

## **SPRING 2012 meeting of the Natural Area Advisory Committee**

19 April 2012, NATL academic pavilion, 4:00 – 5:15 pm

Recorded by Lary Reeves

### **In attendance:**

Jennifer Gillett-Kaufman (NAAC Chair)

Christopher Holderman (ENSO)

Kaoru Kitajima (Department of Biology)

Erik Lewis (Facilities Planning and Construction)

Anna Normand (Wetlands Club)

Jack Putz (Department of Biology)

Beverly Sensbach (FLMNH)

Katie Sieving (NAAC Vice-Chair)

Eduardo Silva (NATL Graduate TA)

Lary Reeves (NATL Graduate TA)

Tom Walker (NATL Super Volunteer)

Elizabeth Wells (NATL Undergraduate TA)

### **4:00 PM**

#### **1. FY 2011 Budget Update (Jennifer Gillett-Kaufman)**

The 2011-12 NATL Fiscal Plan and Report is attached as Appendix 1.

#### **2. Draft of 2012-2013 Spending Plan (Jennifer)**

Attending NAAC members approved using the 2012-2013 Spending Plan as the basis for spending decisions between 1 July 2012 and the Fall 2012 NAAC Meeting. The 2012-13 NATL Fiscal Plan is attached as Appendix 2.

#### **3. NAAC Membership (Jennifer)**

NAAC membership was discussed to ensure that its members participate and remain representative of the units actively using the Natural Area. New members and methods for increasing participation are under consideration. Current members who are inactive and department chairs will be contacted to find replacements for inactive members, new members will be invited to the Fall meeting.

#### **4. DIY Campus EcoArt (Jennifer)**

**a.** As part of the Provost's "Creative B," the course "DIY Campus Eco Art" will be offered during the Summer B semester and will be taught by Dr. Jennifer Gillett-Kaufman. Students in this course will create artwork to be displayed temporarily in the Natural Area. To support the course, the provost has awarded a grant that will assist the instructors and provide some new metal plant signs for NATL.

**b.** Two NAAC members are requested to volunteer to serve on a judge panel at 8:30 AM on July 10, 2012 at the NATL Pavilion. Judges will hear art ideas from the course's students and will be able to veto or provide suggestions to the students' plans. NAAC judges will also help to ensure that none of the proposed artwork is overly invasive to NATL.

#### **5. Website Revision (Jennifer)**

Tom Barnash is currently working on a needed revision to that NATL website. The cost of revising the website (\$400) will be covered by the endowment that was set-up by Tom Walker to provide some financial incentive to the NATL Chair during their time of service.

#### **6. Support from Provost (Katie Sieving)**

It is still unknown if the Provost will continue to support a second NATL TA and our budget at the current funding level. The vice-chair will contact the Provost with a brief NATL update and ask for continued commitment at last year's level of support. The vice-chair will resend

our capital improvement plan in the hope that the Provost has additional funds he would like to invest in NATL.

**7. NATL Pavilion (Katie)**

Scheduling conflicts among NATL-users who wish to use the Pavilion has been a minor problem. The vice-chair will install a sign-up page on the revised NATL website to allow classes or groups to reserve the space and reduce these conflicts.

**8. Graduate TA Position Opening (Katie)**

NATL graduate TA, Eduardo Silva received a Ph.D. this semester and has accepted a job offer in Chile. Attending members unanimously approved that Amanda Abel, an incoming graduate student with the Department of Wildlife Ecology and Conservation will fill the graduate TA position. Abel's C.V. and a statement are attached as Appendix 4.

**9. Volunteer Update (Eduardo Silva)**

Since September 2011, NATL has hosted 61 volunteers that have collectively worked 164 hours on various projects including wiregrass planting, invasive plant removal, trash collection and others. In addition, NATL-Super Volunteers, Tom Walker and Ken Prestwich collectively donated 242 hours of their time to the Natural Area in 2011 and the beginning of 2012. For a detailed Volunteer Summary, see Appendix 5.

**10. Tract A Update (Eduardo)**

On March 12, 2012 PPD bush hogged Plot A of the Old Field plots. Prior to this, Eduardo Silva and Lary Reeves collected data on the trees that had grown in Plot A since the previous restart in 2002. The plot is currently being cleared of remaining trees and will be tilled as soon as all trees have been removed (excluding longleaf pines).

