

Sarah M. Bexell

Research Scholar in Residence, University of Denver Human-Animal Connection Institute
Director of Conservation Education and Communications, Chengdu Research Base of Giant
Panda Breeding

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Education:

B.A. 1991 Augustana College (Biology/Environmental Studies)
M.A. 1995 Northern Illinois University (Physical Anthropology)
M.Ed. 1998 Georgia State University (Science Education)
Ph.D. 2006 Georgia State University (Early Childhood Education/Conservation
Science)

Professional Experience:

- Research Scholar in Residence, University of Denver Graduate School of Social Work, Human Animal Connection Institute September 2009 to present
- Director of Conservation Education and Communications, Chengdu Research Base of Giant Panda Breeding, China, January 2006 to present
- Education Specialist, Black-footed Ferret Recovery Program, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, January – September 2009
- Instructor, Environmental Sciences Department, Sichuan University, China, March 2007 to May 2008
- Manager of China Conservation Education Programs, Zoo Atlanta, 2005
- Field Conservation Education Specialist, Zoo Atlanta, 1999-2004
- Biobus NSF Fellow, Georgia State University, 2003-2005
- Founder and Coordinator of Conservation Lecture Series, Zoo Atlanta, 1999-2005
- Golden Lion Tamarin Conservation Program Coordinator, Zoo Atlanta, 1997-2001
- Biology and Ecology Teacher, The Howard School High School, 1998-1999
- Graduate Research Assistant, Georgia State University, 1997-1998 & 2000-2003
- Animal Nutrition Technician, Zoo Atlanta, 1996-1997
- Program Assistant, Behavioral Research, Summer Safari, Zoo Atlanta, 1995-1996
- Program Assistant - GSAMS Distance Learning Network, Zoo Atlanta, 1995-1996
- Substitute Teacher, Freeport School District, Illinois, 1994-1995
- Naturalist and Environmental Educator, Oakdale Nature Preserve, Illinois, 1994-1995
- Graduate Teaching Assistant, Northern Illinois University, 1993-1994
- Education Curator, Niabi Zoo, Coal Valley, IL, 1991-1992

Service:

- Member: IUCN Commission on Education and Communication
- Member: IUCN Task Force on Cities and Protected Areas

- Board Member: GLOBIO
- Education Advisor to the Giant Panda Species Survival Plan
- Education Advisor to the Chelonian Taxon Advisory Group

Research:

- Doctoral Research: Effect of a Wildlife Conservation Camp Experience in China on Student Knowledge of Animals, Care, Propensity for Environmental Stewardship, and Compassionate Behavior Toward Animals, August, 2006
- Attitudes Toward and Market Knowledge of Chelonians in Chengdu, P. R. China, fall 2002
- Research Assistant (R.A.): Developmental Behavior in *Ailuropoda melanoleuca*, Chengdu Research Base of Giant Panda Breeding (CRBGPB), China, and Zoo Atlanta, 1999-2004
- R.A.: Mother-Infant Behavior in *Ailuropoda melanoleuca*, CRBGPB, China 1999
- R.A.: Foraging Strategies and Spatial Memory in *Leontopithecus rosalia*, Zoo Atlanta, 1999-2000
- R.A.: Parental Behavior and Infant Development in *Leontopithecus rosalia*, Zoo Atlanta, 1998-1999
- R.A.: Transition between Free-Ranging and Winter Housing in *Leontopithecus rosalia*, Zoo Atlanta, 1998
- R.A.: Orangutan Introduction and Socialization, Zoo Atlanta, 1999
- R.A.: Removing Milk from Gorilla Diets: The Effects on Regurgitation and Re-ingestion (R/R), Zoo Atlanta, 1997-1999
- R.A.: Nesting Activity in Captive Western Lowland Gorillas, Zoo Atlanta, 1996-1997
- Master's Thesis, Examination of the effects of melengestrol acetate (MGA)-contraception on the sociosexual interactions of captive *Callimico* and *Leontopithecus* monogamous pairs, Brookfield Zoo, 1993-1994
- R.A.: Cochiti Site Skeletal Survey, Northern Illinois University, 1993
- R.A.: Coalition and Alliance Formation in *Papio cynocephalus*, Brookfield Zoo, 1993
- Senior Thesis, Comparison of Agnostic Behavior among Same Sex Individuals of *Octodon degu*, Niabi Zoo 1991

