Education Center Interpretive Goals

- Connect with partners/others re: getting out in nature
- Make environmentally responsible choices, take actions
- Understand *Small things matter*, aggregate to big impact
- Understand nature is nearby in urban settings
- Make backyards, gardens more wildlife friendly
- Connection to, appreciation for small animals
- Aware of, support conservation efforts of OZ, partners
Core Themes

Small things matter: small animals, small habitats and small actions.
Nature is closer than you think.
My actions are my legacy.
We accomplish more when we work together.
Key Questions

Who is visiting the Education Center?
How do visitors use space?
Barriers to visiting?
What do visitors value there?
What are visitors learning?
Which conservation actions will visitors take?
Summative Evaluation Methods

- Timing-and-tracking study
- Online visitor intercept study
- Family Interviews
- Nature Play interviews
- Barriers to visiting survey
- Reviewed/exempted by IRB
51 visitors tracked: 67% female

Average time in Education Center (including NESt, Insect Zoo, Garden): 11 minutes

Comparison:

• Elephant Lands: ≈8 minutes
• Condors: 4 minutes
Of 51 tracked, 65% spent time in the NESt Central area, including butterflies and white oak tree.
## Most Engaging: Central Area

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Connect to Nature overall, especially Blazing a Trail</th>
<th>Heroes for Wildlife overall, especially Orangutan Protector</th>
<th>Saving Small Animals overall</th>
<th>Borer beetle interactive</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pledge screen</td>
<td>Heroes for Wildlife: overall</td>
<td>Orangutan protector</td>
<td>Blazing a trail</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># Observed &gt; 20 sec.</td>
<td></td>
<td>7 View/Read: <strong>Average: 42 sec.</strong></td>
<td>4 Read: <strong>Average: 22 sec.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4 View/Read: <strong>Average: 32 sec.</strong></td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>10</td>
<td>7 View/Read: <strong>Average: 22 sec.</strong></td>
<td>7 Look: <strong>Average: 13 sec.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>13</td>
<td>4 Read: <strong>Average: 25 sec.</strong></td>
<td>4 Engage: <strong>Average: 14 sec.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2 Children: <strong>Average: 28 sec.</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
61% spent time at the Species Conservation Lab, OZ conservation exhibits

Young salmon, baby turtles were most engaging
Most Engaging: Species Conservation Lab

Species Conservation Lab overall, especially lab window with salmon, turtles

Tilt table frog interactive

Saving endangered turtles

Salmon connect us all

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sign, interactive</th>
<th># Observed</th>
<th>Observed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Species Cons. Lab: overall</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>1 View/Read: 1 min., 8 sec./15 sec.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>5 Watch: Average: 32 sec.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>6 Speak: Average: 38 sec.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>11 Children: Av.: 1 min., 40 sec.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lab window</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>6 Watch: Average: 34 sec.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>6 Speak: Average: 38 sec.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>10 Children: Average: 40 sec.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salmon connect us</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2 View/Read: Average: 20 sec.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2 Children: Average: 40 sec.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saving end. turtles</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3 View/Read: Average: 41 sec.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tilt table frog int.</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>5 Observe: Average: 26 sec.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3 Children: Average: 1 min., 2 sec.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
92% visited the Insect Zoo; average time: 6 mins.

Tracked 40-45 visitors at Tropical, Temperate, Desert

Adults read ID signs

Visitors engaged with all animals
Visitor Intercept Survey

• OZ VAST Volunteers, Rachel Fort
• 87 valid responses
• 1/3 visit Oregon Zoo > 4 times/year
• 52% zoo members
• 76% Oregon residents

“Love the interactive experience for all ages”

“The building is beautiful and there are so many activities to learn from.”
78% rated their experience as Very Good or Excellent.
# Favorite Experiences

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Experience</th>
<th>First</th>
<th>Second</th>
<th>Third</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Insect Zoo, specific insects, tarantulas</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turtles, keeper talking about them</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nature Play, play space, playground</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Puppets</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wildlife Garden, sculptures</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NESt exhibits, building, facility</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Animals, animals are visible</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salmon</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Most Valuable to Visitors: Inside NESt

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Did not see/do this</th>
<th>Not valuable to me</th>
<th>Somewhat valuable to me</th>
<th>Very valuable to me</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Seeing examples of sustainable design features in the Education Center</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>48%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning ways I can help wildlife</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Talking with representatives from the zoo’s partner organizations such as the US Fish and Wildlife Service</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Talking with zoo staff or volunteers</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>51%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indoor space for young children to play</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>53%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seeing how the zoo raises native turtles and butterflies for release to recovery sites in the wild</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>62%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seeing insects and learning how zoo staff care for them</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>62%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading stories of local people taking action to help wildlife</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>42%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finding tools to help me explore nature at local parks/natural areas</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>43%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Most Valuable to Visitors Inside

Seeing insects, learning how zoo staff care for them

Seeing how the zoo raises native turtles, butterflies for release

Indoor play space for young children

Talking with zoo staff, volunteers

Seeing examples of sustainable design features
“To inform, educate, and guide people to make simple changes that will cause big changes to animals and their habitat”

“Small animals are just as important”

“Sustainability and local... exploring”

“Showing that backyard conservation is easier than you might expect”
### Respondent Attitudes