**11. People Counter Update (Lary Reeves)**

- a. The two Trailmaster units installed at the Academic and Cultural Plaza entrances have provided reliable data on the number of people entering or exiting NATL since early 2011, despite initial difficulties. Data collected by these units is summarized in Appendix 6.
- b. On April 13, 2012, Tom Walker and Lary Reeves successfully installed the third (and final) Trailmaster Unit at NATL's NAP-Entrance

**12. Barn Owls/Pitcher Plants (Lary)**

- a. The Operations Committee is exploring the possibility of installing a barn owl nesting box in one of the longleaf pines adjacent to the Old Field plots. The proposed box would be visible from the Old Field trail and would create an interesting interpretive opportunity along the trail and could serve to increase interest among the bird-watching public. An expenditure of \$200 on the barn owl box was unanimously approved.
- b. Similarly, the Operations Committee is investigating the potential for the establishment of pitcher plants (*Sarracenia*) in SEEP's wetlands. However, at this point, we are unsure if they would persist in SEEP.

**13. NSF Announcement (Lary)**

In April of 2012, Lary Reeves accepted a NSF Graduate Research Fellowship. Lary will continue to serve as a NATL graduate TA until the start of the fellowship in May 2013.

**14. Facebook and Twitter Update (Elizabeth Wells)**

- a. NATL's Facebook page currently has 189 "likes" and more than 50 other organization pages following.
- b. NATL's Twitter account has an average of 120 daily users.

**15. Nature Trail Update (Elizabeth)**

- a. Nature trail signs continue to evolve. Over the past several months new QR codes have been integrated into the nature trails including a set on NATL's frogs with QR codes linking to each species' call.

- b. A new batch of 72 new permanent 5x4" signs and a 2x3' ant lion sign will soon be printed by Color Reflections.

**16. Bike Rack (Tom Walker)**

- a. In December 2011, a bike rack appeared near the pavilion, provided by Darrell Pons of UF's Physical Plant. We are currently working with Darrell to place a second bike rack at Natural Area Park.

**17. Invasives Update (Tom)**

- a. Efforts to control Coral Ardisia in NATL have been ongoing since 2010. Since then, significant progress has been made towards eliminating the plant from NATL. In early 2012, Ethan Carter, Tom Walker and Lary Reeves, with the help of volunteer groups led by Sarah Allred completed a census of gridblocks where Coral Ardisia was previously known to occur. Only five berry-bearing plants were found, a >99% decrease from 2011. Currently, Ardisia control efforts have all but eliminated the plant from the Natural Area.
- b. Other than Ardisia, Skunkvine and Cogon Grass are the two highest priority invasives in the Natural Area. Skunkvine has not been observed in NATL since 2010, when two plants were found and killed. Cogon Grass hangs on, but has been nearly eliminated.

**18. Restoration of Upland Pine (Tom)**

- a. Weather and personnel conflicts did not allow us to prescribe burn any of NATL's Upland Pine tracts in 2011. Dr. Alan Long is hopeful that a burn will take place this year. Personnel and equipment resources are lined up in case of opportune weather. After this year, Michael Andreu will serve as burnmaster for prescribed burns in NATL.
- b. On April 30, 2012, a group will meet at NATL to discuss direct seeding of wiregrass and other restoration methods in the Upland Pine tracts. A 1.2 acre demo plot will be established in Tract D of NATL's Restricted Area Pine where the methods discussed will be implemented.

**19. Input from Attending NAAC Committee Members**

- a. On April 21, 2012, the FLMNH will host a BioBlitz in the Natural Area as part of similar Earth Day events taking place inside the museum. The activities in NATL will not include collecting of specimens, but demonstrations of methods for collecting and preparing specimens and natural resource sampling.
- b. The proposed FLMNH collections storage building discussed at previous NAAC meetings will not impact NATL in any way.

