



# THE CABINET



# OF CURIOSITIES

## A PROJECT OUTLINE

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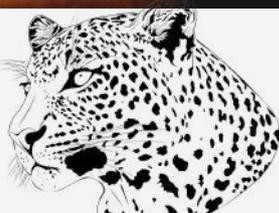


CREATED BY  
ELLIOT CONNOR

# The Cabinet of Curiosities

with Elliot Connor

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# BRIEF OVERVIEW

The Cabinet of Curiosities documentary mini-series was i during Australia's lockdown from the novel coronavirus φ philosophy was simply to create a means for youth and adults alike to learn and connect with nature whilst in these challenging circumstances. Each show lasted up to ten minutes in length, and streamed via major video hosting platforms in addition to social media. The weekly topic was simply an item in the presenter (Elliot's) collections, be it a cicada exoskeleton, shark's egg or shell's operculum.

The structure consistently formed was one of a 30s spoken introduction followed by establishing sequences and the series' musical theme. Then the presenter was cut to once more and said a few lines on the object for the episode, followed by an extended narrative detailing the natural history and lifestory of the creature referenced. Still images provided backdrop for detailed explanations, with a fixed eye-level camera substituted otherwise. Stylistic elements were adapted from David Attenborough's Natural Curiosities, as a reference point in both structure and content. The setting was an improvised studio mockup with two adjacent desks containing an assortment of collection items and the cabinet itself.

Scripts were performed unrehearsed, and a maximum of two takes made for authenticity. A simple lighting rig produced a warm, yellow ambience in fitting with the tone. Episode subjects were sequenced to vary across successive episodes across habitats, animal type and the nature of the object itself. Each episode was written, filmed, presented and edited by Elliot Connor from his living spaces, with minimal usage of third party materials (all appropriately credited) from independent creators and the Biodiversity Heritage Library in particular for reference to old papers and plates.

## It's a small WORLD

The Cabinet of Curiosities makes nature accessible through small wonders encountered every day.



# FUTURE DIRECTIONS

Each series of the programme shall contain six episodes, whereby series one will end in late June. The second series, it is hoped, will see collaboration with the Australian Museum and/ similar research & science communication institutions. This would provide access to more intriguing objects on which to create episodes, as well as possible expert inputs and hence a diversification of format. The partner would benefit with free video materials for distribution through its networks and to increase PR potential/ outreach engagement.

Elliot is also launching a podcast at the time of writing, entitled Human Nature but tackling similar issues to the Cabinet of Curiosities project. This audio medium will feature entertaining discussion of the lives of other creatures, trying to better understand their umvelts through human lenses as a means for nurturing empathy in its listeners. Elliot's book "Human Nature," on this very subject, is due for publishing in late 2020/ early 2021.

Each episode from series 2 onwards will be accompanied by a more detailed blog posting with supplementary information to expand upon the content covered and provide links for further reading. Other medium formats may include simple fact graphic postings on social media to accompany the show's weekly release, interviews with researchers and scientists on the weekly topic, and livestreams with viewers to field any questions and improve loyalty to the programme from its audience.

If the above proves successful, a natural history gameshow format may be trialled, and other more diverse offshoot programmes. A strong element of the motive of the young presenter and hence the show itself is to create greater interest amongst youth for nature, hence this will be prioritized in all future planning and development.



# ABOUT THE CREATOR

Elliot Connor (born 18 October 2002) is an Australian popular science writer, presenter and producer. He is best known for founding the international environmental NGO Human Nature Projects, which supports volunteers across 104 countries. He is the author of Human Nature, stating his life's goal as "reframing our human relationship with the natural world."

His work has been recognized with various honours and accolades, including Samsung's 2020 Eco-Hero Award, Young Citizen of the Year and Young Landcare Leader.

Elliot is certainly amongst the best-networked naturalists of his generation, and he has achieved many notable advances in this realm of pursuit. He has spoken at the TEDx stage in Sydney, at the World Biodiversity Forum and other prestigious international gatherings.

His interview for the Proust Nature Questionnaire featured alongside that of Pulitzer Prize winners, National Geographic Explorers, Astronauts, and a New York Times best-selling author. His motto is "nam gaudium vivendi," meaning "for the joy of living."

