



How does participating in citizen science influence ongoing conservation engagement?

Citizen science can provide a way to engage people in conservation and science. But is this the case? And what parts of citizen science experiences are most likely to strengthen future engagement in conservation?

We surveyed citizen scientists who participated in the *Where? Where? Wedgie!* monitoring program at the time of signing up the program, and a few weeks after monitoring.

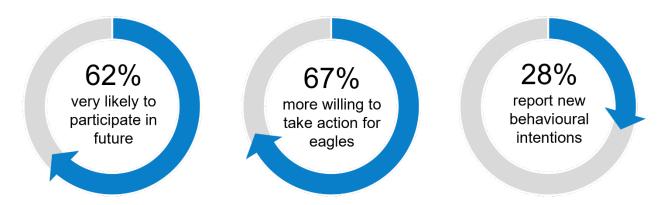
Drivers and impacts of participation

At the time of data analysis, 1046 people had signed up to *Where? Where? Wedgie!* on the NatureTrackers website. Top reasons for their interest included a desire to help protect eagles (73%), enjoyment of bird-watching (46%) and wanting to help scientists (39%). Almost two thirds of people signing up to the program were new to citizen science (65%).

Between 2018-2020, we also surveyed 323 volunteers after the monitoring weekends. A majority of questionnaire respondents were very likely (62%) or likely (30%) to participate in *Where? Where? Wedgie!* again in future. More than two thirds indicated that their experience had made

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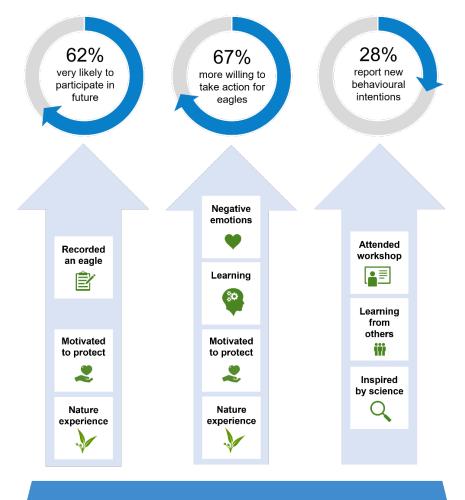
them more likely to engage in eagle conservation actions in future and 28% of respondents could describe a specific new action that they intended to engage in.



What types of experiences supported these outcomes?

The likelihood of future participation was greater if participants valued the nature they experienced while monitoring, felt more motivated to protect eagles, and recorded an eagle as part of their monitoring.

- Being more willing to take action to protect eagles was related to learning new things about eagles, and feeling sad about something that was learnt, in addition to valuing nature experiences and feeling motivated to protect eagles.
- Being able to describe a specific new action and being willing to engage in this action
 was associated with attending one of the workshops, learning from others, and being
 inspired by science.
- Factors affecting these responses included good experiences during the survey, and workshop attendance.



Types of experience that supported each outcome

Overall, these findings show that citizen science can be a powerful way to engage people in conservation actions. Importantly, the type of experience that people have may shape the future engagement.