**5:15 PM Meeting adjourns**

Appendix 1: Fiscal Report for 2011-2012

NATL Fiscal Plan for FY 2011-12		19 Apr 2011 Report for FY 2011-12	
Approved by NAAC and LVL, fall 2011			
Funds available for 2011-12 (excluding stipends for Graduate TAs*)		Receipts	
		Already received	Projected
Brought forward from 2010-11		178	178
Projected income for 2011-12			
Provost	6,000	6,000	6,000
NATL endowment	4,560	3,194	4,259
		75	75
Sum	10,560		Online donations (implemented January 2012)
	<b>Grand Total</b>	9,447	<b>\$10,512</b>
<b>Spending plan for 2011-12</b>			
		Expenditures	
		Already spent or encumbered	Projected
Routine expenses	2,000	568	<b>2,000</b>
Budgeted			Re-start of plot A, new signs, owlbox, website
Undergraduate TA	3,010	2,552	<b>3,010</b>
Control of invasives	2,640	1,741	<b>2,640</b>
3000 wiregrass plugs	900	600	<b>900</b>
2000 NT fillers	270	474	<b>474</b>
People counter for NAP entrance	300	311	<b>311</b>
Controlled burn of upland pine	600	0	0
2 minigrants @\$500 each	1,000	500	<b>500</b>
			0 if burn master hired, TNC crew not available
	Sum	6,746	<b>9,835</b>
To be carried forward		18	<b>676</b>
	<b>Grand Total</b>		<b>\$10,512</b>
			Contingency for shared cost of capital improvement
* The Provost and the CALS Dean will each pay the stipend for a NATL Graduate Teaching Assistant			

**Appendix 2: Fiscal Plan for 2012-2013**

<b>NATL Fiscal Plan for FY 2012-13</b>				
Needs approval by NAAC and LVL, fall 2012				
<b>Funds available for 2011-12 (excluding stipends for Graduate TAs*)</b>				
Brought forward from 2011-12				
Projected income for 2011-12				
Provost	6,000			
NATL endowment	4,560			
Online donations		10,560		
<b>Grand Total</b>			<b>10,738</b>	
<b>Spending plan for 2012-13</b>				
Routine expenses	2,000			
Budgeted				
Undergraduate TA	3,010			does most of the routine maintenance of nature trails
Control of invasives	2,640			pays invasive specialist for 8 hrs work every pay period
Upland pine restoration	900			continues long-term effort to restore longleaf pine understory
2000 NT filers	474			based on previous price (Fall 2011)
Controlled burn of upland pine	600			will be needed if SFR-C burn master not available
2 minigrants @\$500 each	1,000			program attracts student proposals to fulfill NATL needs
Sum	10,624			
To be carried forward				
Grand Total	10,624			
* The Provost and the CALS Dean each paid the stipend for a NATL Graduate Teaching Assistant				

Appendix 3: NAAC Roster

NAAC roster: Spring 2012						
The current version of the NAAC roster is at <a href="http://natl.ifas.ufl.edu/NAACRoster.xls">http://natl.ifas.ufl.edu/NAACRoster.xls</a>						
Last name	First name	Representing	Email	Campus address	Phone (352-)	Notes
Brown	Mark	Environmental Engineering Science Dept	mtb@ufl.edu	PO Box 116450	392-2309	
Clark	Mark	Soil and Water Science	clarkmw@ufl.edu	PO Box 110510	392-1804 ext: 319	
Cohen	Matthew	School of Natural Resources & Environment	mjc@ufl.edu	PO Box 110510	392-1804 ext: 348	
Daniels	Jaret	McGuire Center, FLMNH	jdaniels@flmnh.ufl.edu	PO Box 110620	273-2022	
De Chapman	Gail	Chair of Lakes, Vegetation, and Landscaping Com.	ghansen@ufl.edu	PO Box 110621	392-1831 ext: 262	
Dickson	Donald	Entomology & Nematology Department	dwd@ufl.edu	PO Box 110620	273-3938	
<b>Gillett-Kaufman</b>	<b>Jennifer</b>	Entomology & Nematology Department ( <b>NAAC Chair</b> )	<a href="mailto:gillett@ufl.edu">gillett@ufl.edu</a>	PO Box 110620	273-3950	
Gommermann	Luke	Wetlands Club	<a href="mailto:lukes04@ufl.edu">lukes04@ufl.edu</a>	G158 McCarty A	392-1951 ext: 259	
Holland	Stephen	Tourism, Recreation and Sport Management	sholland@hnp.ufl.edu	PO Box 118208	392-4042 ext: 1313	
Jones	Linda	School of Teaching and Learning	ljones@coe.ufl.edu	PO Box 117048	392-0761 ext: 267.	
Kitajima	Kaoru	Department of Biology	<a href="mailto:kitajima@ufl.edu">kitajima@ufl.edu</a>	PO Box 118526	392-4234	
Kobzar	Leda	Forest Resources & Conservation	<a href="mailto:lkobzar@ufl.edu">lkobzar@ufl.edu</a>	PO Box 110410	846-0901	
Lavey	Doug	Department of Biology	<a href="mailto:davey@ufl.edu">davey@ufl.edu</a>	PO Box 118525	392-9169	
Lewis	Erik	Facilities Planning and Construction	elewis@ufl.edu	PO Box 115050	273-4011	
Normand	Anna	Wetlands Club	evangelina@ufl.edu	PO Box 110510		
Prestwich	Ken	NATL Super Volunteer	kprestwi@holycross.edu	none		
Putz	Jack	Department of Biology	<a href="mailto:jep@ufl.edu">jep@ufl.edu</a>	PO Box 118526	392-1486	
Reeves	Lary	NATL Graduate Teaching Assistant	<a href="mailto:laryreeves@gmail.com">laryreeves@gmail.com</a>	PO Box 110620	514-2794	
Sensbach	Beverly	Florida Museum of Natural History	sensbach@flmnh.ufl.edu	PO Box 112710	273-1900	non-voting
<b>Sieving</b>	<b>Katie</b>	Wildlife Ecology & Conservation Department ( <b>NAAC vice-cl</b> )	chucaco@ufl.edu	PO Box 110430	846-0569	
Silva	Eduardo	NATL Graduate Teaching Assistant	eduardosilva@ufl.edu	PO Box 110430	846 8375	
Smith	Erick	Friend of NATL	edsmith@ufl.edu	none	380-0648	
Walker	Tom	Friend of NATL	tw@ufl.edu	PO Box 112015	273-3920	
Wells	Elizabeth	Undergraduate Teaching Assistant	<a href="mailto:ehawells@gmail.com">ehawells@gmail.com</a>			non-voting

