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A Message from ISAZ President - Nancy Gee



Dear ISAZ Members,

I am delighted to report that our ISAZ 2024 Conference was a big success! We had 217 delegates in attendance, 9 workshops and 153 total presentations including 61 podium, 14 emerging trends, 3 symposia, 64 posters, and 11 DEIB digital posters.

I am grateful to everyone who attended and/or presented and I am especially grateful to our sponsors:

[Purina](#) – Platinum Sponsor

[Waltham Petcare Science Institute](#) – Gold Sponsor

[CABI](#) – Bronze Sponsor

[Routledge Taylor & Francis Group](#) - General Sponsor

[BARK - Building Academic Retention Through K9s](#) - General Sponsor

It was also a wonderful opportunity to showcase our exhibitors: 5M Books, APBC- Association of Pet Behavior Counsellors, Gloucester Animal Welfare Association & Cheltenham Animal Shelter, Dogs for Good, SCAS - Society for Companion Animal Studies, and Sirona Therapeutic Horsemanship.

The success of this conference makes ISAZ's day-to-day functions possible. Thank you all!

I would also like to add a big congratulations, again, to all of our award winners listed in this newsletter. I enjoyed attending sessions. It seems that you've all raised the bar again on the quality of science being presented and discussed. It was my pleasure to discuss research outcomes and ideas with so many people. I always leave the ISAZ conference feeling energized and rededicated to my program of research. Thank you all for making ISAZ such a wonderful collection of minds and personalities.

With gratitude,

Nancy R. Gee

ISAZ President

ISAZ Conference News



Thank you to everyone who joined us at Hartpury University for ISAZ 2024! Over 200 anthrozoology practitioners, researchers, and students came together to share their research. The conference featured multiple opportunities for early career researchers, including a workshop with Dr. Aubrey Fine. Participants enjoyed keynote speeches by Dr. Clara Mancini and Lucy Rees as well as talks from the Distinguished Anthrozoologist Award Winner, Dr. Hal Herzog and the Early Career Award Winner, Dr. Kerri Rodriguez. For the first time, participants had the opportunity to view DEIB posters virtually throughout the conference.

Congratulations to our ISAZ 2024 award winners and presenters:

[Early Career Award Winner](#): Dr. Kerri Rodriguez

[Distinguished Anthrozoologist Award Winner](#): Dr. Hal Herzog

[1st Place Student Oral Presentation Award](#) - Bree Merritt "The Burden of Unwanted Behaviour: Risk Factors for the Dog Owner Bond in the UK"

[2nd Place Student Oral Presentation Award](#) - Maël Theubet "How Do You Feel About Owls? An International Survey"

[1st Place Student Poster Presentation Award](#) - Jennifer Link "Social Kittens: A Quantitative Survey of U.S. Cat Caregiver Attitudes Towards Kitten Socialization Programs"

[2nd Place Student Poster Presentation Award](#) - Colleen Winkelman "The Power of Human Stories in Shaping Horse Worlds and Welfare"

[DEIB Award Winner](#): Dr. Courtney Graham

[Martha Bryant Student Travel Award Winner](#): Sarah Leighton

[Anthrozoös Most Popular Paper Award](#): Salonika Hardie, Dac Loc Mai, and Tiffani J. Howell "Social Support and Wellbeing in Cat and Dog Owners, and the Moderating Influence of Pet-Owner Relationship Quality".

Thank you to Waltham Petcare Science Institute for the sponsorship of the student and DEIB awards.

Thank you to Routledge Taylor & Francis Group for the sponsorship of the Anthrozoös Most Popular Paper Award.

Thank you to Hartpury University and Michael Walter for the photos!

Please find the full ISAZ 2024 conference proceedings [here](#).





ISAZ
HEALTHY PET 12 2024

Case-series

Two-months of treatment for resource guarding in 11 domestic dog puppies

Background
What is resource guarding?
Use of rapid ingestion (1), avoidance (2), threatening (3), or aggressive (4) behaviours to retain control of items in the presence of a human or other animal.

