



Annual Conference Potential Host Information

History:

The International Association of Avian Trainers and Educators (IAATE) began in the Spring of 1993. The organization was founded to foster communication, professionalism and cooperation among those individuals who serve Avian Science through training, public display, research, husbandry, conservation, and education. Specifically, IAATE recognizes its role in and responsibilities to the continued existence of zoological parks, public and private institutions housing birds. Trainers and other personnel involved in the husbandry and research of birds must have a clear understanding of their individual roles as the interplay between themselves, the animals in their care, the animals' wild counterparts, and the communities in which they live and work. IAATE provides opportunities through which bird trainers can exchange and disseminate current knowledge, research, and other information among themselves in professional and social settings. In addition, IAATE seeks to maintain a positive public image by preparing its members to act as ambassadors for the avian community. (Please visit www.IAATE.org for more information.)

The Mission of IAATE is to promote best practices in the field of avian care, training, and educational programming, and to inspire conservation of avian species and the natural world. Through conferences, publications, personal interactions, and its website, IAATE fosters the exchange of information and skills that support the highest standards of managing birds for public programs and exhibits.

IAATE' "Building Connections, Inspiring Excellence."

Conference Benefits:

Since its inception IAATE has facilitated the exchange of information through a (four-day) conference held annually in February/March. The conference has grown to be one of the most important structured gatherings available to animal trainers with a special interest in avian species. The benefits to the conference are many.

Benefits to attendees:

- Information/knowledge.
- Inspiration.
- Connection to others in the avian field/network of information.

Benefits to the host:

- Exposure.
- Recognition.



- Accolades.
- The opportunity for others to learn from your example.

Benefits to birds:

- Exposure to ideas/methods to better care for birds.
- New training techniques or improvement in current practices.
- Information on medical issues.
- Education programming ideas/development.
- Information on conservation of avian species in the wild.
- Conservation of wild bird populations through Conservation Awards and Grants as well as support for existing conservation projects gained from funding accumulated as conference profits.

Conference Format and Content:

The conference itself has followed a relatively similar format over the years. The conference is usually held over a weekend to accommodate better airfares. The basic itinerary is as follows, with most activities occurring at a local hotel picked by the Conference Committee:

Monday and or Tuesday:

Closed Board Meeting

Wednesday:

Pre-conference field trips

Full-day Training Workshop

Evening Icebreaker reception (at the hotel)

Thursday:

Paper presentations at the hotel

Possible roundtable discussions

Friday:

Possible field trip to zoo, wildlife rehabilitation center or host facility

Workshops in the morning and evening

Saturday:

Papers presentations at the hotel

Possible roundtable discussions

Possible Training Panel discussions

Open Board Meeting

Banquet in the evening at the hotel



Paper presentations have explored such topics as medical issues, training strategies, development of new programs, conservation education, theater skills, management and husbandry methods for different avian species, training staff and volunteers, fly off protocols, conservation efforts/animal rescues in the wild, behavioral enrichment programs, fundraising, and more.

Previous Keynote Speakers have included such respected individuals as Dr. Charles Munn (Parrot conservationist), Dr. Peter Raven (Missouri Botanical Garden), Jim Fowler (Fowler Center for Wildlife Education), Mike Reynolds (The World Parrot Trust), Brian Jones (Moholoholo Wildlife Rehabilitation Center in South Africa), Ken Goddard (USFW Forensics Laboratory), Morley Nelson (Nature videographer, falconer and conservationist), Dr Brian Speer, DVM, Dr. Robert Hess, DVM, Dr. Pat Reddig, DVM (avian veterinarian), Lee Durrell, as well as local presenters, members of the host facilities and the very knowledgeable IAATE membership. A full list of Keynote Speakers is available upon request.

Workshops have offered excellent hands-on opportunities to learn about theater/presentation skills, team building/leadership skills, behavioral enrichment, preparing equipment to manage raptor species, biofacts, avian necropsy and more.

In general, the conference is a collaboration between the host staff and IAATE. The Host Conference Committee is usually comprised of IAATE members that work at the host facility and any volunteers they can secure from other resources, such as neighboring facilities, docents and/or interns. Committees have been as small as two members and as large as 13. In general, this committee executes most of the legwork necessary to present the conference. There is also a Core Conference Committee available for support. The IAATE Vice President (VP) is ultimately responsible for facilitating the entire process. The VP offers guidance, suggestions, organizes and secures presenters, as well as accepts responsibility for overseeing the committees. The Host Conference Committee ensures the details are arranged. Each committee member usually takes on an area of responsibility such as pre-conference field trips, icebreaker, banquet, workshops, roundtables, raffle and fundraisers, acquiring donations, field trips, hotel and hospitality suite, transportation, etc.

