

ZSL SCIENCE AND CONSERVATION EVENT

**Citizen Science and conservation: what does it add,
who is taking part and who are we failing to reach?**



**Tuesday 9 February 2021
6:00pm – 7:30pm UK Time (BST)**

Online event livestreamed to [zsl.org/IOZYouTube](https://www.zsl.org/IOZYouTube)

[Direct link: <https://youtu.be/eKsAB6MTUME>]

There is no charge for this event, and no need to register in advance

AGENDA

Joe Pecorelli, Zoological Society of London

Citizen Science at ZSL

Kate Risely, formerly of British Trust for Ornithology

Impacts of Citizen Science on Policies, People and Wildlife: why do people take part in Citizen Science projects and how are the results used?

Dr Hannah Joyce, The River Restoration Centre

Measuring the Impacts of Citizen Science: Outfall Safari Case Study

Dr Sarah West, Stockholm Environment Institute, University of York

Sectors of society currently under-represented in UK environmental citizen science, and what can be done to address this

ABSTRACTS

Citizen science at ZSL

Joe Pecorelli, Zoological Society of London

It is widely recognised that transformative change is required to meet the environmental challenges facing humanity. As we approach our 200th anniversary in 2026, ZSL is embarking on a new strategy for tackling the global challenges facing conservation. Central to our mission will be developing new ways of designing and delivering responses to the major drivers of biodiversity loss. In the UK we want to build on our existing programme of work that puts citizen scientists and the communities they are part of at the centre of the generation, delivery and use of knowledge of the natural world so that they too can address major threats to natural systems and drive forward recovery with us. Using examples from London this talk will illustrate how ZSL citizen scientists contribute to projects that lead to positive environmental impact and how, if nurtured for the long term, citizen science can become the glue that binds stakeholders around conservation issues, builds social capital and provides a meaningful and empowering way of connecting people to nature.

Never too far from a pair of waders, **Joe Pecorelli** is a ZSL Conservation Project Manager. He is an advocate for wildlife conservation that engages and benefits from the skills, energy and knowledge of citizen scientists. He's a board member of the Riverfly Partnership, professional eel measurer and developer of the Outfall Safari, a method for finding and reporting sources of pollution in Urban rivers. He is a Trustee of the Friends of River Crane Environment, a charity dedicated to protecting the environment of his local river in West London.

Impacts of Citizen Science on Policies, People and Wildlife: why do people take part in Citizen Science projects and how are the results used?

Kate Risely, formerly of British Trust for Ornithology

Our British wildlife has been watched, monitored and recorded for hundreds of years; once primarily by amateur naturalists, but now driven by national recording projects, often run by NGOs or government. Smaller, more targeted projects often have a clear focus and easily observed impacts, but it's not always clear how records collected under large-scale, long term projects actually make a difference to wildlife. Are we just documenting what we are losing, or does this information ever help us to save threatened species? If not, is there a value to it at all?

This talk will give an overview of some of the wide range of 'conservation monitoring' citizen science projects in the UK, as well as what motivates people to take part in these projects. It will also cover a few of the ways in which these kinds of monitoring records are used to inform national scale policies, and what impact the resulting policies have for our wildlife on the ground, whether directly or indirectly. Also included will be some of the less obvious ways that data collected by volunteers can have an impact, either by influencing scientific research and public opinion, or by prompting people to take direct individual actions to conserve wildlife.

Kate spent 16 years working for the British Trust for Ornithology running large-scale citizen science projects, first the Breeding Bird Survey, which charts national bird population trends, then BTO Garden BirdWatch, which now receives weekly garden bird records from over 20,000 participants. She keeps a record of her garden birds, was a bird ringer for many years, records the moths she traps in her garden and has even carried out underwater wildlife surveys - and believes it's important that records collected by volunteers should be used to make a difference for wildlife.

Measuring the Impacts of Citizen Science: Outfall Safari Case Study

Dr Hannah Joyce, The River Restoration Centre

Citizen science can have positive impacts, such as tackling environmental problems, contributing to scientific discoveries, informing policy and benefitting society. Better understanding of these impacts can help make citizen science more effective and spread the use of citizen science. However, currently, policy makers and scientists do not have enough evidence or the tools to measure how citizen science informs policy, contributes to scientific discoveries or benefits society. The Measuring Impacts of Citizen Science (MICS, www.mics.tools) project aims to develop the tools and metrics to evaluate how citizen science impacts our society, the environment, economy, governance and science. The MICS tools and metrics are being tested on case study sites in the UK, Romania, Hungary and Italy.

