A GLOBAL DATASET ON HUMAN PERCEPTION OF SPECIES

The World Archives of Species Perception (WASP) - Methodology, Database and Public Perception Research

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World Archives of Species Perception project

CMK CENTRE FOR ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCES

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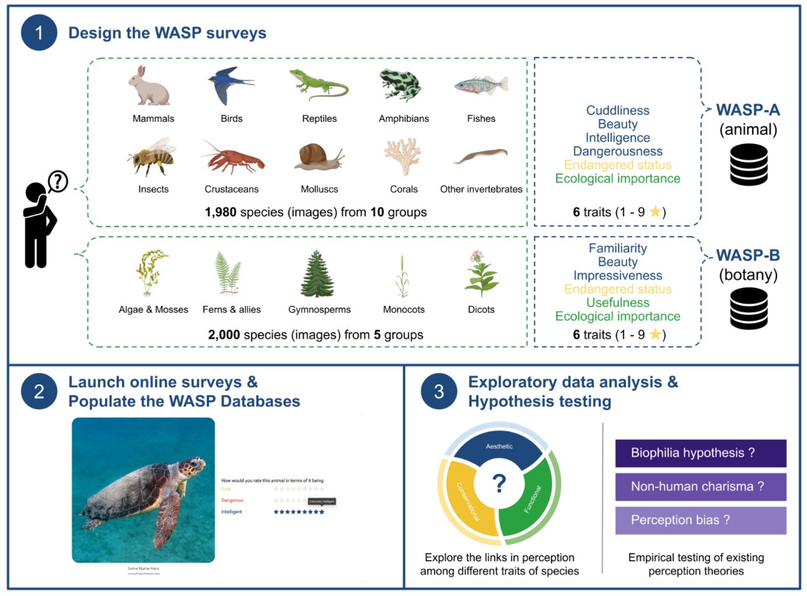
Why research on human perception is important in biodiversity conservation?

A critical factor influencing species conservation is how these species are perceived by the general public. We generally prefer cute, large, fluffy animals such as giant panda and tiger, or colorful and conspicuous birds like flamingoes and parrots. On the other hand, reptiles and amphibians are often negatively perceived, and few invertebrates gain public favouritism.

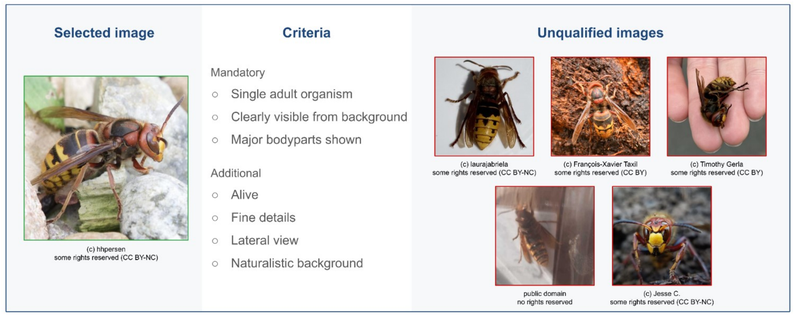
Understanding how people perceive different species help explain the underlying mechanisms of taxonomic bias in conservation, thereby supporting biodiversity conservation as a whole.

Yet, current knowledge is limited to a few taxonomic groups, which makes understanding, comparing and generalizing public perception across the spectrum of life unfeasible.

Here, we introduce the World Archives of Species Perception (WASP) project, including the methodology, the database and some of its applications to support future research on public perception of animals, plants and other lifeforms on earth.