Presentations at Professional Meetings:

Bexell, S. M., Feng, R. X., Wang, Y. M., Li Y., Li, J. L., Zhang, Z. H. (2008, October). *Conservation education and sustainable poverty alleviation projects for the protection of giant panda habitat*. Presentation at Pathways to Success in the Human Dimensions of Fish and Wildlife Conservation Conference, Estes Park, CO, United States.

Bexell, S.M., Feng, R.X., Xu, P., Wang, Y.M., Tang, Y.F., Jin, S., Guo, J., Zhao, H., Li, J.L., Guo, H.M., Zhang, Z.H., Fei, L.S., & Wu, X.Z. (2007, November). *Conservation Education as a Tool for Protecting Giant Panda Habitat*. Presentation at the 2007 Giant Panda Annual Meeting, Chengdu, Sichuan, P. R. China.

Bexell, S. M., & Lan, L. (2006, November). *Comprehensive Conservation Education Programming for Urban and Rural Residents in Sichuan Province: Testing Effective*

Conservation Education Strategies for China. Presentation at the 2006 Giant Panda Annual Meeting, Chiang Mai, Thailand.

Presentations at Professional Meetings (*continued*):

Luo L., Bexell, S. M., Zhang Z. H., Feng, R. X., Xu, P, Tang, Y. F., Zhao H., Wu, X. Z., Zhou, W. W. (2006, September). *Development of a conservation education department in a zoological park in China*. Presentation at the 2006 International Zoo Educators Association Meeting, Pretoria, South Africa.

Bexell, S. M., & DeHaan, R. L. (2006, May). *The impact of cultural context in teaching conservation instructional strategies to Chinese vs. American teachers*. Presentation at the Sino-American Education Consortium, Chengdu, Sichuan, P. R. China.

Bexell, S. M., Snyder, R. J., Luo, L. & Sandhaus, E. (2005, October). *Understanding giant panda behavior and applying it to conservation education: From recognizing to knowing giant pandas*. Symposium presentation at the Society for Human Ecology's 20th Anniversary Conference, Salt Lake City, UT, United States.

Bexell, S. M., Lakly, M. B., Jarrett, O. S., Luo, L., Yu, J., & Atkinson, S. L. (2005, August). *Fostering care: can cross cultural research lead to a truly effective conservation education curriculum?* Symposium presentation at the annual meeting of the American Psychological Association, Washington, D.C., United States.

Bexell, S. M., Jarrett, O. S., Yang, J., & Tan, N. N. (2005, April). *Children and animals: Exploring empathic feelings with animals in four year olds in China and the United States*. Poster presentation at the biennial meeting of the Society for Research in Child Development, Atlanta, GA, United States.

Lakly, M., and Bexell, S. M. (2004, September). *Fostering Care: Creating a model conservation education program*. Workshop at the American Zoo and Aquarium Association Annual Conference in New Orleans, LA, United States.

Lakly, M., and Bexell, S. M. (2004, March) *Environmental Education Research Under the Microscope: Dissecting Models of Success*. Panel discussion presentation at the Environmental Education Alliance of Georgia's Annual Conference in Cordele, GA., United States.

Bexell, S. M. (2004, March). *Mixed-method approach to evaluating preschool environmental education programs*. Presentation at the Environmental Education Alliance of Georgia's Annual Conference in Cordele, GA, U.S.A.

Bexell, S. M. (2004, February) *What happens when Scruffy wants to play? Children's bonds with animals*. Presentation at The Association for the Study of Play Annual Conference, Atlanta, GA, United States.

