

Chat Box: 15 January 2015

Increasing Capacity for Small Natural History Collections: Developing Protocol for Volunteer-Based Inventorying Programs

Shana Hawrylchak, Manager of Exhibits and Collections, EcoTarium; Kaleigh Pare, Collections Specialist; EcoTarium; Emma Westling, Collections Consultant.

Gil Nelson:SCNet website: <http://scnet.acis.ufl.edu/>

Kirsten Stamford Museum CT:what data management software are you using?

Kirsten Stamford Museum CT:thanks

Laura Vietti: Wyoming Vert Paleo Collecitons:Would materials like the 101 trianing program be available to see?

Laura Vietti: Wyoming Vert Paleo Collecitons:awesome! thank you~!

Meredith Mahoney:where do your interns and volunteers come from (local school? community?)

Jamie Smith:How do you advertise for volunteers?

Kirsten Stamford Museum CT:how do you address security concerns with unsupervised volunteers

Laura Vietti: Wyoming Vert Paleo Collecitons:Do you have any suggestions for working volunteers who aren't working out? Personality issues, incompetence? Overstepping?

Elizabeth Johnson:How do you get your volunteers excited about databasing? Our volunteers love to mount herbarium specimens, but transitioning them to databasing is proving hard.

Kirsten Stamford Museum CT:How did dyou decide where to begin? By a select collection or by the physical storage configuration?

Sam Noble Museum of Natural History:Elizabeth - I database with them side-by-side, to make sure they understand that is important enough that the supervisor is working on it with them

Elizabeth Johnson:Great ideas, thanks!

Sam Noble Museum of Natural History:Yes, Andy here, side-by-side is good to also allow immediate questions from volunteers. It helps a lot with consistency between volunteer data entry because they don't go too long without some guidance

Mike Monterusso:Is volunteer retention an issue? In other words, how do you encourage volunteers to commit to volunteering on a regular basis?

Kim Beckwith (NPS):You would be amazed how some volunteers will work extra hours in order to receive the next level "reward," whatever that may be. If you can do rewards for different levels of hours performed, i.e., mug, then water bottle, then t-shirt, etc.

Jennifer Menken:How are you designating items from different types of collections? education vs exhibits etc.

Kirsten Stamford Museum CT:At your current pace, how long to you think it will take to complete the invenory

iDigBio Workshop:Thank you very much! - Molly

Janet Bala:Thanks Shana. Very well done and enlightening.

Meredith Mahoney:thanks!

Clayton:Thanks!

Laura Vietti: Wyoming Vert Paleo Collecitons:Thank you!

Laura Abraczinskas:Thank you very much! Good luck with your grant!

Kirsten Stamford Museum CT:excellent, thanks!

Lisa boucher:Thanks!

Jennifer Menken:Jennifer Menken Bell MUseum

Nick VanAcker:Thanks very much!

Mary Beth:Thanks, though I missed half of it but will check out the website!

