



# CREATURE CONSERVE

*Connecting Artists, Writers, and Scientists to Save Species*

## ANNUAL REPORT 2022

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# CREATURE CONSERVE

## MISSION

We bring artists, writers, and scientists together to foster informed and sustained support for animal conservation. We believe the arts informed by science have the power to direct our attention to the ongoing loss of species and what we can do about it.

## VISION

Everyone works together to make saving species and their habitats more accessible, meaningful, and relevant for all.

## PLAN

We create a safe, supportive, and vibrant space for art/sci conservation work that is accessible to all.

## STRATEGY

By strategically reconnecting the arts and science, we help others celebrate, study, and protect animals and their habitats.

## GOALS

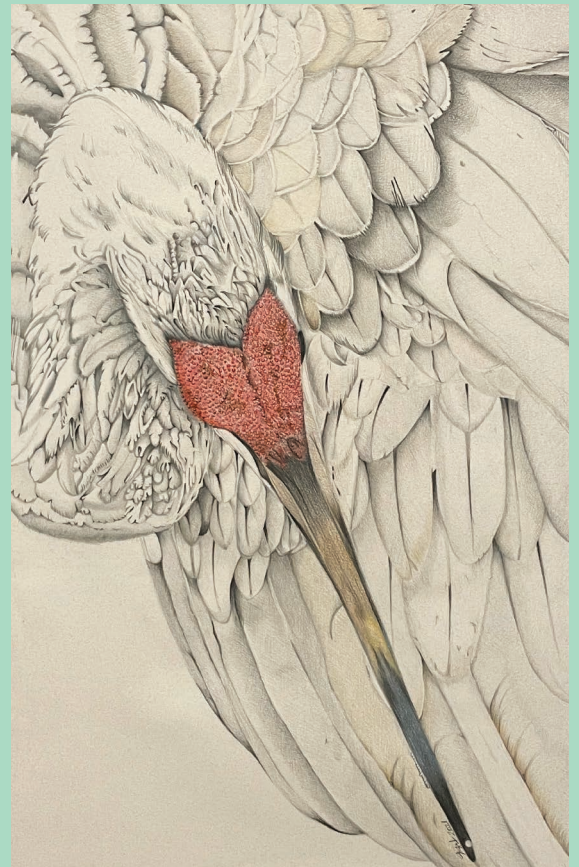
- Give artists and writers interested in science the opportunity to research and respond to the problems facing animals today.
- Give scientists working in conservation the opportunity to explore the artistic, humanistic, and emotional sides of their work.
- Inspire collaboration among artists, writers, and scientists working with animals.
- Inspire conservation action by bringing artists, writers, and scientists together to save species.
- Demonstrate conservation is something we can all do.
- Follow best practices for non-profit boards.

## OUR PROGRAMS

- Exhibits & Events
- Network Growth
- Workshops
- Mentorship
- Scholarships



Emily Poole, *Below the Surface*, 2022, watercolor.



Angel Smith, *Sandhill Crane*, colored pencil on paper.

Cover: Lucy Spelman, *Jaguar*, digital photograph (left).  
Emily Schnall, *Jaguar Corridors*, papier-mâché (right).

# ANIMALS NEED OUR HELP

Our motivation is the ongoing loss of biodiversity and the need for more public engagement in conservation. We believe the arts informed by science have the power to direct our attention to the ongoing loss of species and what we can do about it.

Animals are central to our lives. We rely on them for every aspect of our daily lives, including companionship, clothing, food, medicine, sport, and, spirituality. Their health is connected to ours. Sadly, our actions have had dire consequences: most animals will not survive our massive presence on earth unless we intervene.

Our inspiration is the evidence that conservation works when it is collaborative, community-based, cross-disciplinary, and inclusive.

But we need to do more.



# RECONNECTING ART WITH SCIENCE

Art reminds us we are all connected. It deepens our understanding of this interdependency and helps us explore how we feel about animals and our relationships with them. It makes the science relevant to conservation (such as botany, climatology, ecology, geology, GIS mapping, infectious diseases, population genetics, reproductive physiology, and zoology) more accessible, real and meaningful. Art is also far more likely to inspire a change in our behavior than a string of scientific facts.

Our focus on art/sci collaboration makes us unique among conservation outreach organizations. We hope that by advocating for informed making, we can positively spread actionable change through art. Ultimately, our goal is to make it easier for artists, writers, and scientists to explore the human connection to nature and create new pathways to a healthier world for all animals.



From "Re-Examining Conservation" at the Granoff Center for the Creative Arts, Brown University.



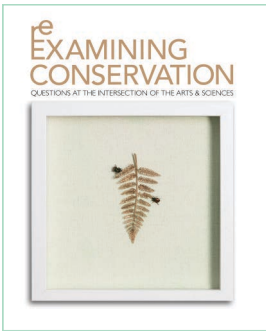
Jeanne Dodds, *Canis Lupis Coexistence Project*, digital illustration accompanied by ekphrastic text.



Deepika Nandan, *Big Banana Fight*, 2022, digital illustration accompanied by ekphrastic text.

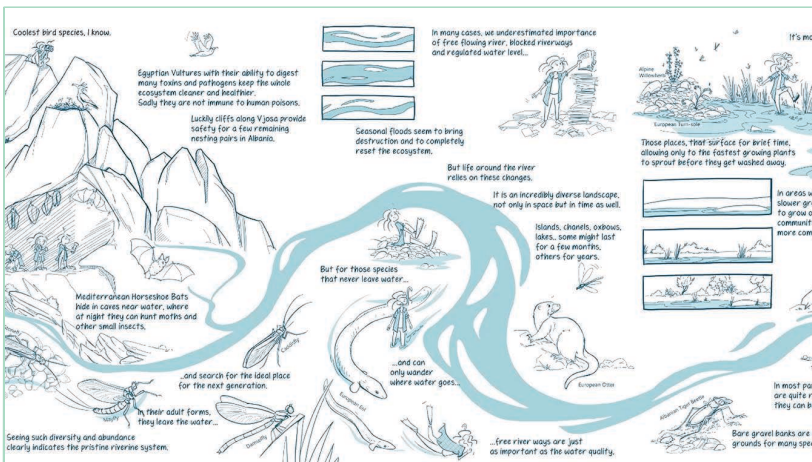
# OUR PROGRAMS

Our programs encourage a fresh approach to the extinction crisis, one that is more open and engaging, collaborative and cross-disciplinary. The artists, writers, and scientists who participate in our programs are learning from each other, creating and innovating together, and using their combined skills to improve outcomes and reach a wider audience.