#### Visitors Rate their Agreement or Disagreement (n = 87)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Not sure</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I believe small actions I take can have a big impact on wildlife.</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I was inspired by the displays in the Education Center to do more to help wildlife in my community.</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I found the information I need to take conservation actions at home, school or work.</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My environmental actions are my legacy.</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I learned some new ideas on how to make environmentally responsible choices.</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nature is nearby, even in urban backyards and gardens.</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>39%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Nature is nearby, even in urban backyards and gardens.
Visitors Agree or Strongly Agree

Nature is nearby, even in urban backyards, gardens: 96%

Small actions I take can have a big impact on wildlife: 96%

My environmental actions are my legacy: 84%

I found the information I need to take conservation actions: 83%
I was inspired by Education Center displays to do more to help wildlife in my community: 79%

I learned new ideas on how to make environmentally responsible choices: 79%
Impact of NESt Visit

Visitors Compare Feelings Before and After their Visit to the NESt (n = 87)

- My commitment to making sustainable choices to protect natural resources and wildlife habitat
- My interest in spending time outdoors exploring nearby nature (parks, natural areas, etc.)
- My motivation to make my backyard/garden/community more wildlife friendly
- My understanding of Oregon Zoo’s involvement in conserving native species
- My appreciation for the importance of insects and other small animals

Less now than before my visit | The same now as before | Greater now than before my visit
--- | --- | ---
63% | 0% | 0%
60% | 0% | 0%
53% | 0% | 0%
71% | 0% | 0%
66% | 0% | 0%
Greater Now than Before NESt Visit

Understanding of zoo involvement in conserving native species: 71%

Appreciation for importance of insects, other small animals: 66%

My commitment to making sustainable choices to protect natural resources, wildlife habitat: 63%
Likely/Very Likely to Take Actions

Use FSC-certified wood/paper products: 47%
Put decals on windows to prevent bird strikes: 47%
Create a rain garden with native plants: 46%
Choose reusable, recyclable, non-toxic materials when renovating: 45%
Repair broken household items: 43%
Support OZ conservation efforts by donating: 42%
Wildlife-Friendly Gardening Actions

Create a wildlife-friendly habitat by growing food plants and providing water and shelter
Keep cats indoors to protect birds and other small animals
Grow native plants that attract pollinating bees and butterflies, and birds that feed on garden pests
Manage your yard/garden naturally without use of chemical pesticides

Likelihood of Taking Wildlife-friendly Gardening Actions at Home or in Community
(n = 48)

- Very Unlikely
- Unlikely
- Not Sure
- Somewhat Likely
- Very Likely
- I do this now
Create a wildlife-friendly habitat: **46%**

Grow native plants: **39%**

Manage yard/garden naturally: **32%**

Keep cats indoors: **26%;**
17% unsure
Visitor Interviews

21 family interviews: 23 females, 11 males, 13 kids

Zoo members: 70%

1/3 first zoo visit; 1/3 visit 2-4 times/year

100% would:

• Visit the Ed. Center again
• Recommend the Ed. Center to family, friends

“It looks cool and inviting from an architect's point of view”

“Great for all stages of weather. Able to spend a lot of time in there in January when it is freezing cold.”
Influenced Intent to Take Action?

Yes: 58% Most effective:

• Seeing animals, Insect Zoo

• Rainwater recycling, solar, sustainable building materials

• Reinforced ideas: (1) multiple layers of plants for habitat; (2) plants that support insects

• Master Gardener talking about mason bees

“Yes—I liked the signs in the bathrooms about the purple handles. Also, we got our lemonade today and were told there are no straws or lids. At first, this seemed inconvenient, but then, this helps wildlife—that's good…”
Visitor intercept survey by Intern Julia Somers

65 groups interviewed; of 37 (67%) who had not visited Education Center:

- 27 males, 36 females
- 43% first zoo visit
- 84% nonmembers
Barriers to Visiting

No time today: 21%

Other: 57%:

• Did not know it was there; did not see it

• Did not know what it was
Make it Easier, More Inviting to Visit

Signs inviting guests to visit, explaining what is there: 13
Better directional signs: 9
More descriptive map info: 6
Other:
- Signs closer to entrance
Conclusions

Evaluation results confirm Education Center met goals:

1. Connect with partners:
   - Visitors rated talking with partner representatives as somewhat/very valuable: NESt: 60%; outdoors: 55%

2. Learn ways to take conservation action:
   - Visitors agreed/strongly agreed that they:
     - Found information they needed: 83%
     - Inspired to do more to help local wildlife: 79%
     - Learned environmentally responsible choices: 79%
3. Understand *Small things matter = big impact*
   - 96% agreed/strongly agreed that actions they take have big impact on wildlife

4. Nature is nearby—even in urban settings
   - 96% agreed/strongly agreed

5. Make backyards, gardens more wildlife friendly
   - Motivation greater now than before visit: 53%

6. Connection to, appreciation for small animals
   - Appreciation for insects/other small animals is greater now than before visit: 66%
Recommendations

Education Center promotion:
- Signs, sandwich boards, table tents

Expand visitor interaction with staff, volunteers, partners

Volunteers: conservation conversations

Action campaigns(?); keep cats indoors

Access ramp directional sign
Thank you!

- Kate Giraud
- Grant Spickelmier
- Jennifer Payne
- Rachel Fort
- Intern Julia Somers
- Oregon Zoo VAST volunteers