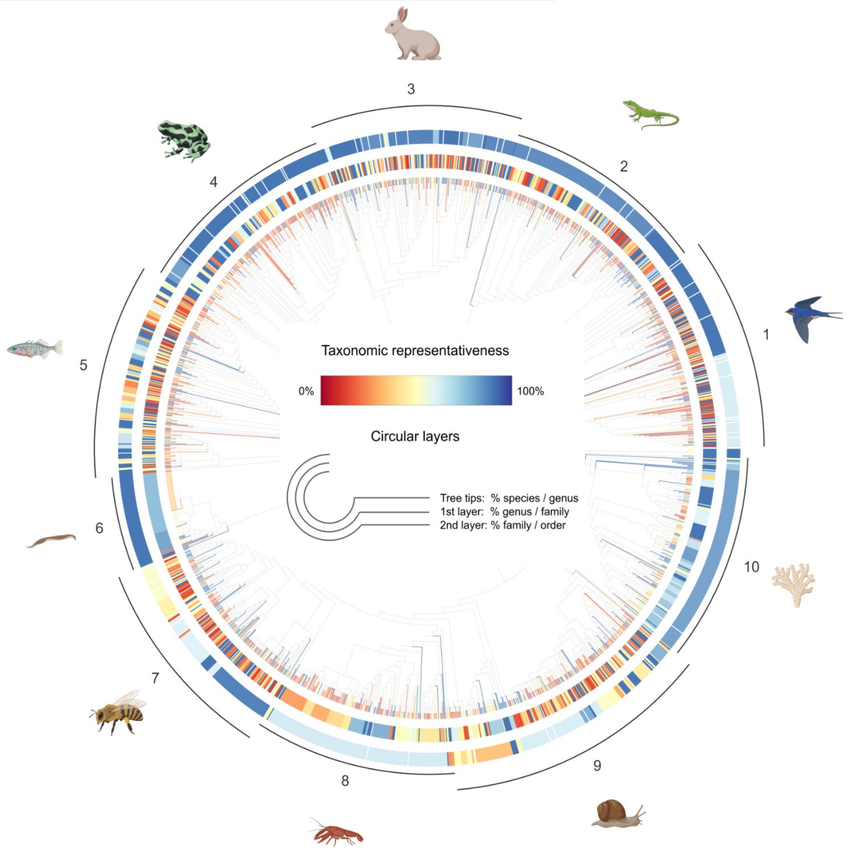
Select species images from iNaturalist



More on WASP Methodology

Nguyen, T., Malina, R., Mokas, I. et al. WASP: the World Archives of Species Perception. Database (2023) Vol. 2023: article ID baad003. doi.org/10.1093/database/baad003

WASP-A PERCEPTION OF ANIMAL DATASET



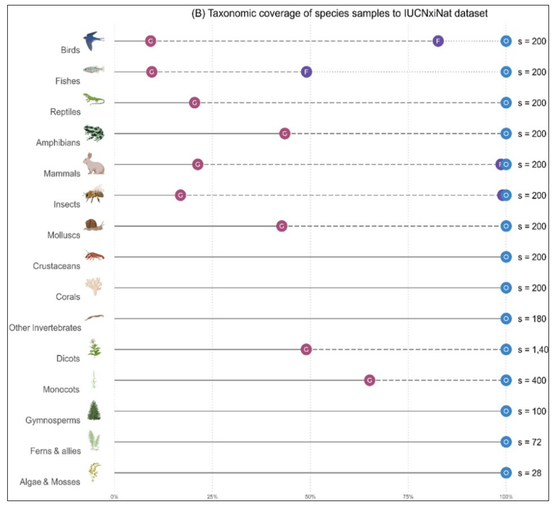
85,000+ Observations

4,000 Respondents

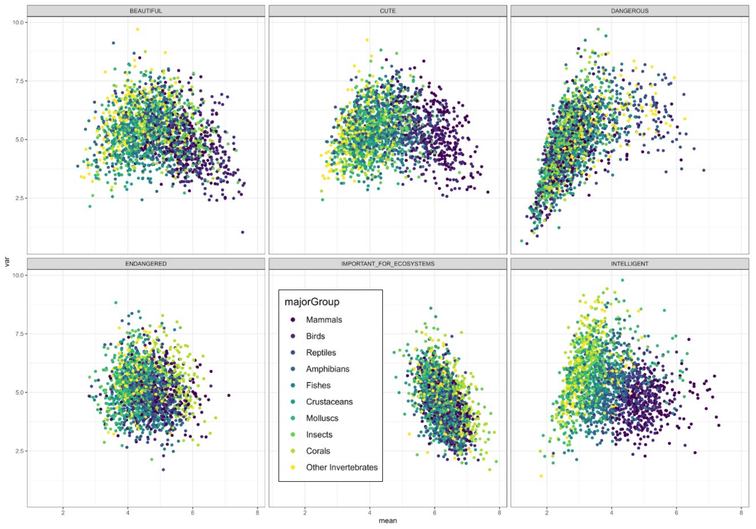
2,000 Species

192 Species orders

Taxonomic representativeness



Preliminary findings: mean and variation across the species trait space



EXAMPLE SPECIES

FUTURE DEVELOPMENT

WASP-A (Phase I)

Collab: CEBioS, Belgium and 10 large zoos

First data collection phase to reach 100,000 observations target.

WASP-A (Phase II, 2025)

Collab: Dr. Diogo Verissimo, WildCRU, University of Oxford, UK

Global data collection of the current dataset by coordinating with zoos and conservation actors around the world.

CEBioS · Pairi Daiza · ZOOPARC de BEAUVAL · Columbus Zoo · Fundación Temaikèn · Lorro Parque Animal Embassy · WILDCRU Wildlife Conservation Research Unit

WASP-B Perception of Plants

Collab: Meise Botanical Garden, Belgium

New global data collection in 2026 by coordinating with botanical gardens and conservation actors around the world.

Meise Botanic Garden

WASP-P Perception of Parasites

Collab: IUCN SSC Parasite Specialist Group

WASP-P
Survey on perception of wildlife parasites

IUCN SSC PARASITE Specialist Group

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Interested in becoming a collaborator or getting in touch with us?

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WASP Project website:
http://wasp-project.net/