In the UK, the impacts of Outfall Safari citizen science activities are being measured. Outfall Safari is an innovative citizen science method for locating, assessing the impact of, and reporting on polluting surface water outfalls. Outfall Safari citizen science activities contribute to: science, by collecting data to fill evidence gaps; the environment by assessing and identifying outfall condition, and society by engaging and teaching people about polluting outfalls. Impact assessment workshops have been held with Outfall Safari Citizen Scientists and project managers to identify the short term outcomes and how these lead to longer term impacts. This allows a deeper understanding of the impact pathways and indicators for measuring impact.

Hannah is a fluvial geomorphologist interested in the dynamic interactions between flow, channel morphology and sediment transport to support process-based river management and restoration. Hannah works at the River Restoration Centre based at Cranfield University providing technical advice and guidance to support the creation of naturally functioning river systems valued by people. Recently, Hannah has been researching the role of citizen science within river restoration projects and how we can measure the impacts of citizen science. Hannah completed her PhD at Durham University, which investigated the patterns and controls of upland river planform adjustments over the last 150 years on 270 rivers in the Lake District, UK.

Sectors of society currently under-represented in UK environmental citizen science, and what can be done to address this

Dr Sarah West, Stockholm Environment Institute (SEI), University of York

I'm going to talk about who participates and who is under-represented in environmental citizen science in the UK, drawing on work myself and SEI colleagues have been doing over the past 6 years. I'm then going to talk about some of the factors that influence people to volunteer, including what motivates people to participate. I show that different demographic groups can have different motivations for volunteering, and discuss the importance of appealing to different motivations for recruitment and retention. I discuss how those involved with designing or running projects can overcome barriers against participation.

Sarah West is Director of SEI York, a Centre of the Stockholm Environment Institute, a science-to-policy research institute. She has been bringing diverse voices into science and decision-making for around 12 years, mainly using citizen science approaches. She has used citizen science to address topics as diverse as air pollution, biodiversity, parenting, and exploring community responses to Covid-19. She worked for many years on the OPAL project, and together with other SEI colleagues has written reports for Defra, UKEOF and journal articles exploring who participates in citizen science, their motivations for participation, and how volunteers can be recruited and retained.

Format of Live Events

- This interactive online event will be livestreamed to our YouTube channel here: zsl.org/IOZYouTube. A direct link to the livestream will also be shared on the event web page before the event.
- Before attending this event, please read our Code of Conduct found [here](#).
- This event will run from 6:00pm – 7:30pm, and will be recorded and available to watch afterwards on our YouTube channel.
- Each event will comprise of 3 – 4 presentations from experts in the topic, similar to our previous events.
- There will be opportunities for the audience to submit questions during the event (this process will be explained on the night), to be answered live after each presentation. If you wish to submit a question to a speaker prior to the event, please send it to scientific.events@zsl.org. Please be aware we may not be able to answer all questions.
- There is no charge for this event, and no need to register in advance.

Join us at our next online event

Return to the wild: How can we recover Extinct in the Wild species?

9 March 2021, 6:00pm – 7:30pm

Species facing imminent extirpation from the wild are sometimes able to be rescued into zoos, aquariums, or botanical gardens before extinction. But what happens next for these species? Can they be restored back to the wild? Are there any lessons we can learn from the fates of different extinct in the wild species and what is next for the 80 species currently listed as extinct in the wild? In this event, we will explore the successes and challenges around recovery efforts for different extinct in the wild species.



ZSL Wild Science Podcast

Listen to our award winning **ZSL Wild Science podcast** episodes produced by Dr Monni Böhm and Eleanor Darbey here: www.zsl.org/zsl-wild-science-podcast.

Further Information

- Please contact the Scientific Events Coordinator, Eleanor Darbey (eleanor.darbey@zsl.org), if you have any queries about our Science and Conservation events or podcasts.
- For press enquiries, please contact the ZSL Press Office: press.office@zsl.org.
- For more information about the ZSL Fellowship, please visit: www.zsl.org/membership/zsl-fellowship.
- To receive email updates about forthcoming ZSL Science and Conservation Events, please visit: www.zsl.org/science/whats-on/science-and-conservation-events-email-updates
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