Towards curating data for sharing, access and preservation with environmental voluntary groups

Dr Mary Anne Kennan is a Senior Lecturer in the School of Information Studies at Charles Sturt University, where much of her research is in the area of the social studies of scholarly communications, e-research and data management. She teaches subjects about the digital environment, research data management and research methods.

Dr Kirsty Williamson, Adjunct Senior Research Fellow at Monash University and CSU, has had a long career specializing in research focussed on information, especially related to technology. The Australian Research Council (ARC) is one of the organisations which have funded her research. Her latest project has focussed on environmental voluntary groups with a mission to encourage data input into e-repositories.

Associate Professor Graeme Johanson is Director of the Centre for Community Networking Research at Monash University. He has undertaken many research studies into the use of information and communications technologies in different communities, locally and overseas, and supervised numerous students undertaking research degrees in community and social informatics.

This presentation reports a recent study which investigated what data were collected by members of an environmental voluntary group (EVG) and how these data were collected, stored, managed and shared.

Environmental and biological data sourced from volunteers and voluntary groups can make an invaluable contribution to formal science. An aim of the research was to understand how data management and approaches to data sharing could be improved in order to enhance such contributions while also continuing to meet individual and group needs. Interviews were conducted with members of the Australian Plants Society Victoria (ASPV) using a broadly ethnographic approach.

Findings indicate that APSV members have a strong interest in conservation biodiversity, and in increasing their own, and society’s knowledge and understanding, passions often shared with professional scientists. Yet their data are often poorly managed, creating significant impediments to further use and sharing.

This seminar explores these issues and outlines work in progress where options for improvement are explored, including ways to empower APSV members with skills and technology to contribute to emerging data repositories, so that their valuable data may be preserved and accessible beyond their immediate co-members.

Keywords: environmental data, crowdsourcing, citizen science

EVENT DETAILS
12:00-1:00pm
Wednesday 26 February 2014
School of Information Studies Seminar Room, Building 05
Charles Sturt University
Wagga Campus
VC Admin Sydney
VC Admin Brisbane CA 745
Communicator: http://wsww01.csu.edu.au/vcbookings/
Bridgit username: SIS Seminar (no password necessary)

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