Why do we care?
Threatening and aggressive behaviour impact:
 - Canine welfare
 - Human safety
 - Human-canine bond

Dog trainers are typically employed to reduce the severity of resource guarding behaviours through trainer education, environmental management and behaviour modification.

Methods

Objectives
Determine which early treatment strategies are effective in reducing severity of threatening and aggressive forms of resource guarding during two months of trainer-led treatment in dogs six months of age or younger at recruitment.
Determine prognostic factors that might play a role in resource guarding treatment success in dogs six months of age or younger at recruitment.

A case-series
11 domestic dogs six months of age or younger who display threatening or aggressive forms of resource guarding behaviour.

Surveys

Trainer survey 1
1. Dog breed
2. Dog sex
3. Dog age at recruitment
4. Dog sex at recruitment
5. Dog breed at recruitment
6. Dog sex at recruitment
7. Dog age at recruitment
8. Dog sex at recruitment
9. Dog breed at recruitment
10. Dog sex at recruitment
11. Dog age at recruitment
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95. Dog age at recruitment
96. Dog sex at recruitment
97. Dog breed at recruitment
98. Dog sex at recruitment
99. Dog age at recruitment
100. Dog sex at recruitment

Results

Most successful treatments
 - Counterconditioning by pairing something positive with approach during resource possession to change underlying emotional reaction
 - Training operator tasks like "Trade", "Abandon" or "Leave it" using positive reinforcement to improve control and positive experiences during resource interactions.

Prognostic factors
Prognostic factors seem to be similar to those in adult dogs with resource guarding behaviour:
 - Known triggers for resource guarding
 - Slow progression to aggression beginning with threats when triggered
 - Inhibited bite during aggression
 - High caretaker compliance to treatment program
 - Caretaker follow-up with trainer

Most common outcomes
 - Reduction in severity of resource guarding behaviour
 - Loss to follow-up to the trainer or the study

Future directions
This study indicates a need for and the development of future research on the efficacy of these treatments when compared with controls and the course of loss to follow-up in studies and with dog trainers in general.



ISAZ 2025 Location: We'll see you in Canada!

UNIVERSITY OF SASKATCHEWAN

BE WHAT THE WORLD NEEDS

June 19 - 22, 2025

Journal of the International Society for Anthrozoology


Anthrozoös

A multidisciplinary journal of the interactions
between people and other animals

Featured Articles

ANTHROZOÖS
2024, VOL. 37, NO. 3, 405–415
<https://doi.org/10.1080/08927936.2024.2327174>

 **Routledge**
Taylor & Francis Group

 Check for updates

“I Saw Her With My Heart”: Supernatural Experiences and Continuing Bonds After the Death of a Dog

Jennifer Golbeck

College of Information Studies, University of Maryland, College Park, MD, USA

ANTHROZOÖS
2024, VOL. 37, NO. 3, 479–499
<https://doi.org/10.1080/08927936.2024.2303228>

 **Routledge**
Taylor & Francis Group

 OPEN ACCESS  Check for updates

Investigating the Motivational Priorities Underlying Equestrians’ Horse-Keeping and Training Practices

Karen L. Luke^a, Andrea Rawluk^b, Tina McAdie^a, Bradley P. Smith^a, and Amanda K. Warren-Smith^c

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^bSchool of Ecosystem and Forest Sciences, University of Melbourne, Parkville, Australia; ^cDepartment of Regional NSW, NSW, Australia

[Read the newest issue of Anthrozoös, Volume 37, Issue 3 \(available free to ISAZ members\)!](#)

Interested in submitting your work to Anthrozoös? [Click here.](#)

Meet the Anthrozoologist: Dr. Leslie Stewart



Tell us about the animals who have shaped your career.

I would like to take a moment to acknowledge my two most influential teachers, Moose and Sophie May. It somehow feels unjust to discuss my human professional adventure without first honoring the animals that supported me from the very beginning. Middleground (called Moose) is possibly the greatest love of my life, and was the horse who started everything. Sophie May lovingly and patiently taught me how to be a good professional partner to a canine, and made a positive impact on the healing journey of many counseling clients. Although Moose and Sophie May have since crossed the rainbow bridge, they are still present in every bit of work that I do as a teacher, clinician, and researcher.

