

Australian Museum

Crowdsourcing for Digitisation: BVP Use Patterns and Future Directions

Paul Flemons

June 2013

nature culture **discover**



The Biodiversity Volunteer Portal



<http://volunteer.ala.org.au/>



Collaboration between
The Australian Museum



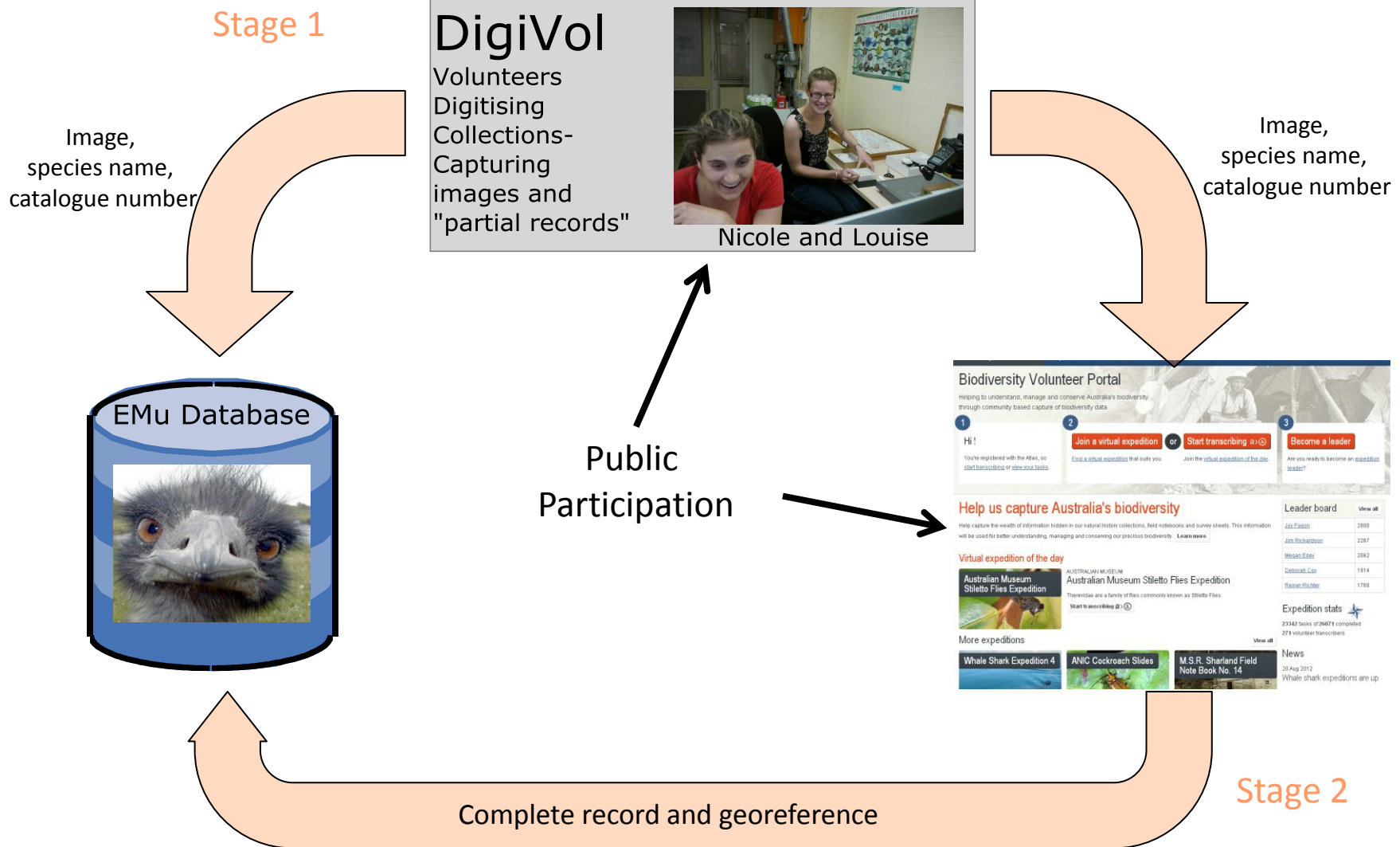
and



The Atlas of Living Australia
www.ala.org.au



Public Participation in Digitising at the Australian Museum



Crowdsourcing – definition

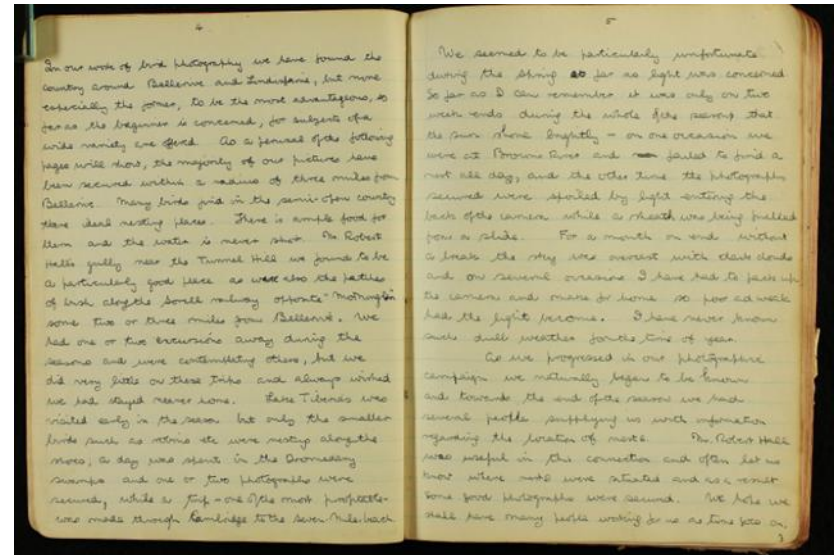


"Crowdsourcing is an online, distributed problem-solving and production model."

Biodiversity Volunteer Portal: Concept



An open, scalable, distributed, standards (DwC) compliant browser based application for crowdsourcing the transcription of biodiversity data and informal literature.



Biodiversity Volunteer Portal: Concept



Template based creation and management of transcription
“expeditions”

3 levels of permissions based activity

- Transcriber level – capturing data
- Validator – quality assurance
- Admin: Expedition Creation and management

Volunteer for Australia's Biodiversity

Join one of our virtual expeditions

and help capture the wealth of information hidden in our Museums and Herbaria. Help turn this information into valuable knowledge that will be used for understanding the relationships between organisms, learning where they live and how they might be affected by habitat loss and climate change.

Browse our current projects and click on one to start the expedition.




Australian
Museum
Moths
Expedition

Moths Expedition

Australian Museum