## EXHIBITS & EVENTS

We host exhibits & events for artists and writers who are combining art and science to study, celebrate, and protect animals and their habitats.



Eva Kunzova, *The River*, 2021, graphic illustration.

## MENTORSHIP

We provide a support system for artists, writers, and scientists as they collaborate and explore the human connection to nature, creating new pathways to a healthier world for all creatures.



## SCHOLARSHIPS

We provide scholarship stipends for artists, writers, and scientists that support the creative process, including making art informed by science that inspires conservation action.

Labonie Roy, *Moths at Night*, 2022, graphic illustration.



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CREATURE CONSERVE

## NETWORK GROWTH

We coordinate and host a variety of online activities designed to support our program participants and attract new ones.



Franco Zacha, *NYC Coyote*, 2022, watercolor.

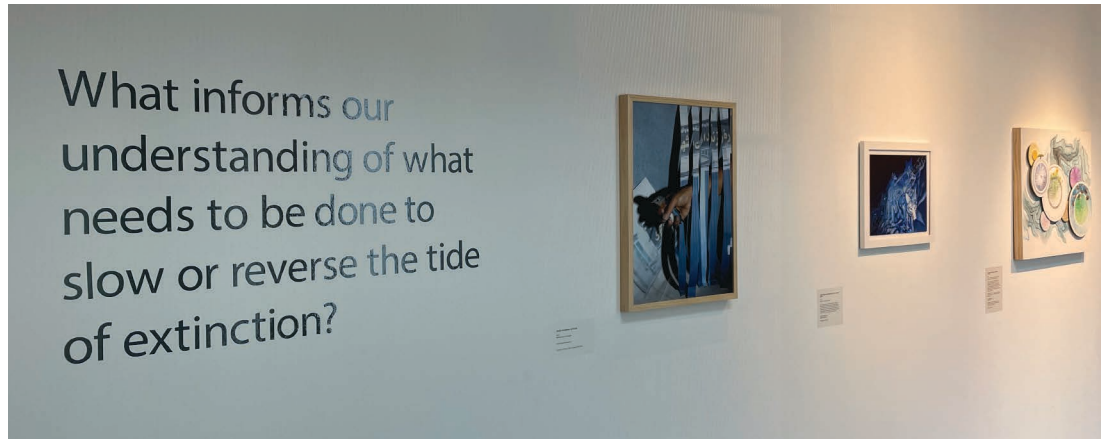
## WORKSHOPS

We give participants the opportunity to build their leadership skills and practice making conservation science more accessible, meaningful, and relevant.

# EXHIBITS & EVENTS

During Spring 2022, our Providence-based Arts Curator Heather McMordie curated “Re-Examining Conservation: Questions at the Intersection of the Arts and Sciences.” This was our third major exhibition and the first in our “Re” series. It included a mixture of 2D and 3D pieces by 24 artists and a book-based installation featuring excerpts from 34 writers. Selected images from the exhibit are shown throughout this report. The exhibit included an Audio Tour that continues to be accessible online.

Heather also launched our new Curatorial Scholars program, selecting two Rhode Island-based Indigenous artists, Haley Johnson (Mashpee Wampanoag) and Lynsea Montanari (Narragansett) to help design the visitor experience.



Haley Johnson, *Holding Tank*, 2021, ceramic.



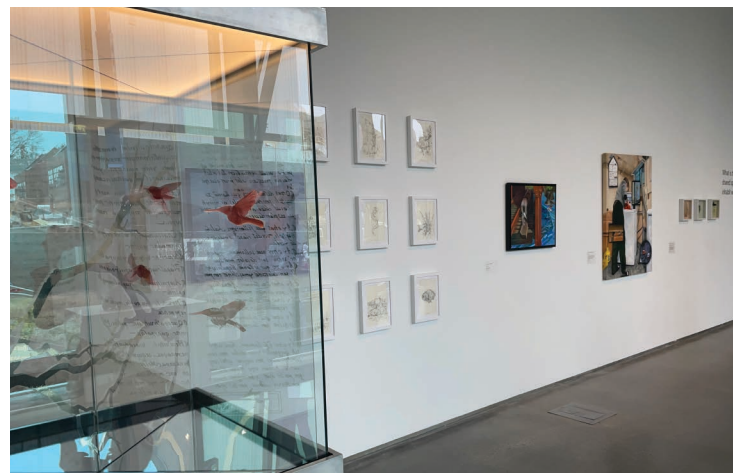
Sophy Tuttle, *Solstalgia*, 2022, mixed media.



In Sophy's words: *This installation is a memorial to the estimated 150-200 species that go extinct every day on Earth even as we continue to count and document new ones. There are 74 species represented on the wall and 124 blank spaces for those we missed, for the species already lost — because of our actions — that never came into contact with the scientific community.*

# RE-EXAMINING CONSERVATION

“Re-Examining Conservation” asked artists, WHAT IS conservation, and prompted visitors to examine how, where, and why each of us may seek to establish “a biological balance” in our human-animal relationships. It included a two-day symposium with talks, readings, and performances featuring poets Marianne Boruch, Linda Hogan and Alberto Ríos. The exhibition was on display at Brown University in Providence, RI at the Granoff Center for the Creative Arts from April 4-June 10, 2022. The response from participating artists and writers was clear: successful conservation calls for immediate, collective, inclusive and multidisciplinary action.