How did you start doing research in anthrozoology? What drew you to this line of work?

I think anthrozoology has always been a passion for me, even though I might not have always been aware of it in an academic context. I grew up participating in competitive equine sports (hunter/jumper, showjumping, and dressage), thus, I spent almost every day riding and caring for horses. Each horse-rider partnership was completely unique, complex, and nuanced; and in each partnership, the rider learned much more than riding skills from their equine partner. Within my equine relationships, I learned courage, patience, unconditional commitment, critical thinking, true empathy, and how to be a trustworthy partner. And probably most relevant to my role as a counselor, I learned that if one of us was experiencing difficulty, it was almost always due to pain or fear, and we needed to find new ways to support each other. I often tell my students, “Everything I know about being a counselor, I learned from a horse”. In a way, I grew up understanding that relationships between animals and people held powerful potential for growth and positive change for both the humans and animals involved. This influenced the start of my career as a Professional Association of Therapeutic Horsemanship (PATH) therapeutic riding instructor (TRI). Although I dearly loved this work, I quickly learned that my clients’ support needs often far exceeded my training as a TRI. To better serve my clients, I went back to university to pursue a master’s degree in professional counseling. Once involved in my counseling program, I noticed that the potential for human-animal relationships to facilitate positive change was underappreciated, and in some cases even ridiculed, within the field of mental health professionals. Further, high quality research to support and justify the inclusion of professionally facilitated human-animal relationships was severely limited. This discovery inspired a clear sense of purpose to help contribute to the body of knowledge relevant to the human-animal bond in order to promote better access to clients who could benefit from the approach, and to further develop and refine the quality and professionalization of the field. Towards this end, I continued my education and earned a Ph.D. in Counselor Education & Practice with an emphasis in

animal-assisted therapy. During this time, I also worked as a practicing clinician and learned how to partner with a dog in more traditional office settings. I can absolutely verify that I learned as much from my first canine partner, a gentle German Shepherd named Sophie May, as I did from my equine partners at the beginning of my career! At the end of my doctoral work, I used my dissertation as an opportunity to create the basis for the American Counseling Association's Competencies for Animal-Assisted Therapy in Counseling, and I now continue an active research and programming agenda relevant to anthrozoology in my current position as a professor of counseling at Idaho State University.

What kind of setbacks have you experienced in your career, and what have you learned from it?

I entered the field of anthrozoology at an interesting time. When I started, the concept of the human-animal bond was barely emerging as a topic that was taken seriously in mental health professions. As the topic continued to gain professional recognition, a trend of sensationalism and misinterpreted media coverage emerged with it. Now, instead of struggling to justify the clinical efficacy of anthrozoology as I did in the beginning of my career, I find myself needing to clarify a great deal of misunderstanding about the human-animal bond in general, and redirect under-informed enthusiasm. At times, it can almost feel like 'damage control'. Yes, the human-animal bond is a powerful avenue for positive growth, but only if certain conditions are met. Yes, the human-animal bond may be an appropriate intervention for many individuals, but it is not a panacea and it is not necessarily a good fit for everyone. Yes, an animal partner can enhance the treatment process for many mental health concerns, but it is still the provider's skill at facilitating and translating those interactions that makes it effective. Yes, many clients request human-animal bond interventions, but the providers need extensive training before including an animal partner. The biggest professional issue that motivates most of my current work is that of the animal's experience amidst the explosion of popularity towards the human-animal bond. From my perspective, scholars and practitioners can get so caught up in the potential of the human-animal bond to help humans, we forget that this is supposed to be a mutually-beneficial experience for the animals, too. Even among pet-loving members of the public, I think the concept of a pet as a consumable commodity for human benefit has influenced the way many individuals conceptualize their pets, and the way many individuals make decisions about bringing a pet into the family. I think this trend is largely unintentional, but nonetheless extremely problematic for the field of anthrozoology and for animal partners.

What advice do you have for young professionals and graduate students in this field?

