



# Wildlife Monitoring & Animal Consumption at BC



Jack Beckham, Lizzy Disanto, Mckenna Foy, Christian McCoy, Jacob Ricco, Frankie Wilton

## Introduction

### Research Objective:

*“To explore the ways in which individuals’ documentation of wildlife interactions affects their relationship with, narrative experience, or rationalization of the consumption of sentient life.”*

### Research Intention:

Our research is aimed at studying the interactions that individuals have with other forms of sentient life and how that affects individuals’ outlook on animal consumption.

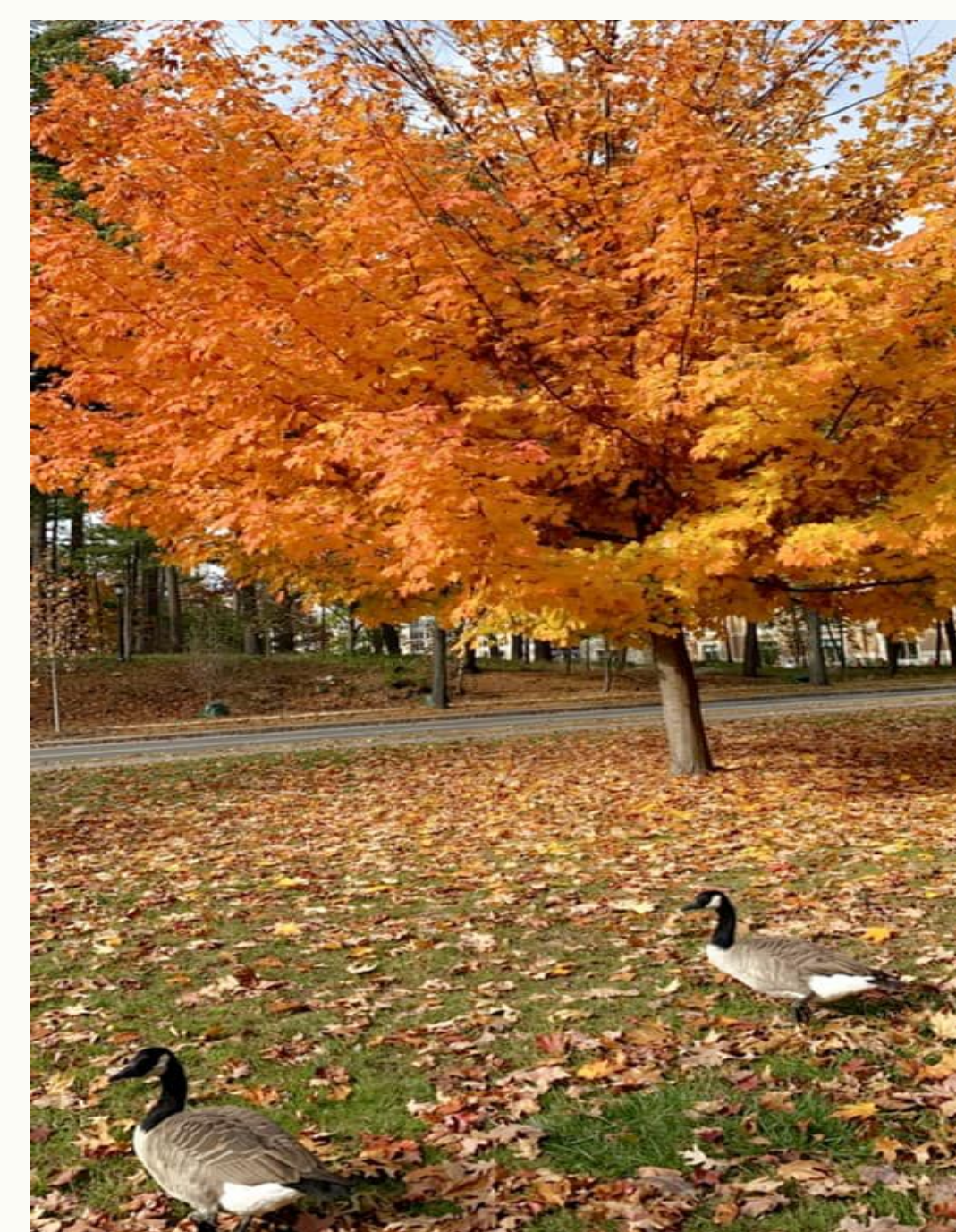
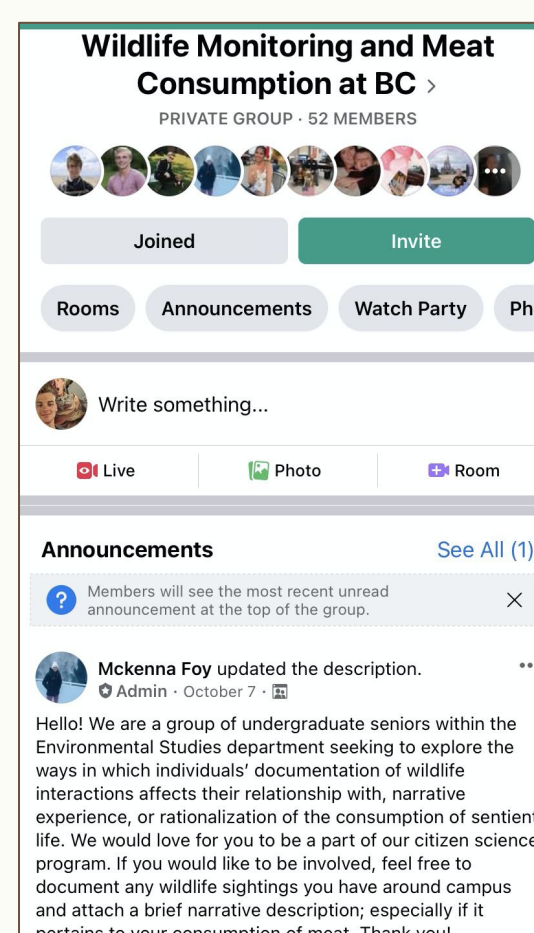
We hope our research provides out citizen scientists with—