“Writing Conservation: An Interactive Book-Based Installation” by Susan Tacent and Lisa Kahn Schnell with deep gratitude for all the writers who granted permission to share excerpts from their work.

Duncan Berry, *Sitka Salmon*, 2022, Archival original impression from nature (Printed in archival titanium white inks with 24K gold on black Mulberry Unryu paper).

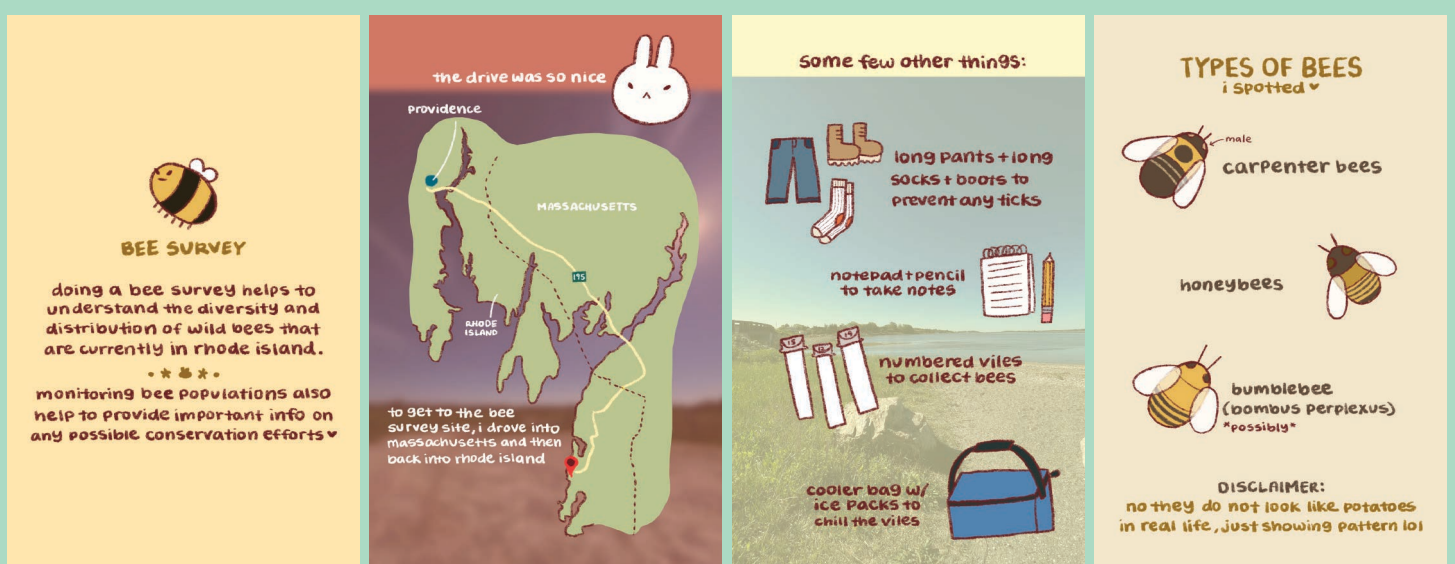
# SCHOLARSHIPS

We awarded Creature Conserve scholarships to 10 visual artists in 2022. The stipend amounts ranged from \$150 to \$3,000, depending on the project. The funds were spent on art supplies, logistical support, travel, and conference fees. Countries represented included the US (6), India (3), and UK (1). Two of the 10 scholarship recipients were Indigenous artists living and working in Rhode Island.



Tripti Shukla studied heritage-based biodiversity conservation with the Sherdukpen tribe of Arunachal Pradesh, India.

Since Creature Conserve was founded (2015), we have provided stipends for conservation-minded artists, writers, and scientists who are exploring art/sci collaboration through our scholarship program. To date, we have awarded scholarships to 64 individuals.



Hannah Chang spent six weeks as a visiting artist with the Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management, Fish and Wildlife. One of her projects was to participate in a local bee survey which she documented on social media.

# NETWORK GROWTH

In 2022, we continued to grow our online presence and increase participation in our programs. This Fall, Maggie Richardson joined our team as Social Media Manager and Shiri Lev as Networking Coordinator. Art Director Franco Zacha launched a monthly e-mail newsletter in January, both as a source of inspiration and information. "Bats" hosted by Labonie Roy was one of our Theme Weeks.



# MENTORSHIP

Under the leadership of Derek Russell, our Mentorship program has grown exponentially since its inception. Mentees and mentors meet individually and in small groups via Zoom over the six-month duration of the program to share updates and offer feedback.

As a 2021–22 mentee, textile designer Leah Widdecome created a tapestry using found clothing inspired by the contribution of "fast fashion" synthetic fibers to ocean plastic pollution. She is now a mentor for our 2022-23 cohort.





# WORKSHOPS

We give participants the opportunity to build their leadership skills and practice making conservation science more accessible, meaningful, and relevant.

Artist Sofiya Shukova teamed up with Shiri Lev and scientist Katarina Fernandez of the Otter Collaborative to teach a workshop about the growing illegal trade in live otters in Asia and Africa; artist and scientist participants were paired during the first session and worked together over the next week to practice collaborating and create a graphic for social media.

## Significance of collaboration

Aim:

- **Initiate conversation** and new concepts of joint work
- Show both **art & science** are **essential** for conservation
- Create **cross-industry opportunities** for conservation efforts
- Study and develop various aspects of a particular conservation issue, while creating **synergy**, aiming for impact in multiple ways.

What do we get when we collaborate?

- New perspective, new eyes
- Exposure, feedback
- Connection & support
- Learn, evolve, grow.