Connect and engage! Although you need to take responsibility to do reading and research on your own, building relationships with experienced anthrozoologists is one of the best ways to learn. Volunteer service can be a great way to do this, and volunteer service often helps newcomers learn many of the important aspects of anthrozoology and its professional culture that are not always easy to pick up in texts and journal articles. Volunteering within professional associations (like ISAZ!), and/or volunteering as part of an academic research team are great places to start. I also think the depth and complexity of the field can be overwhelming and intimidating to students and other newcomers. I encourage these folks to remember that even the most well-known leaders in the field started out as newcomers, too. And in general, anthrozoologists are very welcoming to students and newcomers, so reach out and get to know us!

How do you think the field of anthrozoology will change or progress in the future?

I wish I could predict this! What I can speak about is what I hope for the future of anthrozoology. I hope the body of high-quality and balanced research continues to grow, and I hope to see more research that bridges that gap between academics and practitioners. For example, research that can be translated into actionable practices to help promote the professionalization of the field, and the wellbeing of the animals and humans involved. I also hope to see continued growth and emphasis on the animal-specific

knowledge and skills required to do this work ethically and effectively. I think it would benefit many anthrozoologists to know much more about the animals they work with, at the species and individual level. And I hope the field grows in such a way that relationship enhancing and force-free animal training and handling become a professional expectation instead of an occasional recommendation. If I could go back in time with the knowledge I have now, I would make completely different choices about the equipment and training techniques I used when I was involved in equine sports. The fact that such practices are still fairly standard in most of the equine world is an example of what I hope to see change and evolve. I hope to see a future in which our training and handling practices are congruent with the mutually-beneficial relationships we seek with our animal partners.

What is your favorite anthrozoology book or journal title?

How could I possibly choose just one! I definitely could not live without the foundational texts by Cynthia Chandler and Aubrey Fine, and the ultra-applicable works of Rise VanFleet. If I look in my current folder of favorite saved articles, I see a great deal of Eduardo Fernandez's work. I so appreciate his re-conceptualizations of animal welfare and wellbeing, and I hope his work, particularly his LIFE Model, will continue to influence the field of anthrozoology as a whole.

What are your hobbies and interests outside of academics?

I love all things outdoors, especially hiking, camping, backpacking, kayaking, and scuba diving. I'm fortunate to live in an area of the world with incredible outdoor adventure opportunities and wildlife spotting. Every June, I make the short trip over to Yellowstone National Park with my family to go wolf-watching. There are very few things I will willingly wake up at 4am for, but a chance to observe the wild wolves and their pups is absolutely worth it!

What are your goals as the new ISAZ Secretary for Development?

I am new to the role, and in many ways I am still learning about the full potential of this position. As in all things, I seek mutually-beneficial relationships and partnerships, and I hope the Development Committee will accomplish this in our relationships with our sponsors and supporters. I want our supporters to feel well served by the organization, and for them to experience benefits resulting from their participation and investment. I also see potential opportunities for the committee to create sponsorship opportunities that support accessibility and inclusivity for the conference and for the organization as a whole, and I hope we can create opportunities that feel exciting and valuable for our potential sponsors.

What's your biggest success to date in your career?

This is an easy one! Watching my graduate students present at the 2024 ISAZ Conference, seeing their passion for anthrozoology, watching their confidence grow, and hearing about their excitement for the future. I've been very fortunate to have been supported and mentored by many human-animal bond leaders, and as I look back, many of my successes were made possible by these colleagues and mentors. Although I am proud of some of my own work, the accomplishments that mean the most to me are the ones in which I can pay forward the support, encouragement, and generosity afforded by my mentors and colleagues.

In Remembrance: Rebecca A. Johnson, PhD, RN, FAAN

Rebecca A. Johnson, PhD, RN, FAAN, passed away on May 4, 2024 at the age of 68. Rebecca was a leader in the field of human-animal interaction. In 2005 she established the Research Center for Human-Animal Interaction (ReCHAI) at the University of Missouri. She served on the board of this and many other

organizations, including the Mid Missouri Corvette Club. Rebecca was an eternal optimist. She traveled the world and remained deeply involved in her local community. Rebecca's legacy lives on through her scholarly works, the students she trained, and the lives she touched with her innovative HAI programming, including work with older adults and veterans. A full obituary is available [here](#).



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