, battery, solar panel, etc. Thus, we now have a completely functional Motus tower.

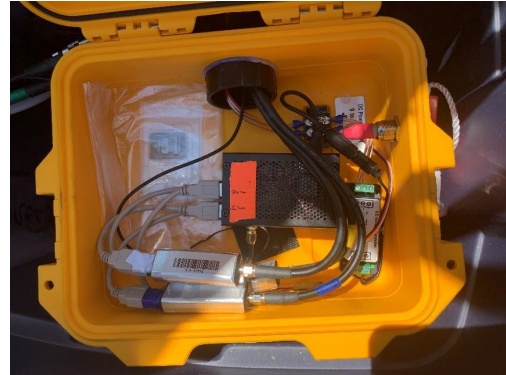


Figure 1. Sensorgnome installed with the Motus tower.

The Motus tower was first installed at Fort Lennox National Historic Site (Figure 2), located on the Richelieu River in Quebec, Canada (Figure 3). Motus data for Chimney swifts and other bird species indicate that this river could be an interesting migratory corridor.

The tower was first installed at Fort Lennox in the summer 2020, but troubles with the system prevented data collection. The tower was put back into operation in summer 2021 and is working well so far. Data was collected in the fall 2021, following migration period.



Figure 2. Motus tower installed in Fort Lennox (Quebec, Canada).

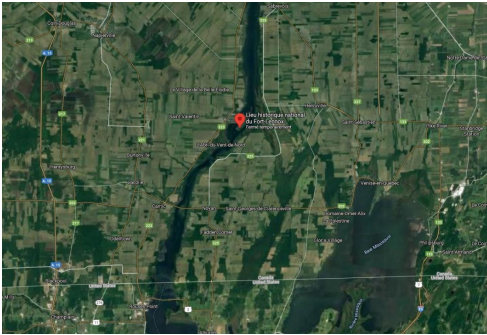


Figure 3. Localization of the Fort Lennox tower, on the Richelieu River.

A collaboration was initiated with Reserva Las Galarias, in Ecuador, regarding the future installation of a Motus tower in this protected area. Contact was also established with SELVA – Research for Conservation in the Neotropics, a not-for-profit non-governmental organization from Colombia. Members of SELVA, who have experience with the Motus

system, agreed to support Reserva Las Galarias for the installation and maintenance of a tower and to offer technical support in Spanish. Even if Covid-19 slowed down the process, everything seems to line up for a possible installation in 2022, with the planned sending of a Sensorgnome from Granby to Ecuador. Funding (\$1,770 USD) was also sent to Reserva Las Galarias for the purchase of the rest of the equipment (mast, antennas, solar panel, etc.).



NEW MEMBERS

New Members

Associate

Chris Boshart, Project Manager, GLMV Achitecture
Niomy Nolberto, Zoo Volunteer, Zoo New England

Commercial

Kent Kalar, Animal Weighing Manager, Emery Winslow Scale Company
Justin Loyd, Project Manager, Colorado Hardscapes

Professional

Alexander Adler, Senior Architect, Adler Associates, LLC
Eric Bemont, Facilities Director, Mystic Aquarium
Michael Fanelli, Project Manager, San Diego Zoo Wildlife Alliance
Connie Kautza, Administrative Assistant – Maintenance, San Antonio Zoo
Danielle O’Shinski, Facilities Maintenance I, John Ball Zoo
Kasie Regnier, Director of Applied Water Science, Monterey Bay Aquarium

CALENDAR

Deadline for articles for the next newsletter: April 25th

2022 Annual Conference: Denver Zoo, October 9th – 13th in Denver, Colorado

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