Bexell, S. M., Luo, L., Hu, Y., Tan, N. N., and Yang, J. (2003, November) *Fostering bonds with animals in conservation education programs in the United States and China.* Presentation at the 2003 Giant Panda Annual Meeting, Chengdu, Sichuan, P. R. China.

Presentations at Professional Meetings (continued):

French-Lee, S., Bexell, S. M., Korkmaz, N., Konantambigi, R., and Jarrett, O. S. (2003, February) *University sponsored childcare in four countries: Implications for play theory and practice.* Paper presented at a cross-cultural symposium at The Association for the Study of Play, Charleston, SC, U.S.A.

Bexell, S. M., Jarrett, O. S., Snyder, R. J., Sandhaus, E., Luo, L., Hu, Y., and Maple, T. L. (2003, February) *Interpreting and understanding animal play: Implications for conservation.* Paper presented at The Association for the Study of Play, Charleston, SC, U.S.A.

Bexell, S. M., Luo, L and Hu, Y. (2002, December) *Conservation education and research collaboration between the Chengdu Zoo, Chengdu Research Base of Giant Panda Breeding and Zoo Atlanta.* Presentation at the 2002 Giant Panda Annual Meeting, Chengdu, P. R. China.

Jarrett, O. S., Turner, S., French-Lee, S., & Bexell, S. M. (2002, February). *Outdoor sand play: What kind of play does sand promote?* Paper presented at the annual meeting of The Association for the Study of Play, Santa Fe, NM, U.S.A.

Jarrett, O. S., Bexell, S. M., Turner, S., French-Lee, S., Lan, L., & Hu, Y. (2002, February). *Play in university related child development centers: A cross-cultural comparison.* Paper presented at the annual meeting of The Association for the Study of Play, Santa Fe, NM, U.S.A.

Bexell, S. M. (2001, August) *Conservation Education Programs in US Zoos.* Presentation at CAZG Directors Annual Meeting (focus, Conservation Education in Chinese Zoos), Nanjing, P. R. China.

Bexell, S. M., Luo L., Hu, Y., and Maple, T. L. (2000, October) *Conservation Education Initiatives in China: A Collaborative Project between Zoo Atlanta, Chengdu Zoo, and Chengdu Research Base of Giant Panda Breeding.* Paper presented at Panda 2000: Conservation Priorities for the New Millennium, San Diego, CA, U.S.A.

Invited Speaker at Professional Meetings:

Bexell, S. M. & Luo, L. (2006, December). Conservation Education at the Chengdu Panda Base: Protecting Wildlife, Enhancing People's Lives in Sichuan. Beijing Science and Technology Meeting in Beijing, China.

Bexell, S. M. (2004, April). A multicultural education program for promoting conservation. Shell invited speaker for the National Science Teachers Association Annual Conference in Atlanta, GA, U.S.A.

Bexell, S. M. (2003, September). Field conservation partnerships: Conservation education in China. Symposium presentation for the Diversity Committee at the American Zoo and Aquarium Association Annual Conference in Columbus, OH, U.S.A.

Publications:

Myers, O. E., Saunders, C. D., & Bexell, S. M. (2009). Fostering Empathy with Wildlife: Factors Affecting Free-Choice Learning for Conservation Concern and Behavior. In J. H. Falk, J. E. Heimlich and S. Foutz (Eds.) *Free-choice learning and the environment*. Lanham, MD: AltaMira Press. Pp. 39-55.

Bexell, S. M., Feng, R. X., Zhang, Z. H., & Esson, M. (2008). Conservation education and community pride as a tool for protecting Mamize Nature Reserve, Sichuan Province, China. *Journal of the International Zoo Educators Association 44*: 8-11.

Bexell, S. M., Jarrett, O. S., Luo, L., Hu, Y., Sandhaus, E., Zhang, Z., & Maple, T.L. (2007). Observing panda play: Implications for zoo programming and conservation efforts. *Curator (50)3*: 287-297.