## Appendix 4: Statement and C.V. from Amanda Abel

### Statement from Amanda Abel

I am very excited to be considered for the NATL TA and I feel that I would be a great fit for this position. I will be receiving my B.S. in Environmental Science and Policy from USF this May, and I have valuable field and public outreach experience. Through an internship with the Florida Fish and Wildlife Commission, I worked with several projects in the Brooksville Ridge area. The projects in which I spent the most time were the Red-cockaded Woodpecker and the South-Eastern American Kestrel Monitoring Projects. I learned the importance of prescribed burning and succession, which is knowledge I could apply to working in the old-field succession area of the NATL. I worked at Chinsegut Nature Center on Saturday mornings, which entailed greeting visitors, answering questions about wildlife, cleaning, filling bird feeders, and other miscellaneous jobs. I also took part in the public outreach programs hosted at the nature center. On Pioneer day I helped teach children about the lifestyles of European settlers in Florida, specifically showing them how to make candles. In a competition called an Envirothon, high school students were asked about environmental subjects and I helped grade the tests. I also spent time doing invasive species removal, specifically Coral Ardisia and Rattlebox in the Withlacoochee State Forest. I have been working at a plant nursery in Tampa for the last year and so I am familiar with many common native and invasive plant species in Florida. Through the graduate level Wildlife Ecology class I took last semester, I learned how to identify over 100 common birds and mammals of Florida. After touring the NATL and learning about the various restoration and educational projects taking place, I feel that my knowledge, experiences, and interests make me great candidate for the TA position.

### CV for Amanda M. Abel

email: aabel@mail.usf.edu

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#### EDUCATION:

- University of South Florida- Tampa, Florida
  - Bachelor of Science, Environmental Science and Policy- Science Track
  - Degree anticipated May 2012
  - Current GPA: 3.46
- GRE scores:
  - Verbal Reasoning Scaled Score: 157
  - Quantitative Reasoning Scaled Score: 152
  - Analytical Writing: 3.5

#### RESEARCH INTERESTS:

- Management of threatened or endangered species, conservation of biodiversity, landscape ecology, habitat fragmentation and how it effects animal dispersal, inbreeding depression, wildlife corridors, natural and artificial boundary effects, and

reserve design

### **EXPERIENCE:**

- *Intern*, Florida Fish and Wildlife Commission-Brooksville, FL Jan. 2011-May 2011
- *Plant Nursery Salesperson/ Office Assistant*, Treemart-Tampa, FL Feb. 2011-Jun. 2011
- *Waitress*, Casa Mexicana-Tampa, FL Aug. 2008-Sept. 2008
- *Teller*, Bank of Evansville-Evansville, WI Sept. 2006-Jul. 2008