Artwork by Kallol Mozumdar

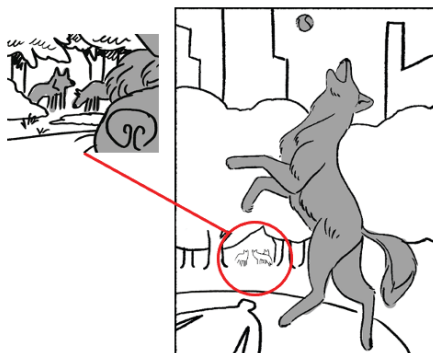
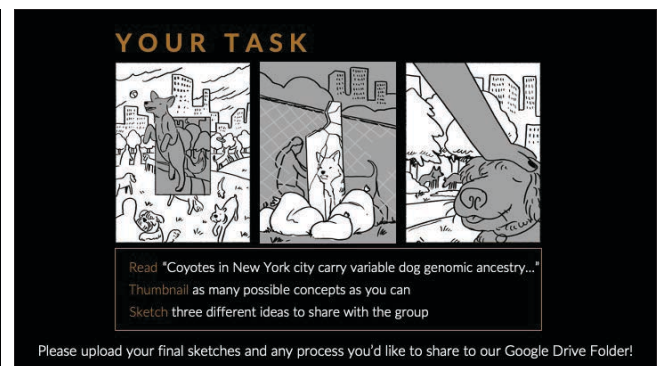
We have a tendency to work in separate realms - joining forces creates impact!



Shiri Lev | shiri@wildotters.com



Artist Franco Zacha taught one of his signature workshops, "Behind the Research Paper: Making Science Visual"; the goal is to help artists unveil the narratives behind research to create art that promotes wildlife conservation. The topic was human-coyote conflict in NYC and the invited scientists were ecologist Chris Nagy and conservation geneticist Bridgett von Holdt.



# METRICS 2022

We met or exceeded every metric we set for 2022.

Creature Conserve Scholars are the artists, writers, and scientists who we support and who play active roles in our programs. They include exhibiting artists, mentors, mentees, program leaders, scholarship recipients, theme week hosts, and workshop instructors and speakers.

## 1. Increase the number of Scholars each year.

Since our first year of programming (2016) we have supported 302 scholars.

- This total measures the growth of our organization over time.
- The annual total (166) number of Scholars is a measure of the impact of our programs on individuals who are actively engaged in art/sci conservation work. This year's total was more than double the total of all prior years (2016-2021) combined. Note: we routinely support repeat scholars, both as members of our leadership team and as mentors.
- Increased enrollment in Mentorship has contributed to this increase. We have 22 mentors, 22 mentees and two Fellows in our 2022-23 cohort. The growing interest in this program is a measure of the value of providing a support system for art/sci collaboration in conservation.

## 2. Support a diverse and international group of Scholars each year.

Participants in our programs include representation from BIPOC artists, writers, and other creatives. They live and work in a variety of countries. These include: Australia, Canada, Colombia, India, Iran, Israel, Kenya, Mexico, Norway, Russia, Singapore, Slovakia, South Africa, South Korea, U.K., and the U.S.A. and three Indigenous Nations (Masai, Narragansett, and Mashpee Wampanoag.)

## 3. Track the activities of prior year Scholars and support them whenever possible.

- Our prior year scholars continued to be very active in our programs — serving as coaches, instructors, and mentors.
- Artist scholar and mentor Sofiya Shukhova presented work from her two-year collaboration with scientist Naomi Shen in a gallery exhibition in Singapore, "Flying In-Depth with Stingrays." In Sofiya's words: "I received a lot of good feedback, but my favourite one so far was from a local 'auntie' who works in the gallery. She approached me to say that she decided to stop eating stingrays after seeing the exhibition."



# METRICS 2022

We met or exceeded every metric we set for 2022.

## 4. Offer workshops that encourage and support art/sci collaboration in conservation.

- We offered nine workshops with 227 participants (193 artists, 5 scientists, 29 writers).
- Of these, five were skill-based workshops that gave participants (163) the opportunity to explore new ways to combine art and science to improve conservation outcomes, and four were professional development modules that gave participants (64) the opportunity to build their leadership skills.

## 5. Increase the number of program participants each year. (Scholars + Workshop participants)

- Total participation was 394 (166 Scholars + 228 Workshop participants), up from 231 last year.
- Our six-year total is now 1,071.

## 6. Continue to grow and interact with our target audience via social media.

- Our Instagram following increased by 55% (from 2,469 to 3,874).
- We launched a new newsletter in January 2022; as of December our readership was 560.

## 7. Expand support from co-hosts/supporting organizations including conservation non-profits.

Partners include: Brown University, Endangered Species Coalition, International Union for the Conservation of Nature Specialist Groups (IUCN Red list), National Museum of Wildlife Art, Tomaquag Museum, and What Cheer Writers Club.

## 8. Directly serve an increasing number of individuals actively engaged in art/sci conservation.

- We engaged with 6,100+ artists, writers, scientists, and members of the general public.
- This total includes 1) Creature Conserve Scholars (166) – the artists, writers, and scientists who we actively support, including scholarship recipients; 2) Program Participants in our Workshops and Art+Sci Professional Development Modules (228); 3) Exhibit & Event visitors (1,375); 4) Newsletter subscribers (560); and 5) Instagram followers (3,874).

Selected artworks from Creature Conserve's 2022 exhibition, "Re-Examining Conservation."



Rachel Berwick, *The Near and the Far: Left Side of the World*, mirrored glass, cast crystal hummingbird; special thanks to Robert Rauschenberg Residency, Matt Hall, Warren Johnson, Michael Anderson, and Katie Bullock.



Faith Williams Dyrsten, *Elevation Change*, 2022, colored pencil, graphite, and watercolor on gessoed wood panel functional gears, and dowels.

