2018 Poster Session Presenters

Miles Maxcer - The Ant Network and Montana State University	
The Ant Network	The Ant Network (TAN) is a new organization that focuses on sharing the amazing world of ants and other invertebrates with the general public, provides networking opportunities between ant enthusiasts and researchers, and explores new ways to contribute to science outreach. TAN's contributors include insect enthusiasts, entomologists, videographers, and graphic designers. After years of development, The Ant Network is launching publicly in Summer 2018 as a fully-realized outreach platform including a content-rich website, adventure-style videos, in-depth tutorials, documentaries, written manuscripts, and public museum/university exhibits.
Chris Mooney - San Diego Zoo	
Using a Sting to Take the Bite Out of Spider Trafficking	"Operation Spiderman" was a 2010 sting operation in which the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service targeted a smuggler shipping tarantulas between Europe and the Americas. The San Diego Zoo maintained a large contingent of the spiders during the trial, and we realized a new opportunity. By displaying these misunderstood animals and telling their stories, we could elevate awareness of wildlife trafficking and demonstrate how zoos play a critical role in caring for even some of its least-known victims. Today, our Arachnid Rescue Center showcases animals from this and other confiscations, and helps our guests appreciate the true scope of the problem.
Lydia Attard - Toronto Zoo	
A pilot study using laboratory-raised hematophagous triatomine bugs for low-stress minimally-invasive blood sampling of zoo reptiles	Blood collection using laboratory-reared hematophagous insects was investigated at the Toronto Zoo. Belize kissing bugs (Triatoma dimidiata) were allowed to take a blood meal from anesthetised turtles (Emydura subglobosa). A blood sample was immediately collected from the insect's crop. Hematology and biochemistry values from the insect-derived blood were compared with blood collected at the same time from the turtle's jugular vein using the conventional needle-and-syringe method. There were no significant differences between the two samples. The insect's bite is non-painful and causes minimal tissue trauma. This study suggests "living syringes" may be used for minimally-invasive blood sampling of zoo reptiles.
Julie LaTurner - Houston Zoo	

Invertebrate outreach and education at the Houston Zoo: finding our audience	Invertebrate interpretation at the Houston Zoo (HZI) relies primarily on keeper chats and impromptu presentations. Keepers for the Bug House at the Houston Zoo interpret invertebrates throughout the year in a variety of ways, including general keeper chats, themed weekends and events, special event rentals, local television, zoo website, and an area professional conference. This paper will cover the types of chats and events we interpret for, the different audiences we have and the invertebrates we utilize to educate the community of Houston.
Maia Holmes - Colorado State University Bug Zoo	
You are what you eat; how prey influences survival and growth in the African white spotted assassin bug, Platymeris biguttatus	The African white spotted assassin bug is a popular species kept in live collections around the world. While part of their popularity can be attributed to the species' willingness to accept common feeder insects, no research has been conducted to determine if certain prey species cause faster development or higher survival rates in captive bred assassin bugs. This research measures the growth rate and survival of P. biguttatus nymphs reared on crickets (Acheta domesticus), mealworms (Tenebrio molitor), cockroaches (Blaptica dubia), and combinations of these species. Through this research, we hope to improve husbandry techniques used to rear these beautiful insects.
Nathan Brockman - Reiman Gardens, Iowa State University	
A Look at Overwintering Lepidoptera Eggs Utilizing Highly Absorbent Water Polymer Crystals	Overwintering lepidoptera eggs can be tricky business for some species. Getting the right balance of cold temperatures, moisture and maintaining a sterile environment can be hard. A new way this might be achievable is through the use of highly absorbent water polymer crystals. A couple different applications of the crystals were utilized to overwinter Parnassus eggs. This poster will take a look at what has been learned after two years of trials.
Anita Westphal - Reiman Gardens, Iowa State University	
New Tools for Butterfly Identification	Reiman Gardens is working to ease the frustration of butterfly identification in the field for citizen scientists, researchers and enthusiasts. We are creating a trait-based identification app and a photo recognition program for the butterflies of the U.S. and Canada. We will even amaze you with a live demonstration!

For information on presenting a poster please contact TITAG here.