

2022 NACCB Interactive Session Report
Conservation Literacy as Interwoven Literacies: a sharing and learning session

Organizers:

- Dr. Martha Groom, University of Washington Bothell, School of Interdisciplinary Arts and Sciences, Conservation and Environmental Studies, groom@uw.edu, 425-352-5410
- Dr. Ana Porzecanski, Center for Biodiversity and Conservation, American Museum of Natural History, alporze@amnh.org; 212-313-7052
- Dr. Jessica Pratt; University of California, Irvine; Masters in Conservation and Restoration Science; Ecology and Evolutionary Biology; jdpratt@uci.edu; 949-872-5072
- Dr. Suzanne Macey, Center for Biodiversity and Conservation, American Museum of Natural History, alporze@amnh.org; 212-769-5742

Abstract: We live in an increasingly complex world in which communication and collaboration across disciplinary boundaries and between communities of learning and practice are essential to addressing the myriad conservation challenges facing society. Both undergraduate and graduate education could better prepare students to meet rapidly changing environmental and social conditions through a more pluralistic, multidisciplinary approach to cultivating conservation literacies.

Number of Attendees: 20

Activities: The session consisted of two rounds of short talks from differing perspectives addressing two core questions: What does it mean to be a well-educated conservation professional/practitioner? What areas of knowledge, approaches, and/or principles should be fostered in conservation education? Each round was followed by discussion among speakers and attendees to further explore themes brought out in the talk or of great interest to the attendees.

Speakers in the first round of talks included Martha Groom, Pua'ala Pascua, Cleo Wölfle Hazard, and Lee Ann Woolery, focusing on integration of social justice pedagogies, fluencies and communication across multiple knowledges, queer ecologies and reflexive approaches, and artistic engagements. Discussion focused on how rare these ideas are in conservation education today, with particular interest on the importance of providing a critical historical background to different issues, and cultivating communication and facilitation/mediation skills among future conservation professionals. There were many specific ideas for areas of emphasis that should be included in conservation education, with great emphasis on skills for working to enact changes in specific locations, and therefore more understanding of how to work with multiple communities.

The second round highlighted principles from the Social Science Working Group of SCB, and talks by Liliana Dávalos, Citlalli López Binnquist, and Jessica Pratt, focused on the need to explore ethical dimensions and adopt ethical humility in conservation practice, to work in deep collaboration with broad publics, and to address the significant affective load of living in an age of biodiversity loss and climate change injustices. The discussions focused again on specific aspects of conservation literacy that could be engaged, as well as on how to achieve this plurality in conservation education. Many were focused on broad educational goals – for all, not only **undergraduate** or graduate students.

Ultimately the discussions were very rich and offered many ideas for future development. All participants are invited to participate in an online, follow up workshop hosted by the Network of Environmental Educators and Practitioners (NCEP) on Oct 19 & 26th from 12-2pm EST. The workshop is intended to continue the conversations, and begin to focus on developing materials to share across educators to support many of the key pedagogical innovations represented in the session. Session attendees were also encouraged to submit their materials and perspectives to *Lessons in Conservation*.

Slides with session notes and a recording of the session are available [here](#).