

RGS-IBG Animal Geography Working Group AGM 2023

Monday 4th September 2023, ONLINE

Meeting Minutes

Chair: Catherine Oliver (CO)

Secretary: Hannah Dickinson (HD)

Treasurer: Jamie Arathoon (JA)

9 online attendees (plus CO & HD)

Apologies: Jamie Arathoon

1. Welcome, Introduction and Chair Report

Committee Chair CO welcomed everyone to the AGM. Apologies were noted for JA. CO introduced the AGWG and the mission/aims of the working group. CO noted feedback from the RGS that the establishment of the AGWG was highly welcomed and they would encourage the working group to make collaborations with other research groups, particularly physical geographers. CO explained that since the group was established in May the main activities have involved setting up a mailing list, website, blog, social media accounts and organising 3 sessions at the RGS-IBG Annual Conference in London.

2. Treasurer Report

CO delivered the treasurer report in JA's absence. A £200 starting grant was given to AGWG by the RGS. As of the date of the AGM the balance remained £200. Plans to spend the balance of the starting grant will be drawn up before 31st October.

3. Secretary Report

HD reported on membership numbers. At the establishment of the AGWG, 24 RGS Fellows were automatically registered as members: these individuals had supported the initial application to establish the working group. The total number of AGWG members who are registered RGS fellows is currently 30. The mailing list is open to non-RGS fellows and has 58 subscribers, of which 28 are non-RGS Fellows. HD noted we are seeing slow but steady growth and is hopeful that our presence at the RGS-IBG Annual Conference will see an uptick in membership numbers.

4. Conference Report

CO explained that the AGWG committee organised 3 sessions at the RGS-IBG Annual Conference:

- 1) Panel - Animals in/and Climate changed geographies: Theory and Methods
- 2) Panel - Animals in/and Climate changed geographies: Conservation, International Development and Climate politics
- 3) Paper session - Animals in/and Climate changed geographies: Case Study perspectives

These sessions were all well attended with great audience participation and discussion. AGWG also hosted an informal networking lunch which was similarly well attended by c.20 people.

5. Committee Recruitment

CO introduced the committee vacancies: Conference/Events Officer; Web/Social Media Officer; PGR Rep. The Committee received no nominations for Web/Social Media Officer, so it was noted that the existing executive committee members (CO, HD, JA) would continue to manage the website and social media.

Jonathon Turnbull (JT) and Hannah Fair (HF) were nominated as Conference/Events Officer and agreed to share the role so no vote was taken. JT and HF elected as Conference/Events Officer(s). Katherine Tubb (KT) was nominated as PGR Rep. This nomination was uncontested, so KT was elected as PGR Rep.

JT, HF, KT, gave introductions and were welcomed onto the committee by CO.

6. AGWG plans for upcoming academic year (23/24)

a. Flagship event: Multispecies methods workshop

The Committee proposed to organise a flagship AGWG event for summer 2024 on Multispecies methods. This would likely happen in person at the RGS in London. Discussion amongst attendees suggested a focus on the technologies/techniques used to study and research animals. Also suggested was integrating physical geographers, biologists, applied ecologists and creative practitioners into the workshop.

Action: The Committee will canvass further ideas from the mailing list about the focus of the workshop.

b. Writing/Reading groups

CO introduced the possibility of organising monthly writing groups/reading groups, or groups with a hybrid format. HF suggested the possibility of organising Work in Progress groups.

Action: CO will circulate a poll with AGWM members to determine what sort of writing/reading/or work in progress group is most wanted and how often.

c. Animal Geographies past, present, futures (2025)

CO noted future plans to host a flagship event in 2025 on Animal Geographies Past, present and futures. The event is intended to mark the 25th anniversary of the publishing of Philo & Wilbert, 'Animal Spaces, Beastly Places'. Plans for this event will be developed by the committee over the coming academic year.

7. AOB

a. RGS Awards/Nominations

CO explained there is scope for the AGWG to nominate individuals for RGS awards. If anyone would like to nominate the committee can send further details.

b. Blog Call

AGWG continue to welcome contributions for our blog from anyone doing animal geography research both in academia or as practitioners.

c. Special Issue

CO noted that the RGS has asked AGWG to consider putting together a special issue for the RGS journals, possibly Area or GEO. Discussion amongst meeting attendees suggested interest in this idea. One possibility discussed was focusing on a methods special issue for Area connected to the outcome of the multispecies methods workshop. Decided that the committee would keep this conversation going as events are planned.