# FINANCIALS OVERVIEW

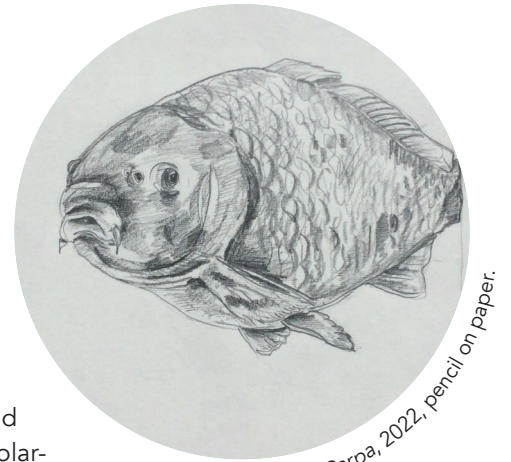
## EXPENSES

We provide the funding, expertise, and oversight needed to establish, sustain, and promote art/sci collaboration in conservation. Our expenses (by program area) include funds to cover the costs of consulting fees for our Arts Curator; stipends for Curatorial Scholars and Fellows, and exhibit production costs (Exhibits and Events); consulting fees for our Mentorship Director and stipends for Mentorship Fellows (Mentorship); consulting fees for our Art Director, Networking Coordinator, Social Media Manager, stipends for theme week hosts, and promotion for social media promotion (Network Growth); stipends for our scholarship recipients, including field studies (Scholarships); and, instructor and expert fees for workshops and professional development training modules (Workshops.)

Since our founding in 2015, we have intentionally maintained low overhead, spending the majority (94% in 2022) of the funds we raise on our programs. We do this by keeping our administrative costs to a minimum: accounting software, bank fees, general advertising/marketing, fundraising materials, postage, licenses, and tax preparation expenses equal 6% of our total budget. We rely on our strong social media presence for marketing and advertising and by partnering with organizations (i.e., art galleries, co-working spaces, museums, schools, and writing groups) to host our programs rent-free. We also draw on the expertise of our all-volunteer Board of Directors and our advisory group.

## INCOME

Grants from private foundations are our main (71% in 2022) source of income. Other sources include board dues, exhibit and workshop entry fees, corporate gifts, and grants from non-profits. The organizations that host our exhibits and workshops also provide valuable in-kind support.



Anna Garret, *La Carpa*, 2022, pencil on paper.



Carina Cheung, *Oceanus*, 2020, Aventurine glass, seahorse.



Eunhyung Chung & Shiqi Wu, *Footprints*, 2022, clay bricks.

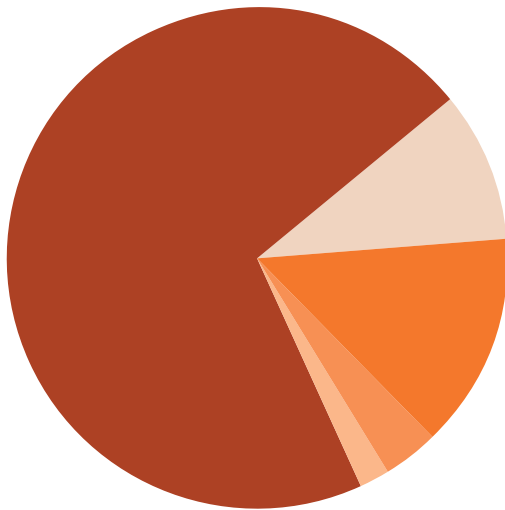







# FINANCIAL SUMMARY 2022

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## INCOME

In 2022, we raised the majority of our funds from foundations as in past years. Our total income was \$57,470.



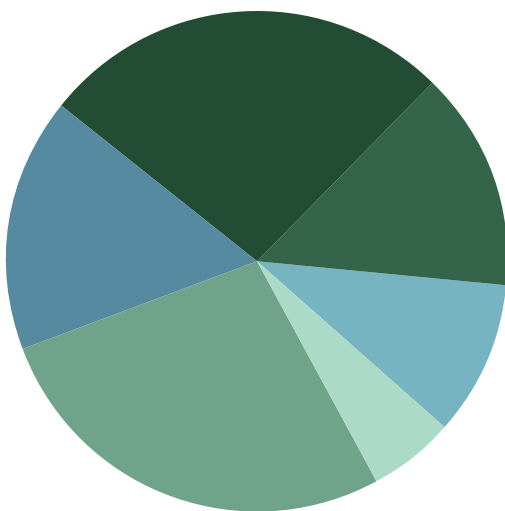
	DONATIONS GENERAL 14%	\$7,993
	DONATIONS RESTRICTED 3.7%	\$2,123
	EXHIBIT/WORKSHOP FEES 1.8%	\$1,068
	FOUNDATION GRANTS 71%	\$40,800
	OTHER GRANTS 9.5%	\$5,486







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TOTAL INCOME 2022: \$57,470

## EXPENSES

We spent a total of \$51,637 in 2022, nearly all of it on our programs.



	ADMINISTRATION 5.8%	\$2,975
	EXHIBITS 27.1%	\$14,020
	MENTORSHIP 16.5%	\$8,500
	NETWORK GROWTH 26.5%	\$13,688
	SCHOLARSHIPS 14.2%	\$7,345
	- COMM ENGAGEMENT 17% \$1,250	
	- CONFERENCE FEES 6% \$400	
	- FIELD STUDIES 30% \$2,195	
	- RESEARCH 17% \$1,250	
	- VISITING ARTIST 30% \$2,250	
	WORKSHOPS 9.9%	\$5,109

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TOTAL EXPENSES 2021: \$51,637