A conference budget is developed in advance by the host committee; with assistance from the VP. The budget is developed for 150 attendees. The goal is for the conference to "pay for itself". In other words, the registration fees collected from the attendees are intended to cover all conference costs. A percentage of the amount of money the conference makes as profit goes into the Conservation Fund. That money can then be used to support Conservation Awards and Grants as well as programs supporting conservation of wild bird populations. The average conference costs approximately \$30,000. Conferences have profited \$1000 - \$10,000 in raffle and fundraisers. Many committees have been able to secure donations of money,

merchandise and/or services to keep expenses down and provide the best conference experience possible. Donations vary for each conference. Some typical donations have included food items and advertising or promotional items for giveaways (pens, notepads, magnets, etc). Host facilities are neither required nor expected to donate to the conference. However, in the past some facilities have provided support in the way of printing and graphics, usage of AV equipment and/or AV technicians, postage, letterhead, lunch on facility visit day, office supplies, money, and/or small merchandise. In addition, most committees have been fortunate to receive free admission to their host facility for conference attendees. Some host facilities have offered financial support by allocating a certain amount of funds to the committee to utilize for the conference. This has been on average \$2000-3000. Again, this is not required, but has been helpful. The Host Committee Chairperson has access to funds through the IAATE CFO to facilitate purchases and need not be dependent on the host facility for assistance. Hospitality suite amenities such as food and drink should be donated.

The most important support the Host Conference Committee can receive from the host facility is time. Planning for the conference begins at least one year in advance. Committee meetings and most preparations for the first 6-8 months usually occur outside of work hours. However, as the conference date approaches, members of the committee will most likely need time during the workday to address conference preparations. During the final few weeks before the conference, the demand increases. Fortunately, this is usually a time when most bird show facilities are not as busy. The Host Committee Chairperson will most likely be very busy with final details just prior to the conference. For this reason, it does become important for the host facility to be able to support its staff working on conference preparations. The benefits to this are a great conference! In addition, great support and respect for the host facility from conference attendees.

Overall, the annual IAATE conference is a wonderful opportunity for avian enthusiasts to share their knowledge, expand their expertise, and gain a great network of resources to ultimately benefit birds and the natural world. We hope your facility will consider hosting this important event. Thank You.

Planning a Conference – Timeline Overview

Once your facility has been chosen to host a conference, the VP will send you a folder with all detailed conference planning information. This folder will have a more detailed timeline as well.

Acceptance date through June

- Decide your committee members and delegate responsibilities-try to meet one time per month.
- Send meeting minutes to Vice President



- Write out initial estimated budget and present to Vice-President
- Secure hotel, meeting space, beverage breaks, and room rates and dates for the Midyear Board Meeting and get information to board members (VP does this).
- Secure hotel based on distance to airport, feature facility, and surrounding amenities as well as room rate and quality of hotel and meeting spaces (VP does this, host may be required to do a site visit prior to contract)
- Develop details for website and other materials:
 - Icebreaker location and/or theme
 - Banquet location and/or theme
 - Workshops-identify topics (VP will assist with this)
 - Optional fun activities
 - Conference tour at zoo, any other conference trips
 - Pre-conference trips
 - General itinerary (VP does this)
 - Keynote speaker
 - Prices for trips- make sure fees cover costs to IAATE for trips, meals, and transportation.
 - Prices for registration- make sure fees cover costs to IAATE for icebreaker, banquet, meeting spaces, other transportation (VP and CFO will determine registration fee)
- Write Flyer article with a little conference tease.
- Solicit donations.

July through August:

- Get in touch with CFO to discuss payment policies.
- Write Flyer article on Feature Conference Facility
- Get conference information to VP for posting on IAATE website.
- Send out conference announcements to other related organizations for posting on their websites and in their journals (VP does this).
- Prepare presentation for Midyear Board Meeting

August through September:

- Finalize Pre-conference trips, Keynote speaker, workshops and workshop leaders, any other information needed for mailer.

September through Conference:

- Finalize Hotel details including meeting spaces, a/v needs, vendor room needs, hospitality suite, meals and beverages for icebreaker, banquet, paper session breaks (VP does this).
- Finalize schedule and post on website (VP does this).
- Finalize roundtable topics.



- Finalize conference tee (if having one).
- Finalize raffle/fundraisers.
- Finalize budget.
- Finalize and print signs, awards ballots, etc. (VP will provide most of the materials).
- Write Flyer article with another conference tease.

General Reminders:

- Run all purchases by CFO.
- Keep all receipts for CFO.
- Keep VP in the communication loop.

If you have any questions please contact:

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