

The Honorary Graduand: Simon Garrett

The Orator: Lyn Newton

Simon Garrett is to be awarded the Honorary Degree of Master of Science.

Simon Garrett grew up catching minnows in the Thames, finding woodlice under bits of wood, observing wildlife in Richmond Park, getting covered in mud volunteering on an RSPB reserve in Lancashire, and watching Dottie the ring-tailed lemur on Animal Magic. This led to a Biology degree at the University of Bristol and then a summer job at Bristol Zoo Gardens painting faces, doing animal encounters and talks, writing and illustrating education packs – and meeting Dottie the ring-tailed lemur for real.

After graduating, Simon led an ecological expedition to Venezuela's 'Henri Pittier' National Park, studying bats, plants and insects. This was one of the first Royal Geographical Society supported expeditions to involve education work with schools.

On his return in 1990, he secured a job as an Education Officer at Bristol Zoo Gardens and also became involved in several overseas projects: setting up an Education Centre at Chipangali Wildlife Sanctuary, Zimbabwe; conducting research and education work around the Endangered Livingstone's fruit bat in the Comoro Islands; and initiating an education programme for Ape Action Africa in Cameroon.

Progressing to Head of Education, Simon also took on the management of the Zoo's Graphics and Volunteer teams, and brought into existence the Ranger team who deliver enclosure talks and staff the walkthrough exhibits, engaging the Zoo's guests. He has also been a key player in the development of Wild Place Project, Bristol Zoological Society's second site near Cribb's Causeway. Thus, now in his current role as Head of Conservation Learning, Simon oversees a 30-strong team delivering formal and informal learning for visitors to both Bristol Zoo Gardens and Wild Place Project.

Simon is passionate about using all of these education and engagement opportunities to bring about tangible conservation outcomes, over and above the conservation breeding and support for in-situ conservation programmes that the Society carries out. To this end, Simon also co-manages the Society's Conservation Campaigns Manager, who develops social science-based campaigns harnessing the opportunity of face-to-face engagement to bring about behaviour change for the benefit of wildlife: for example encouraging our guests to choose FSC-certified wood and paper products, and MSC-certified fish.

Simon's desire is to strengthen this relatively new field: training the conservationists of the future in a wide range of disciplines, including the skills and knowledge to use communication as a conservation tool to bring about behaviour change in society. This has come to fruition through the close relationship with the University of the

West of England, such that Simon now co-leads 'Communication for Conservation' modules on both the Foundation degree in Integrated Wildlife Conservation and the recent MSc in Advanced Wildlife Conservation in Practice.

An active participant in national, European and international zoo education conferences, Simon also chaired the BIAZA (British and Irish Association of Zoos and Aquariums) Education and Training Committee for six years, sits on the Steering Group of the Bristol Natural History Consortium, and represents the Society on the BNHC 'Communicate' conference committee a conference for conservation communication professionals.

The Honorary Degree is awarded in recognition of Simon Garrett's contribution to wildlife conservation.