

RESEARCH CONNECTIONS

PLA wishes to thank Penny Davidson for her dedication and commitment to Research Connections since she commenced researching projects for inclusion into this journal in 2015.

PLA congratulates Penny on winning PLA's highest award for service to the industry in 2017, the Frank Stewart Award, and wishes her well in her new endeavours in Northern NSW.

John Wood has taken over the role of Research Connections editor and looks forward to sharing with you some of the latest research in the parks, recreation and leisure industry.

John welcomes contributions and suggestions regarding current research projects that may be of interest to others. Please forward any suggestions to John at jwcs@bigpond.net.au

AUSTRALIA

PRACTICES OF LITERARY TOURISM: AN AUSTRALIAN CASE STUDY (2013)

Authors

Susan Carson, Lesley Hawkes, Kari Gislason, Samuel Martin

Article Abstract

The purpose of this paper is to present the results of tests for the development of literary trails for domestic visitors and tourists in Brisbane, Queensland, and to situate these findings in the context of recent state government policy changes in relation to culture, community engagement and the environment.

A gap in tourist and cultural development models exists for the implementation of a network of sustainable literary trails in Brisbane – this model can be extended to regions around the state to meet the demands of the new tourist.

The research has produced new software for the use of self-guided walks; the locations for two specific area trails; and the involvement of the State Library of Queensland as a "hub" for the trails.

Substantial support exists for further development in advanced locative media and gaming.

Published International Journal of Culture, Tourism and Hospitality Research, Vol 7. Issue 1. March 2013. pp 42-50

Download <http://www.emeraldinsight.com/doi/full/10.1108/17506181311301345>

Price \$32

HOW ACTIVE ARE PEOPLE IN METROPOLITAN PARKS? AN OBSERVATIONAL STUDY OF PARK VISITATION IN AUSTRALIA (2015)

Authors

Jenny Veitch, Alison Carver, Gavin Abbott, Billie Giles-Corti, Anna Timperio and Jo Salmon

Article Abstract

Parks are generally an under-utilised resource in the community with great potential to enhance levels of physical activity. If parks are to attract more visitors across a broad cross-section of the population and facilitate increased physical activity, research is needed to better understand park visitor characteristics and how visitors spend their time in parks. The Recording and Evaluating Activity in a Modified Park (REVAMP) study is a natural experiment monitoring a park upgrade in a low socioeconomic status (SES) neighbourhood. This study described the observed baseline characteristics of park visitors (age, sex) and characteristics of visitation (weekday or weekend day, period of the day) and explored how these characteristics were associated with observed park-based physical activity in two metropolitan parks located Melbourne, Australia. Parks offer substantial opportunities for people of all ages to engage in physical activity; however, this study showed that a large proportion of the park visitors observed were engaged in sedentary pursuits. Further research on how park design, amenities and programming can optimize park visitation and park-based physical activity is needed.

Published BMC Public Health (2015) 15:610. Open Access article.

Download <https://bmcpublihealth.biomedcentral.com/track/pdf/10.1186/s12889-015-1960-6?site=bmcpublihealth.biomedcentral.com>

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THE AUSTRALIAN SPORT INDUSTRY (2017)

Authors

Ashlee Morgan, Tracy Taylor

Extract

Australia is a large, relatively isolated, country that is populated by just over 23.7 million people (Australian Bureau

of Statistics [ABS], 2015a). Notably, this relatively small and geographically diffused population hosts a vast array of sporting codes, sports events, and professional sport leagues and teams. The Australian sport industry is multi-faceted and comprises government, not-for-profit, commercial, and private enterprises. This multi-million dollar industry has a rich historical tradition that has shaped the way in which contemporary sport is played, organised, and consumed. Australians often refer to themselves as a sport-mad nation, a country that sees sport as part of its national identity, with greater per capita athlete and sport team success than its comparable rivals. This chapter provides a brief history of the development of the sport industry in Australia, key federal government sport policies and initiatives, an overview of professional sport leagues, sport's role in the country's economy and society, and concludes with contemporary issues and trends. Illustrative case vignettes are integrated into each of these sections.

Published Sports Business in Leading Economies. pp 27-64

Download <http://www.emeraldinsight.com/doi/abs/10.1108/978-1-78743-563-620171002>

Price \$32

INTERNATIONAL

BENEFITS OF RESTORING ECOSYSTEM SERVICES IN URBAN AREAS (2015)

Authors

Elmqvist T, Setälä H, Handel S, van der Ploeg S, Aronson J, Blignaut J, Gómez-Baggethun E, Nowak, Kronenberg J, de Groot R.

Article Abstract

Cities are a key nexus of the relationship between people and nature and are huge centres of demand for ecosystem services and also generate extremely large environmental impacts. Current projections of rapid expansion of urban areas present fundamental challenges and also opportunities to design more liveable, healthy and resilient cities (eg. adaptation to climate change effects). We present the results of an analysis of benefits of ecosystem services in urban areas. Empirical analyses included estimates of monetary benefits from

urban ecosystem services based on data from 25 urban areas in the USA, Canada, and China. Our results show that investing in ecological infrastructure in cities, and the ecological restoration and rehabilitation of ecosystems such as rivers, lakes, and woodlands occurring in urban areas, may not only be ecologically and socially desirable, but also quite often, economically advantageous, even based on the most traditional economic approaches.