- A reason to go outside
- Interaction with sentient life
- An online community of similar individuals
- An opportunity to reflect
- A more nuanced understanding of a shared community between human animals and non-human animals
- College is an important moment for dietary reflection

## Methods

### Facebook Group

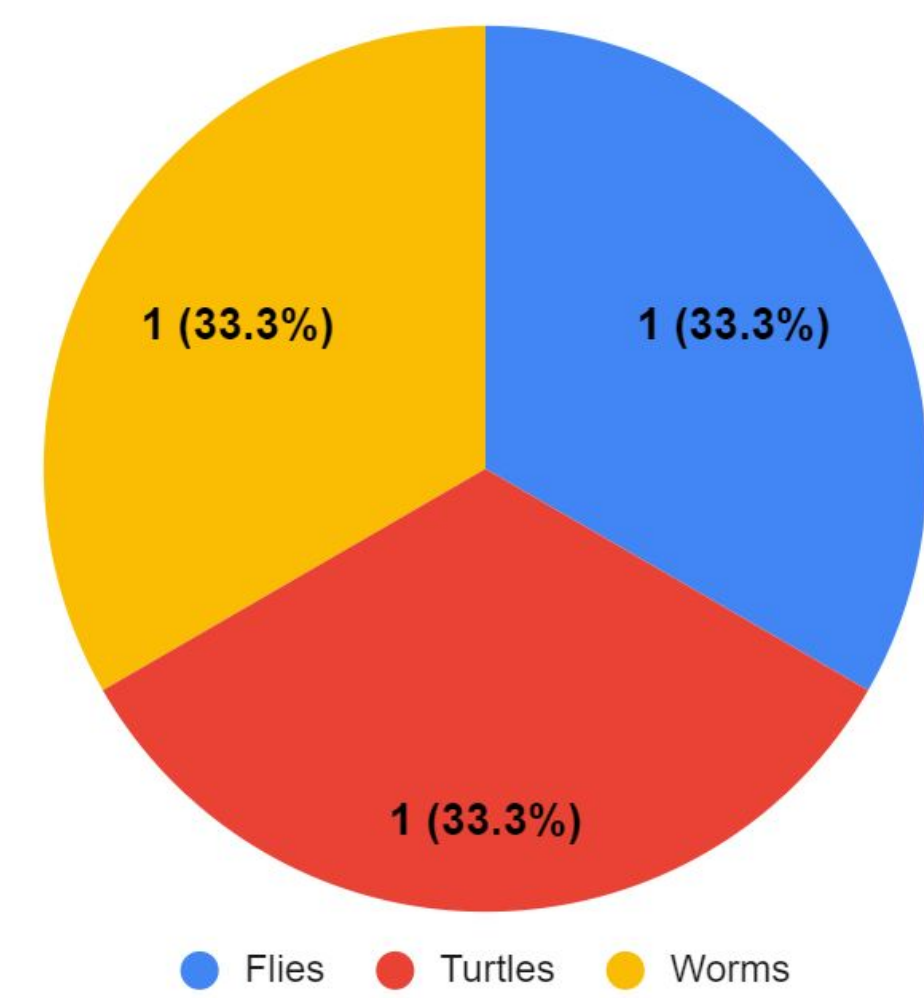
- Facebook group, open to Boston College students via invitation
- Pinned description reveals intent of research and purpose of the group
- We as researchers provide feedback to encourage results that enhance our research