Hawk moths fly very fast and strong, with rapid wingbeats, and can hover in flight to sip nectar. Don't let their beauty fool you though, the caterpillar stage of their life cycles can do significant damage to agricultural crops. Your task is to transcribe the labels so we know who collected them, when and where .

Biodiversity Volunteer Portal

Helping to understand, manage and conserve Australia's biodiversity through community based capture of biodiversity data

1

Hi !

You're registered with the Atlas, so [start transcribing](#) or [view your tasks](#).

2

Join a virtual expedition or Start transcribing

[Find a virtual expedition](#) that suits you. Join the [virtual expedition of the day](#).

3

Become a leader

Are you ready to become an [expedition leader](#)?

Help us capture Australia's biodiversity

Help capture the wealth of information hidden in our natural history collections, field notebooks and survey sheets. This information will be used for better understanding, managing and conserving our precious biodiversity. [Learn more](#)

Virtual expedition of the day



Australian Museum Edgar Waite Diaries Expedition - Diary 67

AUSTRALIAN MUSEUM
Australian Museum Edgar Waite Diaries Expedition - Diary 67

Australian Museum Edgar Waite Diaries Expedition - Diary 67 - 1919-1920 - Personal diary entries with his writings published in newspapers, the death of Mr W J Rainbow and Robert Etheridge. [Start transcribing](#)

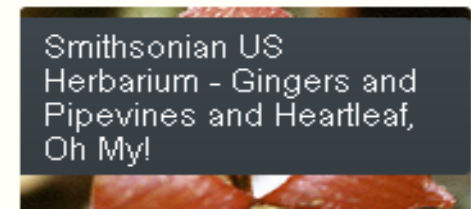
Leader board View all	
Megan Edey	7341
Jim Richardson	5033
Joy Pagon	4388
Teresa Van Der Heul	3019
Reiner Richter	2000

Expedition stats

34823 tasks of 38518 completed
375 volunteer transcribers

More expeditions

[View all](#)



Smithsonian US Herbarium - Gingers and Pipevines and Heartleaf, Oh My!