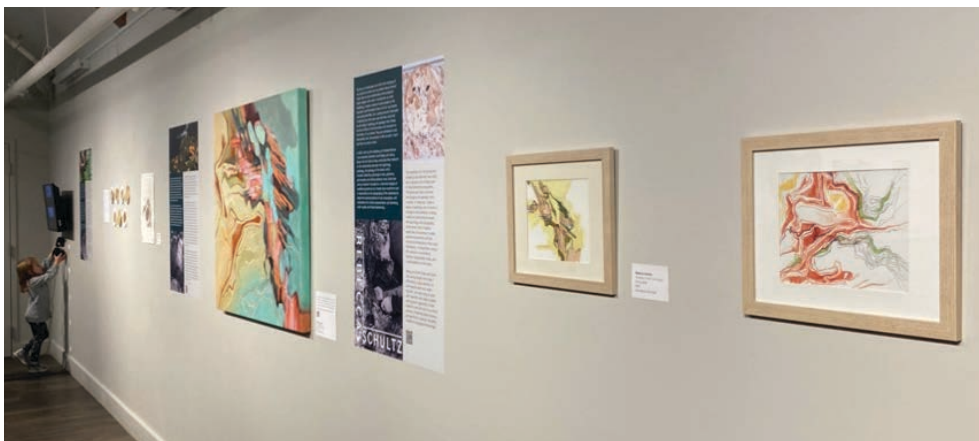
# SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENT TESTIMONIALS

## REBECCA SCHULTZ

Visiting Artist, New Hampshire

With support from Creature Conserve, I spent the week of July 24-30, 2022 at the Hubbard Brook Experimental Forest in New Hampshire. The week at Hubbard Brook allowed me to build upon my practice of making soil pigments. I was particularly fascinated by the differences in color and texture in soil horizons, as well as the form of the pit, with a halo of organic matter surrounding its opening. I decided to make a multi-color etching based on this imagery, using ink made from soil pigments.

Etching is my favorite printmaking process—it involves elemental materials and equipment that has been in use for hundreds of years. The process of etching a plate also evokes the process of chemical weathering of bedrock to make soil. I am very grateful for the scholarship; it helped me advance my art-science practice significantly. Thank you!



## LABONIE ROY

Research Artist, Moth Conservation, Bangalore, India

My goal is to capture the equivalent of my experience and learnings (as a beginner) about moths and moth researchers. I'm fascinated by the cultural invisibility of moths (in a lot of Indian languages, we don't even have a word for moths! This was something Deepika Nandan and I discussed recently), and how they are often ignored culturally and ecologically, literally because most people don't see them very much. But even when they do, in their kitchens, homes or even in broad daylight as caterpillars or cocoons, we tend to gloss over them. Simply put, we want this resource to encourage readers to notice, observe and ask questions about moths. At the same time, while in the field and subsequently we had many discussions on how women and queer people experience field research, and how these challenges are often ignored/brushed under the carpet in the conservation and ecology sector.

These conversations were very interesting and revealed a side of research that I want to talk about through my art. I am also dedicating a small part of the document to capturing Pritha and Anza's (another member of her team) experiences as women in the field of moth research. ...I also wanted to say that I really appreciate the structure of this project - for the first time in ages, I feel like I have the freedom and flexibility to think critically, ponder, revise and detail at a comfortable pace. Thank you so much!



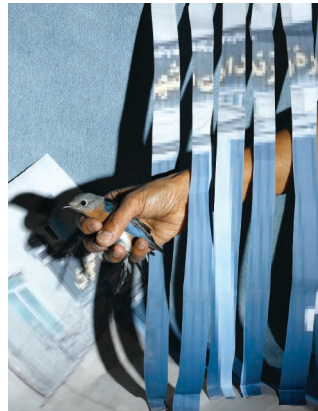
Labonie Roy, *Moths at Night*, 2022, digital illustration

# WHAT TO LOOK FORWARD TO IN 2023

## EXHIBITS & EVENTS

Plans are well underway for our next major exhibition, “Re-Imagining Conservation,” the second in our “Re” series curated by Heather McMordie. “Re-Imagining Conservation” strives to create space for multidisciplinary and varied perspectives about conservation, asking artists: WHAT IF we imagine a new future for conservation? It encourages visitors to consider new ways to find a healthy balance in our human-animal relationships, including how we live together in shared environments. For example, what if we fully embedded wildlife rehabilitation within urban landscapes? What if political borders respected natural migratory pathways for all animals, human and nonhuman? What if we gave more to the land than we took from it?

To ask and answer these questions as fully and deeply as possible, Heather will be curating “Re-Imagining Conservation” in two locations: one in partnership with the Urban Soils Institute in New York City at Swale House on Governors Island, subtitled “From the Ground Up,” and one in Jackson, WY at the National Museum of Wildlife Art subtitled “From Many Viewpoints.” Both exhibitions will be open to the public from July through November 2023. Heather also plans to select a Curatorial Scholar for each location. This East-West pairing of exhibitions will feature artworks from artists around the world and will be accompanied by a variety of public programs, both in-person and virtual, local, national, and international, to extend the reach of the exhibition.



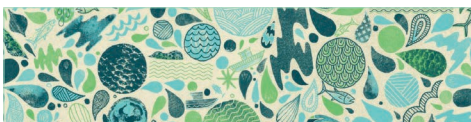
Sheida Solemani, *Untitled*, 2022, reproduction photograph.



Tom Henderson, *Marsh Harrier*, digital illustration.



Derek Russell, *Snowglobe for Colorado*, glass, 3-D print, cast stone.



### Call For Entry: Art of the Tides

Creature Conserve is excited to announce its first-ever youth exhibition to be on display in Spring 2023!

New England's vast collection of salt, fresh and brackish waters are home to many vibrant and fragile ecosystems. Recently there have been many efforts in Rhode Island to preserve these spaces and keep them healthy for generations to come. However, globally, there is still much left to be desired. Creature Conserve is searching for young artists (13-24) to describe their relationships with the waterways they interact with regularly. Consider the bodies of water that you see on your daily commutes or those that have strong sentimental value to you. Think about the plant and animal relationships in those spaces and how they are affected (positively or negatively) by your community.

