

Last Paper

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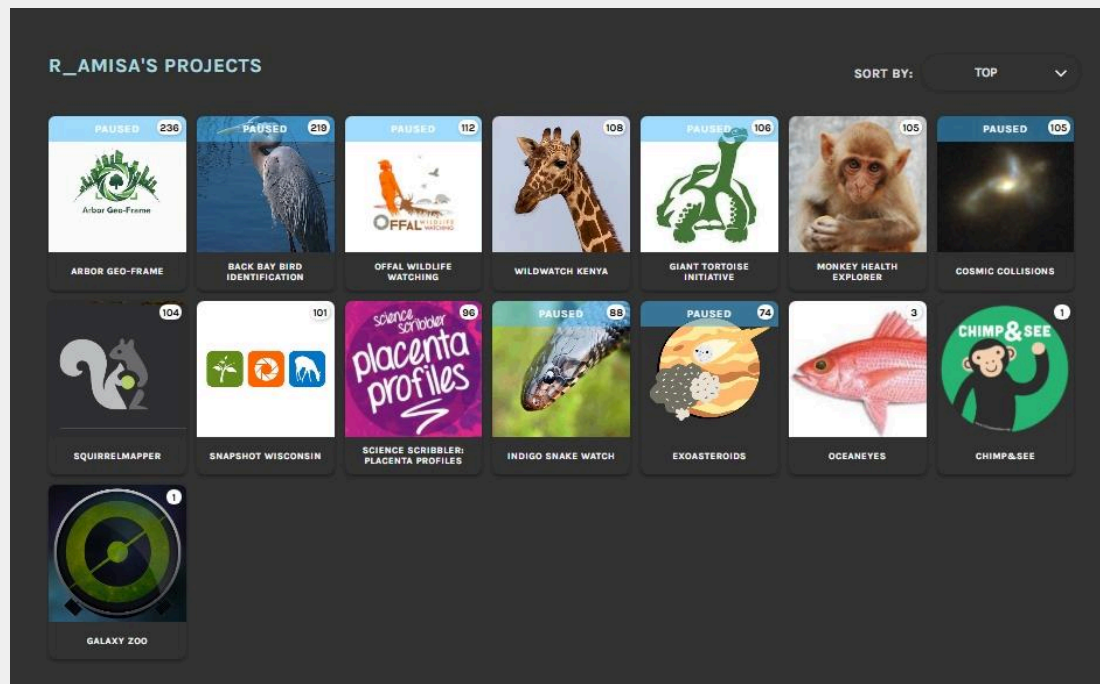
This document summarizes what I learned through my first self-directed research experience; it includes reflections, challenges, and skills gained.

Was it Worth it?

I wanted to see research process in practice while learning how to write research papers myself.

At first I used to think this was something someone could put in their portfolio. I was wrong. I spent 2 quarters of my grade 9 doing this when I could have been doing something more “efficient”. However, no feeling of regret is in me.

The projects I have worked on:



The number of images I have classified:



The skills I have gained from those:

- **Observational Skills:** My ability to focus on something for a long time, noticing the inconsistencies and patterns skills. I could also be more confident in this skill with time.
- **Patience:** Zooniverse takes time when someone wishes to do 100 images in one sitting. While not recommending this, I also wanted to improve my attention span while depriving myself from anything distracting and see how accurate I can be when my mind simply goes into “the flow” mood. Sometimes, it never felt like time have passed and I still felt like I could continue it for one more hour (It took 3 hours in average) — a good sign, hopefully.
- **Scientific Knowledge:** While not claiming that I know everything regarding science, Zooniverse taught me a lot of interesting facts in science — whether it is about wildlife, squirrels, monkeys, asteroids — anything. It has made those facts be more likely to be remembered when someone is observing every part of an image, trying to classify it.
- **Time Management:** Not only that I become faster at this, it also taught me a lot about my time management. Since I was trying to do this every week, I was forced to get out of my messy schedule and create something that actually works.
- **Research Paper Writing Skills:** Though I cannot say I know how to write a research paper (yet), I can say I know a bit of APA format now (I do know how to use citations now and can avoid unintentional plagiarism), and how to organize information in a clear manner. It also taught me many ways on how to make a paper look more attractive (I

never thought about making paper grey until I started this; though not everyone would like it, I found out that it helps with my light sensitivity.)

The challenges I have faced:

- **Confusion:** At first, distinguishing similar-looking species in camera trap photos was confusing. I learned to create personal checklists to avoid mistakes.
 - **Attention Span:** Though I try not to spend much time on social media and get affected by brainrot, my attention span was still lower than someone from a previous generation. A huge reason behind me sitting for 3 hours in a spot, every week was to make it longer — and it worked.
 - **Overwhelming:** Trying to categorize species, especially the ones that look similar often arose unpleasant feelings in me. The constant checking the field guide and guilt for guessing did not help as well.
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I will carry all the skills I have gathered through those projects into forensic pathology and (future) med school, where those skills will be in proper use and all those 40 hours of mine would not be in waste.

This is my last paper regarding Zooniverse. It marks the end of my first self-directed research journey and the beginning of more forensic-focused investigations.



This is to certify that

R_AMISA

has contributed

35.9

hours

to **15 projects** during **Sep 5 - Dec 10, 2025**
hosted by the online citizen science platform **Zooniverse**

Dr. Laura Trouille

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