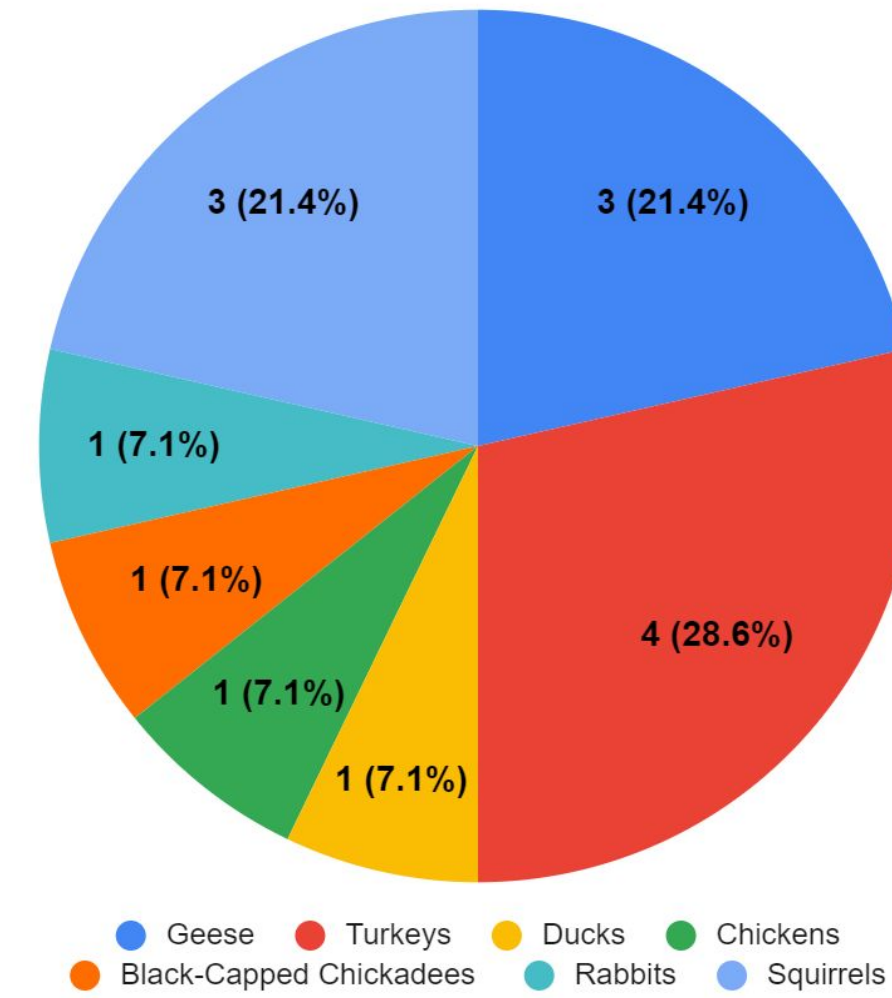
## Results

### Statistics

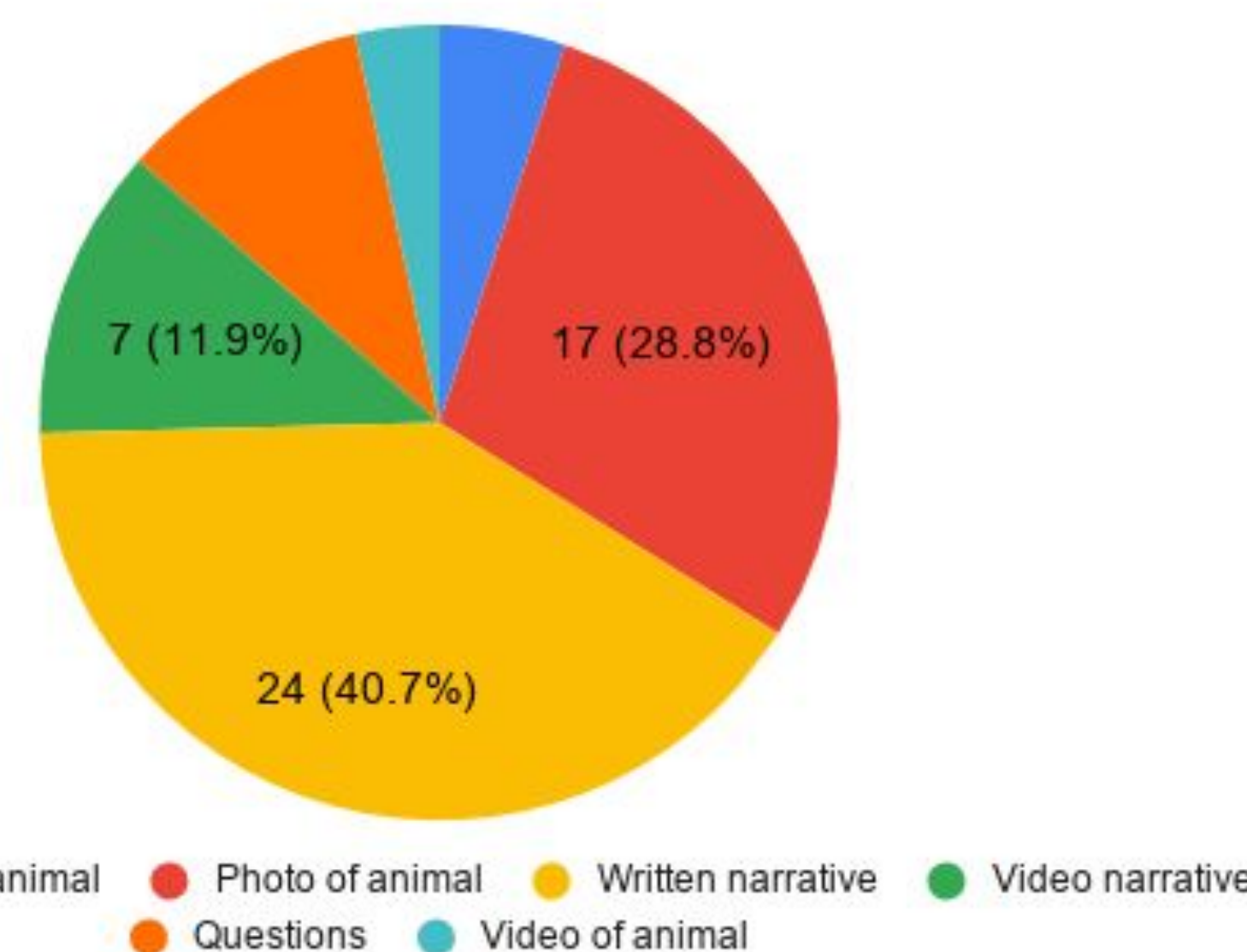
#### Cold Blooded Animals Recorded



#### Warm Blooded Animals Recorded



### Format of Posts



### Emergent Themes

- Acknowledgment of shared sentience
- Opinions on warm-blooded versus cold-blooded animals
- Gender differences
- Associations of animals for food versus “wild” animals
- Expression of compassion for animals and impact on consumption of animals for food
- Moral justifications for consuming animals as food



## Discussion

### Defining Sentience

- Intra-species Relationship
  - “The fact that turkeys are always walking around in groups makes me think that they’re definitely sentient, smart, and social animals”
- Inter-Species Relationship
  - “[We] formed a bond in the short time we locked eyes and then went our separate ways.”
- Universality
  - “This interaction reminded me that all animals are sentient beings and deserve to be valued as such.”

### Gender Dynamics

- “Animals are made of meat”

Overall, we found that while many participants mention having never thought about the sentience of other animals, specifically wild animals, their posts demonstrate a transition towards beginning to acknowledge this shared sentience between themselves and the natural world. The results also suggest that female’s documentation of wildlife profoundly impacts their relationship, experience, and thought processes surrounding the consumption of animals as food; whereas male’s documentation of wildlife interactions impacts their relationship, experience, and thought processes about consuming animals as food less impactful.

Our results are in agreement with a “One Nature” worldview that seeks to co-create a new world without artificial binaries working together to respect the dignity and sentience of all. Participatory action research offers a new way of doing scientific research and activism at once. There may be no greater way to teach empathy and compassion than through active engagement and participation.

## Acknowledgments

As a group, we cannot express enough thanks to our professor, Jennifer Schauer, for her continued support and encouragement throughout this project. We offer our sincere appreciation for the learning opportunities provided and for encouraging us to move into novel spaces, while exploring a deeper connection with the natural world. We also offer our thanks to Professor Pisani Gareau and the Environmental Studies Department

We would also like to thank our participants and the sentient beings they interacted with for their participation in this project and for joining us in exploring our connection with nature as a continuum.