Australian Museum Edgar Waite Diaries Expedition - Diary 69



Australian Museum Bivalve Expedition - 2

News

06 Jun 2013
[More Expeditions](#)

Go to the Expeditions tab at the top to see more projects!

Biodiversity Volunteer Portal » Biodiversity Volunteer Portal

Biodiversity Volunteer Portal

Helping to understand, manage and conserve biodiversity through community based transcription of archival and natural history collections

Admin

Virtual expedition of the day



Angolan Lamiales Expedition

ROYAL BOTANIC GARDENS KEW Angolan Lamiales

Royal Botanic Gardens Kew Expedition - Angolan Lamiales

Start transcribing

More expeditions

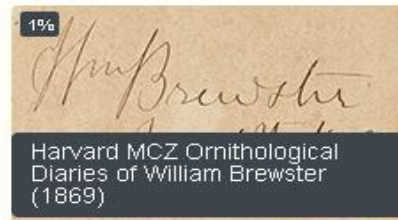
View all



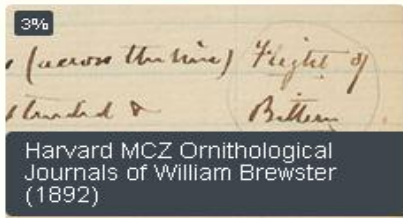
Smithsonian US Herbarium - Dalbergia around the world



Australian Museum Bivalve Expedition - 6



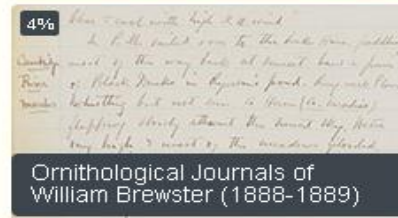
Harvard MCZ Ornithological Diaries of William Brewster (1869)



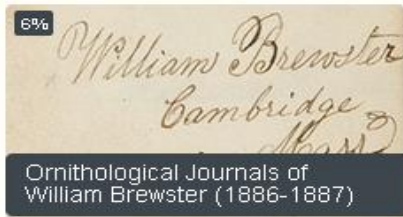
Harvard MCZ Ornithological Journals of William Brewster (1892)



Australian Museum Edgar Waite Diaries Expedition - Diary 64



Ornithological Journals of William Brewster (1888-1889)



Ornithological Journals of William Brewster (1886-1887)



Angolan Lamiales Expedition



Australian Museum Edgar Waite Diaries Expedition - Diary 63

Honour Board

Day Tripper	View Top 20
Baz Walter	100
Weekly Wonder	View Top 20
Baz Walter	260
Monthly Maestro	View Top 20
Baz Walter	580
BVP Legend	View Top 20
Megan Edey	17739

View my tasks

Expedition stats



85008 tasks of 95086 completed
627 volunteer [transcribers](#).

News

21 Jan 2014

A new and better BVP!

Look for: A new honour Board A simpler front page that shows all of the currently available expeditions New transcription templates Improved validation work flow for validators The site dynamically resizes so that it adjusts to your screen size.

Who is involved?



Institution	Number of Tasks
Australian Museum	54651
The New York Botanical Garden	12203
Smithsonian Institution	12135
ECOCEAN	2658
Australian National Insect Collection	2416
The Frost Entomological Museum at The Pennsylvania State University	1944
Museum Victoria	594
South Australian Museum	392
SANBI South African National Biodiversity Institute	231
Finnish Museum of Natural History	99
Kew Gardens	Just started
Biodiversity Heritage Library	Just started