Bexell, S. M., Luo, L., Hu, Y., Maple, T. L., McManamon, R., Zhang, A., Zhang, Z. (2004). Conservation Education Initiative in China. In D. Lindburg and K. Baragona (Eds.) *Biology and conservation of the giant panda*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Lukas, K. E., Stoinski, T. S., Burks, K., Snyder, R., Bexell, S., & Maple, T. L. (2003). Nest Building in Captive *Gorilla gorilla gorilla*. *International Journal of Primatology*: 24:1:Feb. pp.103-124.

Zhang, Z., Luo, L., McManamon, R., Bexell, S. M. (2001). *For Giant Panda*. Chengdu, China: Chengdu Giant Panda Breeding Research Foundation.

Consultant:

Watch Me Grow Panda. (2008). New York: DK Publishing.

Invited Lecturer:

Georgia State University 2003, 2004, 2005; Zoo Biology with Dwight Lawson, *Building on panda politics: conservation education in China*

Georgia State University 2003, 2004, 2005; Science Methods with Olga Jarrett, *Environmental education: why should we teach it and how*

University of Georgia, Institute of Ecology 2003, 2004, General Ecology with Cheryl McCormick, *Conservation and research at Zoo Atlanta*

Shorter College, 2001, 2002, Study Abroad Program with Jennifer Davis, *Field conservation programs at Zoo Atlanta*

Grants:

Compassion for Animals Foundation, 2008, *Anti-fur Education Campaign for Chengdu University and Middle School Students (\$10,000 USD)* (with Guo Hong Mei, Xu Ping and Li Jin Long)

Grants (continued):

ZooParc deBeauval, 2007, *Infectious disease monitoring and control in domestic dogs adjacent to the Longxi Hongkou Nature Reserve, Sichuan Province, China. (education portion of project) (2,000 Euros)* (with Feng Rui Xi and Wang Yi Mei)

North of England Zoological Society: Chester Zoological Garden, 2007, *Primary School Conservation Education Programming for Urban and Rural Residents in Sichuan Province, P. R. China (5,691 GBP)* (with Feng Rui Xi)

North of England Zoological Society: Chester Zoological Garden, 2007, *Conservation Education and Community Development Research Partnership for Mamize Nature Reserve, P.R. China (2,573 GBP)* (with Feng Rui Xi)

North of England Zoological Society: Chester Zoological Garden, 2006, *Primary School Conservation Education Programming for Urban and Rural Residents in Sichuan Province, P. R. China (6,500 GBP)* (with Dr. Zhang Zhihe and Luo Lan)

Chengdu Municipal Government, Science and Technology Division, 2006, *Comprehensive Conservation Education Programming for Urban and Rural Residents in Sichuan Province (200,000 RMB)* (with Dr. Zhang Zhihe and Luo Lan)

Toronto Zoo Conservation Fund, 2004, *Addressing the Asian Turtle Crisis through Public Education at the Guangzhou Zoo, P.R. China (\$1,000 USD)*

Disney Conservation Fund, 2003, *Conservation Education Initiatives in China and the United States (\$5,000 USD)*

American Zoo and Aquarium Association Conservation Endowment Fund, 2002, *Addressing the Asian turtle crisis in Mainland China: Conservation Education and Herpetological Capacity Building* (with Drs. Dwight Lawson and Chris Tabaka) (\$12,300 USD)

US-China Environmental Fund, 2002, *Conservation Education Programming for the Chengdu Zoo and Chengdu Research Base of Giant Panda Breeding (\$2,800 USD)*

Disney Conservation Fund, 2001, *Conservation Education Initiatives in China and the United States (\$10,000 USD)*

Membership in Professional Organizations

- Society for Human Ecology (SHE)
- Society for Conservation Biology (SCB)
- International Society for Anthrozoology (ISAZ)
- International Zoo Educators Association (IZE)
- North American Association for Environmental Education (NAAEE)

- Turtle Survival Alliance (TSA)