Below are some questions to consider when choosing artwork for submission:

- How do we connect physically, emotionally, and/or mentally to our aquatic environments?
- How can we describe these connections through art/music and culture?
- What are the values of these waterways from a human and animal perspective?

Curatorial Fellow Haley Johnson will be holding a series of Young Artist Workshops and organizing a Spring 2023 exhibit, *Art of the Tides: Exploring Rhode Island's Waterways* for local youth (ages 13–24): “With this project, I am focused on young artists and giving them the opportunity to explore and learn about an aquatic site’s importance to their local human and animal community through both cultural and scientific lenses. I aim to encourage youth to interact and respond creatively to the waterways they might see daily. Collecting and showing the artworks that result will empower youth to continue their creative practices and to be more mindful of their natural environments wherever life may take them.”



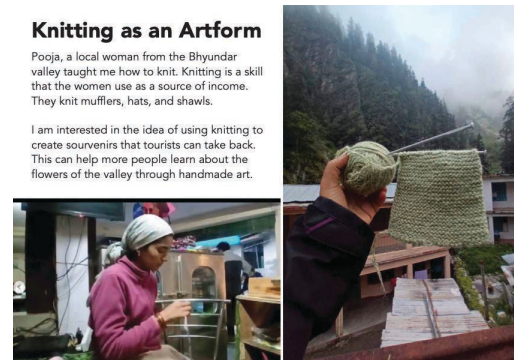
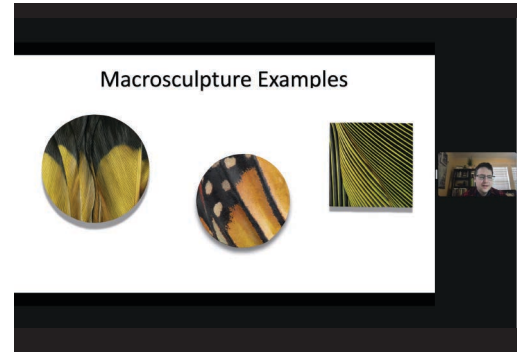
# WHAT TO LOOK FORWARD TO IN 2023

## MENTORSHIP

Mentorship Director Derek Russell has exciting plans for the program in 2023. He has assembled our largest, most diverse cohort yet and we look forward to tracking their progress. Derek will be hosting both the Midyear Review (January) when mentees share their art/sci process and receive feedback and the Mentorship Showcase (March) when they present their work in final form

Under the mentorship of sculptor and conservationist Dale Weiler, sculptor Spencer Tinkham is studying feathers of birds injured by oil spills and experimenting with ways to engage viewers in this preventable and treatable problem (right).

From Mentorship Fellow Deepika Nandan: "I will be working to learn, create artwork, and start conversations about native and endemic plants present in India, starting with Nandan Kanan or the Valley of Flowers. I plan to engage with communities to understand their connections with the valley, learn about the plants and their historic and cultural significance, archive fading traditions such as the flower festival, and facilitate community creation of artwork. I hope to create artwork about the valley through various lenses, one being the sharp contrast between the conservation status of protected areas and the ecosystems right outside this constructed boundary."



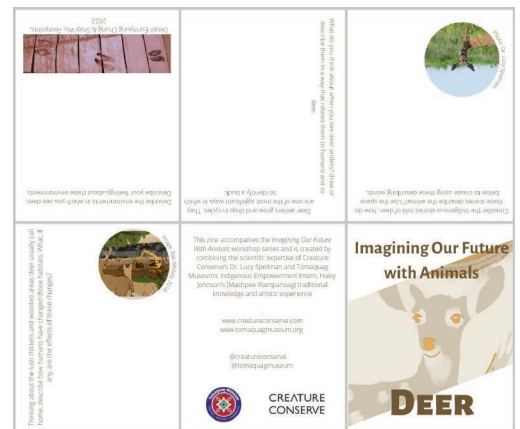
## NETWORK GROWTH

We look forward to the continued growth of our Creature Conserve community in 2023. Maggie Richardson will be working to further increase our social media presence; Shiri Lev will be working to grow our networks both within and external to the organization; and Franco Zacha will soon launch a new Art Direction Service focused on wildlife conservation.

## WORKSHOPS

We have a great line-up of online workshops and professional development training planned for 2023. In addition, Dr. Lucy Spelman and Samantha Fry, Indigenous Empowerment Director at the Tomaquag Museum, plan to produce a booklet featuring works of art and writing from their 2022 collaboration: a new Arts and Wellness series called "Imagining Our Future with Animals."

This series was designed for the Native Community in Rhode Island. Participants created art and reflected on what they could all do to ensure that deer, hawk, beaver, and quahog will be around for the next 7 generations. Artist Haley Johnson created an interactive zine as a prompt for the first session (right).



# MEET THE 2022 CREATURE CONSERVE PROGRAM LEADERS



**Network Growth Coordinator**

**SHIRI LEV** is a content creator and strategist with over a decade of experience working in the online realm. She currently lives in Israel where she also runs the Otter Collective, an online platform that aims to give artists a voice in conservation to combat the illegal pet trade.



**Mentorship Director**

**DEREK RUSSELL** is an architect, environmental sociologist, and multi-disciplinary artist from Colorado who dedicates his efforts to community driven design as a way to incite resilience. He has worked between art and governance, for various environmental advocacy groups.



**Social Media Coordinator**

**MAGGIE RICHARDSON** is a writer, social media manager, and artist who strives to create engaging and accessible content to connect artists & scientists in the conservation space. She lives in Vermont where she runs a custom upcycling + embroidery shop in addition to her work in media/communications.



**Arts Curator**

**HEATHER MCMORDIE** is an artist and printmaker currently making prints, puzzles and installations informed by soil science. She lives in Providence, RI where she divides her time between art making, curating with Creature Conserve, and teaching in Visual Arts at Brown University.