### **SKILLS AND ACHEIVEMENTS**

- Dean's List Spring 2010 and Fall 2011
- Bilingual in English and Spanish
- Computer Skills: Microsoft Office, arcGIS, and Adobe Photoshop
- Field Skills: wildlife identification, point counts, line and belt transect studies, operating a "peeper" and GPS, surveying Red-Cockaded Woodpecker cavity trees, herbicide application, invasive plant removal, aging deer jaw bones, and creating animal activity budgets

### **ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES**

- Botanical Gardens Club at USF
- Volunteer at Chinsegut Nature Center in Brooksville, FL

### **REFERENCES**

- Dr. Gordon Fox
  - Affiliation: Associate Professor in the Department of Integrative Biology at USF
  - Email: gfox@usf.edu
- Mary Dowdell
  - Affiliation: Red-Cockaded Woodpecker Biologist at the Florida Fish and Wildlife Commission
  - Email: mary.dowdell@myfwc.com
- Dr. Joni Downs
  - Affiliation: Assistant Professor in the Department of Geography, Environment, and Planning at USF
  - Email: downs@usf.edu

### **Internship Overview**

Organization: Florida Fish and Wildlife Commission  
Supervisors: Annemarie Hammond and Mary Dowdell  
January-June 2011

Assisting Mary Dowdell (Red-Cockaded Woodpecker Biologist) in the Withlacoochee State Park

- Timber stand improvement: cutting down oak undergrowth and applying herbicide to stumps in woodpecker clusters to improve habitat
- Tree prep: preparing longleaf pines with woodpecker cavities for prescribed burns (clearing duff, trimming wiregrass around trees, and scraping bark)
- Cavity checks: using a peeper and GPS to check the status of cavities before and after breeding season began for an annual population survey

#### South-Eastern American Kestrel Monitoring

- Box check: using a peeper or ladder to survey the activity of Kestrel boxes in a variety of location for research data on the viability of kestrel boxes in different habitats

#### Invasive Species Removal

- Removal of Coral Ardisia at Ahochee Hill with a project called “Together Green”, hosted by the Audubon Society
- Rattlebox (*Crotalaria*) removal in the Withlacoochee State Forest

#### Rare Invertebrate Survey

- SLAM and blacklight traps: setting up/taking down traps and collecting samples for research data on the occurrence of rare invertebrate species

#### Chinsegut Nature Center Maintenance

- Cleaning, taking out trash, filling bird feeders, and other miscellaneous jobs

#### Public Outreach

- Pioneer day: teaching children about the lifestyles of European settlers in Florida, specifically candle making
- Campfire sing-along: playing violin in the sing-along
- Envirothon: grading tests for a competition where high school students were asked about environmental subjects
- Half Moon Wildlife Management Area Trail Opening: assisting with grand opening preparation
- A Night of Bats and Ballads: helping serve food at an event all about bat education

#### Term Paper

- Red-Cockaded Woodpeckers
  - Reproduction and Social Structure
  - Foraging and Diet
  - Habitat
  - Cavities
  - Conservation

#### Calculus II Project

- For this project I used population growth equations and Red-Cockaded Woodpecker population data from the past 11 years to predict future growth of the population in the Citrus Tract of the Withlacoochee State Forest. This information was then used to predict the time it will take the population to reach carrying capacity for the specific habitat.

## Appendix 5: Volunteer Summary

**Volunteer summary:** Since September 2011 we have been tracking the participation of volunteers in NATL. Since that date 61 different volunteers have contributed to NATL with nearly 164 hours of work (Table 1) in diverse tasks such as wiregrass planting (32.1%), Ardisia control (30.7%) and picking up garbage (20.1%) among other activities. **Volunteer total- 164 hours.**

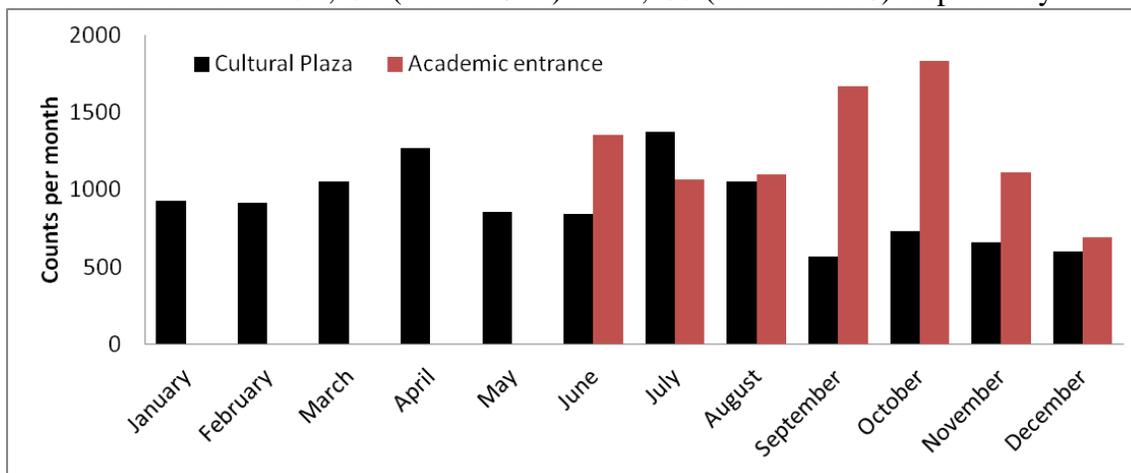
**Table 1.** Number of hours allocated by volunteers to activities organized between September 2011 and March 2012 in NATL. Some students volunteered in multiple months.