Published Current Opinion in Environmental Sustainability, Vol 14. June 2015. pp 101-108

Download <http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S1877343515000433?via%3Dihub>

Price FREE

THE HEALTH BENEFITS OF URBAN NATURE: HOW MUCH DO WE NEED (2015)

Authors

Danielle F Shanahan, Richard A Fuller, Robert Bush, Brenda B Lin, Kevin J Gaston

Article Abstract

Over 30 years of research has shown that urban nature is a promising tool for enhancing the physical, psychological, and social wellbeing of the world's growing urban population. However, little is known about the type and amount of nature people require in order to receive different health benefits; preventing the development of recommendations for minimum levels of exposure and targeted city planning guidelines for public health outcomes. Dose-response modelling - when a dose of nature is modelled against a health response - could provide a key method for addressing this knowledge gap. In this overview, we explore how "nature dose" and health response have been conceptualised and examine the evidence for different shapes of dose-response curves. We highlight the crucial need to move beyond simplistic measures of nature dose to understand how urban nature can be manipulated to enhance human health.

Published BioScience, Vol 65. Issue 5. May 2015. pp 476-485

Download <https://academic.oup.com/bioscience/article/65/5/476/324489>

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RELEVANT RESEARCH FOR PRACTICE 2017: FOCUS ON CONSERVATION AND RESILIENCY. A SUMMARY OF RECENT RESEARCH ARTICLES WITH A DIRECT APPLICATION

FOR PUBLIC PARKS AND RECREATION AGENCIES (2015)

Author

National Recreation and Park Association

Article Abstract

This summary report is intended to help bridge the current research-practice gap for practitioners in the field and their decision makers by identifying 33 peer-reviewed published research articles from 2015 to 2017 that provide an evidence base and/or could have a potential impact on the practice of P&R. Community Resiliency and Capacity Building: Covers research and practices related to how agencies can address natural and human-made disasters and change, including preparation and conservation of natural areas to withstand, protect, and revitalise the communities they serve. Human Restoration from Natural Areas: Includes effects of health impacts, nature "dosing," park prescriptions, and the potential return on investment from providing natural environments in communities. Measuring and Communicating the Role of Conservation: Includes research related to the development of updated evaluation metrics and measurement tools to help communities determine how their parks and conservation areas are performing and providing service. This includes evaluating and communicating the role of education and stewardship to promote conservation, quality of life, and community capacity building.

Published © 2015 National Recreation and Park Association

Download <http://www.nrpa.org/contentassets/fb989eacc0f34a6dbef8e8e88dfad9c3/relevant-research-practice-report-2017.pdf>

Price FREE

THE IMPACT OF ENVIRONMENTAL INTERPRETATION IN DEVELOPING A CONNECTION TO NATURE IN PARK VISITORS (2012)

Authors

Mark E Burbach, Lisa Pennisi, Chelsea D West, Sharon Ziegler-Chong

Article Abstract

This static group comparison study examined whether participants in nature-based recreation activities featuring environmental interpretation elicited more connection to nature than those that engaged in nature-based recreation activities without environmental interpretation. This result supports the contention that participation in nature-based recreation

activities featuring environmental interpretation can increase a person's connection to nature. Additionally, frequent park visitors who participated in activities featuring environmental interpretation had a higher connection to nature than frequent park visitors who participated in activities without environmental interpretation. This result supports the contention that frequent park visitors who participate in nature-based recreation activities featuring environmental interpretation can increase their connection to nature. For infrequent park visitors, however, there was no significant difference in connection to nature between participation in activities featuring environmental interpretation and participation in activities without environmental interpretation.

Published The Cyber Journal of Applied Leisure and Recreation Research, Vol 15. Issue 4. Fall 2012. pp13-30

Download <http://larnet.org/2012-04.pdf>

Price FREE

OUTCOMES OF AN AFTER-SCHOOL SOCCER PROGRAM FOR AT-RISK YOUTH (2010)

Authors

Nancy Hritz, Danny E Johnson, Candace Ashton-Shaeffer, Kirk W Brown, PhD

Article Abstract

Children's use of time after-school is a public concern, particularly for elementary school youth considered "at-risk" (Halpern, 2003). In the United States, after-school programs are viewed as a solution for poor academic performance. Lauer, et al (2004) found low academically performing at-risk children improved their reading and math scores after participating in an after school program. In addition, after school programs that focus specifically on recreational sports have the potential to positively enhance self esteem for adolescents (Peterson & Seidman, 2004; Todd & Kent, 2003). This study examined the academic and social outcomes of an after school recreation program for at risk elementary school children. Pre and post participation data revealed significant academic improvement in math and reading scores and improved social skills. Teachers also reported positive improvement in behaviours such as time-management, acceptance of criticism, and cooperation. Students responded favourably stating they felt better about school and making friends.

Published The Cyber Journal of Applied Leisure and Recreation Research. July 2010.

Download <http://larnet.org/2010-01.html>

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