Statistics tell a story



Institution by Year	Number of Tasks	Number of Expeditions	Number of transcribers/ expedition	Transcription rate tasks/exp/day	Ave Time per expedition (in days)
2011	13463	9	32	7	287
Australian Museum	12106	8	30	8	287
Australian National Insect Collection	1357	1	43	5	289
2012	16596	49	16	10	49
Australian Museum	12573	39	14	9	48
Australian National Insect Collection	499	2	11	7	61
ECOCEAN	2658	4	31	33	23
Finnish Museum of Natural History	99	1	19	4	24
Museum Victoria	594	2	22	4	87
Smithsonian Institution	173	1	14	2	111
2013	32611	70	11	21	36
Australian Museum	15255	53	9	19	29
Australian National Insect Collection	280	1	3	47	6
SANBI South African National Biodiversity Institute	62	1	8	1	95
Smithsonian Institution	6665	9	15	27	34
The Frost Entomological Museum at The Pennsylvania State University	1944	3	14	6	120
The New York Botanical Garden	8405	3	33	44	70
2014 (prorata)	24373 (41782)	45	10	29	27
Australian Museum	14717	33	9	33	21
SANBI South African National Biodiversity Institute	169	2	4	2	65
Smithsonian Institution	5297	8	11	17	42
South Australian Museum	392	1	10	30	13
The New York Botanical Garden	3798	1	26	64	59
Grand Total	87043	173	13	19	51

Impact of Group on productivity



Group	Number of tasks	Number of Expeditions	Rate of transcription	Transcribers per expedition
Insects	31167	31	26	19
Plants	23977	20	28	18
Diaries	15274	96	17	9
Molluscs	9917	13	14	15
MarineInverts	3427	5	12	14
Mammals	2658	4	33	31
Echinoderm	392	1	30	10
Registers	231	3	2	5

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How do templates affect productivity



Australian Museum Label Templates	Number of tasks	Transcription Rate
Total	40575	9
default	15963	6
GenericLabels	9375	9
SpecimenLabel	5558	23
AM specimen template	9679	34

The big questions! (October 2011)



1. Is the quality of the transcribed data sufficient to justify the use of crowd-sourcing?
2. Is the crowd-sourcing resource an ongoing one or a fad that will quickly pass and not realize the benefits we hoped it would.

Other Issues to be considered? (October 2011)



1. Transcription versus georeferencing
2. Ease of georeferencing versus accuracy and reliability
3. The challenge of data repatriation
4. Attracting volunteers and maintaining their interest

Is it worth the effort? (October 2011)



When considering it simply as label digitisation for entomological specimens - Maybe

For field note transcriptions – yet to be determined

If you consider it as an exercise in

- Outreach
- Education
- Collections Access

.....then the case is stronger but the jury is still out

What the future holds



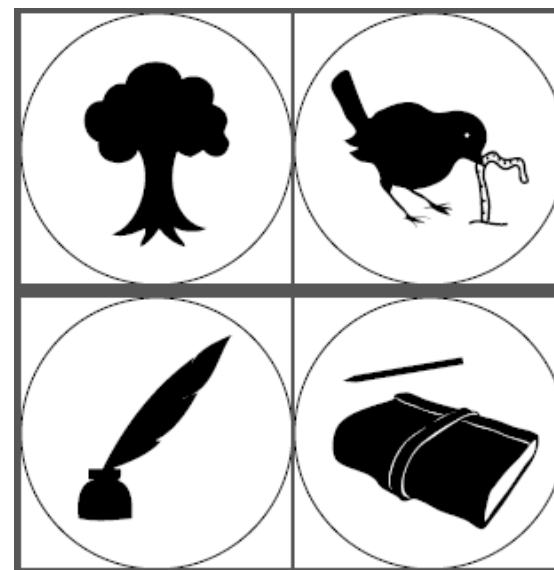
- BVP:
 - Functionality:
 - New templates
 - Institutional pages
 - Badges
 - Volunteer engagement programs
 - School based programs
 - Tertiary education programs
 - Offenders workforce re-entry program
 - Games??

What the future holds



- Collaborative crowdsourced digitisation hubs
 - Eg iDigBio – [Biospex](#)
 - <http://www.biospex.org/>
- Tools for enabling volunteers to tailor their contributions to their interests:
 - Flexibility in selecting specific taxa, people (eg collectors or geography)

Badges



Thank you

www.australianmuseum.net.au

nature culture **discover**

