

# Steve Prchal Scholarship Fund

## About

Steve Prchal's unrelenting interest in arthropods started growing near the end of his 16 year tenure at the Arizona-Sonora Desert Museum. He had long cared for the Museum's small collection of arthropods but it wasn't until he took up macrophotography that his interests really started to blossom. A month-long internship at the Cincinnati Zoo's Insectarium in 1979 (when the only other insect zoos were in San Francisco and at the Smithsonian) convinced him that the Museum should be leading the way. He continued in his photography, documenting life histories of Sonoran Desert moths and butterflies and began building a collection of insects found around the Caretaker's House across the road from the Museum. In 3.5 years he had collected more than 1000 species in that small area, clearly demonstrating an incredible diversity that needed to be interpreted. The Museum had other priorities, so in 1986 he left to found the Sonoran Arthropod Studies Institute (SASI). Steve's mission was to promote arthropods and their role through environmental education, research and publications. In his words, he wanted to "Turn the world on to bugs".

SASI fulfilled its mission with a small insect zoo-museum exhibit for the first couple of years while also doing outreach to local schools and conducting teacher training workshops. In 1988 a location in Tucson Mountain Park was secured and served as a terrific location for arthropod research and natural history film projects as well as serving as a base for outreach, membership workshops and other events.

Insect zoos and butterfly houses were becoming more and more common each year. In 1992 at the AZA meetings in Toronto Prchal suggested that instead of individual professionals dropping in throughout the summer months, that SASI hold an organized gathering so all could meet each other. Very quickly this "gathering" grew into what became the 1993 SASI-TITAG Conference, attended by 77 professionals from around the country. The Conference soon became the Invertebrates in Captivity Conference (IICC) and invited presentations on captive husbandry, invertebrate conservation, invertebrate research and education programs using invertebrates and at its peak, had 188 attendees representing 9 countries. The Conference continues to grow and is now known as the Invertebrates in Education and Conservation Conference (IECC).

Steve left SASI on its 20th anniversary to take on another aspect of the insect zoo industry — production of butterflies and other insects in Costa Rica. This scholarship is offered in the name of Steve and promotes his passion for invertebrates, the science of entomology, his love for the natural world, and one of his many missions of inspiring and fostering the next generation of scientists.

The **Steve Prchal Scholarship Fund** is sponsored by the Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA) Terrestrial Invertebrate Taxon Advisory Group (TITAG).

### **The goal of this scholarship:**

- Offer an opportunity to attend the annual Invertebrates in Education and Conservation Conference (IECC)

- Foster the passion of individuals interested in the field of entomology
- Allow for professional networking and mentorship opportunities to individuals looking to pursue studies and/or a career in entomology
- Provide professional development opportunities in the form of field trips, workshops, and scientific and educational lectures.

**The Scholarship will provide funding for the following (up to \$2,000):**

- IECC registration (full) including one workshop and one field trip of your choice
- Round-trip airfare from the award recipient's point of origin to the destination city
- Round-trip airport shuttle ground transportation
- Hotel/lodging throughout the duration of the conference (based on double occupancy rate)
- A stipend to cover meals and incidentals

**Please note:** If you do not receive the award and plan to attend the conference anyway, the scholarship application does not represent a conference registration. To attend the IECC conference you must submit a complete on-line registration form.

**Requirements**

This scholarship is only available to first time attendees of the IECC (formally IICC).

Applicants must have a strong passion for one or more of the following; invertebrate study, invertebrate husbandry, invertebrate conservation and/or education. Applicants must also provide one letter of recommendation with application. A final report summarizing your experience attending the IECC will be due to the TITAG Steering Committee by September 1, 2022 (*Report template will be provided to the awardee*).

We look forward to receiving your application.

Sincerely,

Lou Perrotti,  
Chair of the TITAG Steve Prchal Scholarship Fund

# Steve Prchal Scholarship Fund Application Form

## Application Instructions

Please complete and submit this application form, your essay and letter of recommendation by **April 15, 2022**. Awardees will be notified by **May 15, 2022**. Late applications will not be accepted.

## Submit Applications to:

**Lou Perrotti**  
**Director of Conservation Programs**  
**Roger Williams Park Zoo**  
[Lperrotti@rwpzoo.org](mailto:Lperrotti@rwpzoo.org)

## *Personal Information*

Full Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_

State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_ Country \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

E-Mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Are you over the age of 18? YES / NO

*If under 18 you must attend with a parent or legal guardian*

## **For international applicants please provide your passport information**

Passport Number \_\_\_\_\_ Country issued \_\_\_\_\_

## ***Essay Question***

*In 500 words or less, tell us about the experiences that have influenced your passion for invertebrates and/or your decision to pursue a career in invertebrates and how these experiences will help you in this career choice.*