**Art Director**

**FRANCO ZACHA** is an Argentinian illustrator based in Brooklyn, NY, where he creates art for a variety of magazines and newspapers. As Creature Conserve's Art Director, he helps artists and scientists develop visual arts and writing workshops and assists in the creation of visual assets.

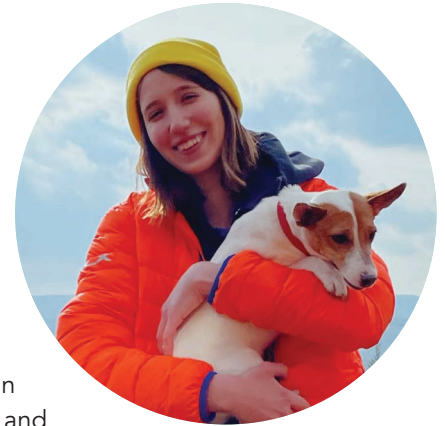


**Board of Directors Liaison**

**SAMANTHA DEMPSEY** joined the Creature Conserve board in 2019 and uses human-centered design practices to support the development of organizational strategy. She facilitates strategic decision-making and advises on the design of Creature Conserve's programs.

# IN MEMORY OF ELIF ILKEL

On Tuesday, March 22, 2022 we lost a cherished friend and invaluable member of Creature Conserve, Elif Ilkel. We miss everything about her, especially the many smiles she gifted us and her contagious passion for wildlife and the natural world. She was an accomplished filmmaker and photographer, as well as a member of our core leadership team.



As our first Social Media Manager, Elif helped us develop our branding style and public image, and so much more, all the while pursuing advanced training in media and communications. She shaped and grew our presence on Instagram, and established accounts for us on every major media platform. She created, hosted, and produced our first series of Artist Talks as well as the first season of the Creature Conserve Podcast. She was a coach for our professional development program and an enthusiastic supporter of our new "Re" exhibition series. She was a shining light for all of us.

Elif joined Creature Conserve not long after she graduated with a Film, Animation, Video degree from the Rhode Island School of Design. She had taken several of Dr. Lucy's courses there; her interest in art/sci conservation blossomed during a study abroad course in Guyana. Elif often spoke about that experience, and how meaningful it was for her to be able to immerse herself in nature and learn from those who studied it.

CREATURE CONSERVE  
SCHOLAR HIGHLIGHTS



ELIF

FILMMAKER & PHOTOGRAPHER  
CREATURE CONSERVE ARTIST SCHOLAR  
COORDINATING CREATURE CONSERVE'S  
SOCIAL MEDIA & LEADING ARTIST TALKS

"ART AND SCIENCE WORKING TOGETHER CREATE AN UNIQUE OPPORTUNITY TO NOT ONLY INFORM PEOPLE ABOUT THE PROBLEMS ANIMALS FACE AND SHOW THE SOLUTION TO THESE PROBLEMS, BUT ALSO SIMULTANEOUSLY GENERATE EMPATHY FOR THE ANIMALS."

"I had a very inspiring three weeks in Guyana. Using my field journal and the photography and videos I took in Guyana I want to keep producing work on environmental issues. My experiences helped me create a library of inspiration and images that I will be using for a long time!"

Elif Ilkel (FAV 20)  
WS19 Guyana: Exploring Art and Science of Bio Diversity in Guyana

"SCIENCE MIGHT BE THE ROAD MAP FOR HOW WE COUNT PANDAS OR ESTIMATE THE CAPACITY OF A HABITAT FOR TIGERS, BUT WE NEED ART TO MOTIVATE US TO FOLLOW IT."

DR. LUCY SPELMAN

ART+SCI PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT  
SERIES MODULE 4  
FINDING YOUR BRAND IDENTITY & AUDIENCE ON SOCIAL MEDIA  
COACHED BY ELIF ILKEL

CREATURE CONSERVE  
with Dr. Lucy Spelman

## ELIF ILKEL MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP

To honor Elif's memory, her love of animals, and her amazing contributions to Creature Conserve, we have established a memorial scholarship for photographers and videographers who embody her passion for conservation. The Elif Ilkel Memorial Scholarship will be offered for the first time in Spring 2023.

# ABOUT CREATURE CONSERVE

**Executive Director and Ex Officio Board Member:** Lucy Spelman

**Board of Directors:** Abby Adams (Secretary), Bianca Brown (Treasurer), Samantha Dempsey, Nick Jainschigg (Vice Chair), Cameron Little, Nicole Merola (Clerk), Sophie Nieman, and Melissa Torres (Chair).

In her 2015 TEDx talk, **Creature Conserve founder Dr. Lucy Spelman** describes how her work as a zoo and wildlife veterinarian led her to seek new ways to engage people in conservation by connecting art and science. Over the course of her career, she has treated animals of all kinds, from cockroaches to giant pandas. She has lived in Rwanda, where she managed the veterinary team responsible for the world's only mountain gorillas, has served as Director of the Smithsonian National Zoo, and is a published author. In addition to scientific articles, she contributed the title story and co-edited the others in *The Rhino with Glue On Shoes* (Random House, 2008) and wrote the text for the popular *National Geographic Animal Encyclopedia* (2021, 2nd edition).

She has taught biology to architecture, art, and design students at the Rhode Island School of Design since 2010 and continues to practice veterinary medicine at Ocean State Veterinary Specialists.

*Artists have always been interpreters of our time. Through their eyes, the science of saving species and the importance of taking a one-health approach to conservation becomes accessible, meaningful, and relevant—and, the source of positive change.*



"Hands Off" by Emily Schnall

# CREATURE CONSERVE

Connecting Artists, Writers, and Scientists to Save Species

Find out more at [creatureconserve.com](https://creatureconserve.com) and follow [@creatureconserve](https://www.instagram.com/creatureconserve) on Instagram.

connect@creatureconserve.com  
12 Rosedale Ave, Barrington, RI 02806