

A community-based participatory research experience on Proyecto Yacaré-Broad-Snouted Caiman Sustainable Use Program (*Caiman latirostris*)

Alba Imhof* and Alejandro Larriera

Proyecto Yacaré - Laboratorio de Zoología Aplicada, Anexo Vertebrados – Departamento de Ciencias Naturales (FHUC – UNL/MASPyMA), Aristóbulo del Valle 8700, Santa Fe, Argentina.
(aimhof@fhuc.unl.edu.ar; alelarriera@hotmail.com)

Abstract: Proyecto Yacaré, *Caiman latirostris* Program, has been operating in the city of Santa Fe, Argentina for 30 years, however, the relationship with the society in which its activities are carried out was maintained until 2015 within the academic field (research and teaching) in addition to the work with local people who participate in the collection of eggs. Since 2015, extension activities have been started in the field of Environmental Education, planned for the time of births. Through social networks and media, citizens of Santa Fe and the region are invited to join the Project's facilities on certain days of the week, upon confirmation that births were taking place. There they are welcomed and guided by researchers and interns of the same who give a small talk about the activities, the value of the incentive driven conservation of the program and a video is projected about it. Then, children and adults are allowed to participate directly in the hatching of the eggs, after a brief talk on the correct way to do it. Since the beginning of these activities more than 1200 people have participated in the six seasons, and the opinions and perceptions of the public was recorded, plus the reception of the suggestions of the visitors on the most effective way to promote the understanding of the sustainable use programs. Since November 2019 this experience of Community Participation is complemented with a survey of alligator populations in peri-urban wetlands of the city of Santa Fe with neighbors and island settlers, which has so far resulted with 10 records of the species in the vicinity of Ciudad Universitaria by mean of a Community-based participatory research which is just starting now.

Keywords: Citizen participation, *Caiman latirostris*

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