Year	Month	Volunteers	Hours
2011	September	34	70.2
2011	October	4	4.5
2011	November	5	10.7
2011	December	3	10.8
2012	January	13	26.5
2012	February	5	21.0
2012	March	5	20.0
Total		61	163.7

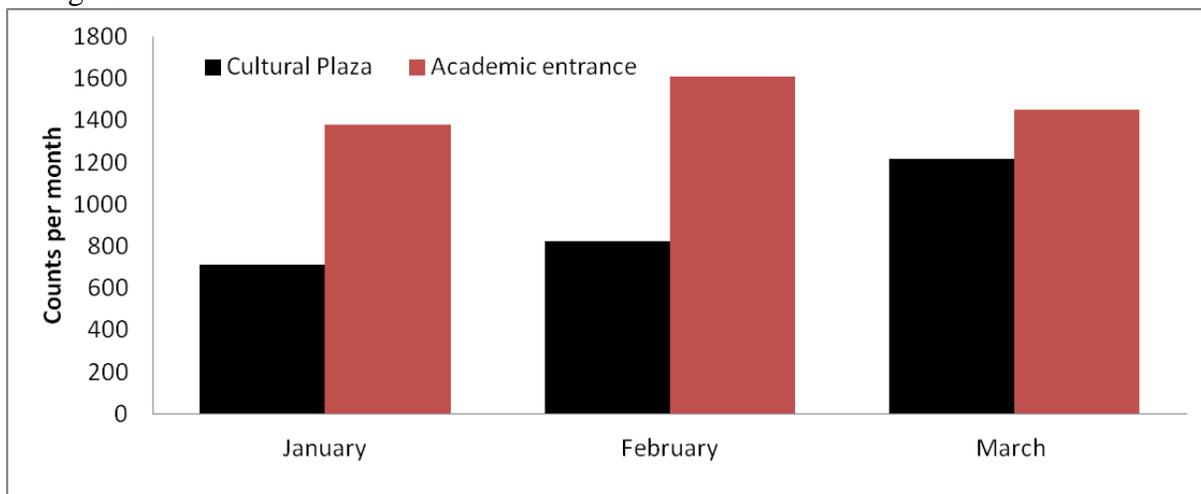
**Super volunteer summary:** Dr. Tom J. Walker volunteered 78 hours in 2011 and 109 hours between January and March 2012. Dr. Ken Prestwich contributed with 55 hours of volunteering between December 2011 and March 2012. **Super volunteer total- 242 hours.**

## Appendix 6: People Counter Summary

**People counter summary:** The trail master equipment located in the Cultural Plaza and Academic entrances provide an indication of number of visitors per month. For 2011, the total number of entrances registered in Cultural Plaza and Academic entrance was 10,847 (January to December) and 8,820 (June to December) respectively. This yields an average of 904 entries per month in Cultural Plaza and 1260 in Academic entrance. Note however that the trail master started working in the Academic Entrance only in June 2011. In general, a much higher number of counts were recorded in the Academic entrance (Figure 1), which could reflect the fact that most classes meet in the Pavilion. This pattern continues holding in 2012 (Figure 2). For the present year (January-March) the total number of entrances registered in Cultural Plaza and Academic entrance was 2,752 (mean = 917) and 4,435 (mean = 1478) respectively.



**Figure 1.** Summary of Trail Master counts at Cultural Plaza and Academic entrances to NATL during 2011.



**Figure 2.** Summary of Trail Master counts at Cultural Plaza and Academic entrances to NATL between January and March 2012.