

# Humanities research at the Zooniverse: How we deploy crowdsourcing in the humanities



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# Talk outline

- Crowdsourcing
- Origins of Zooniverse
- Humanities and transcription projects to date
- Panoptes: DIY Zooniverse

# Citizen Science aka Academic Crowdsourcing

‘In citizen science projects, members of the public (citizens) collaborate with professional scientists to conduct scientific research.’

G. Newman et al, ‘The future of citizen science: Emerging technologies and shifting paradigms’,  
*Front Ecol Environment*, 10, 6 (2012), 298-304

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# Few have witnessed what you're about to see

Experience a privileged glimpse of the distant universe as observed by the SDSS, the Hubble Space Telescope, and UKIRT

## Classify Galaxies

To understand how galaxies formed we need your help to classify them according to their shapes. If you're quick, you may even be the first person to see the galaxies you're asked to classify.

[Begin Classifying](#)[How Do Galaxies Form?](#)[History of Galaxy Zoo](#)

# >1.3 million users



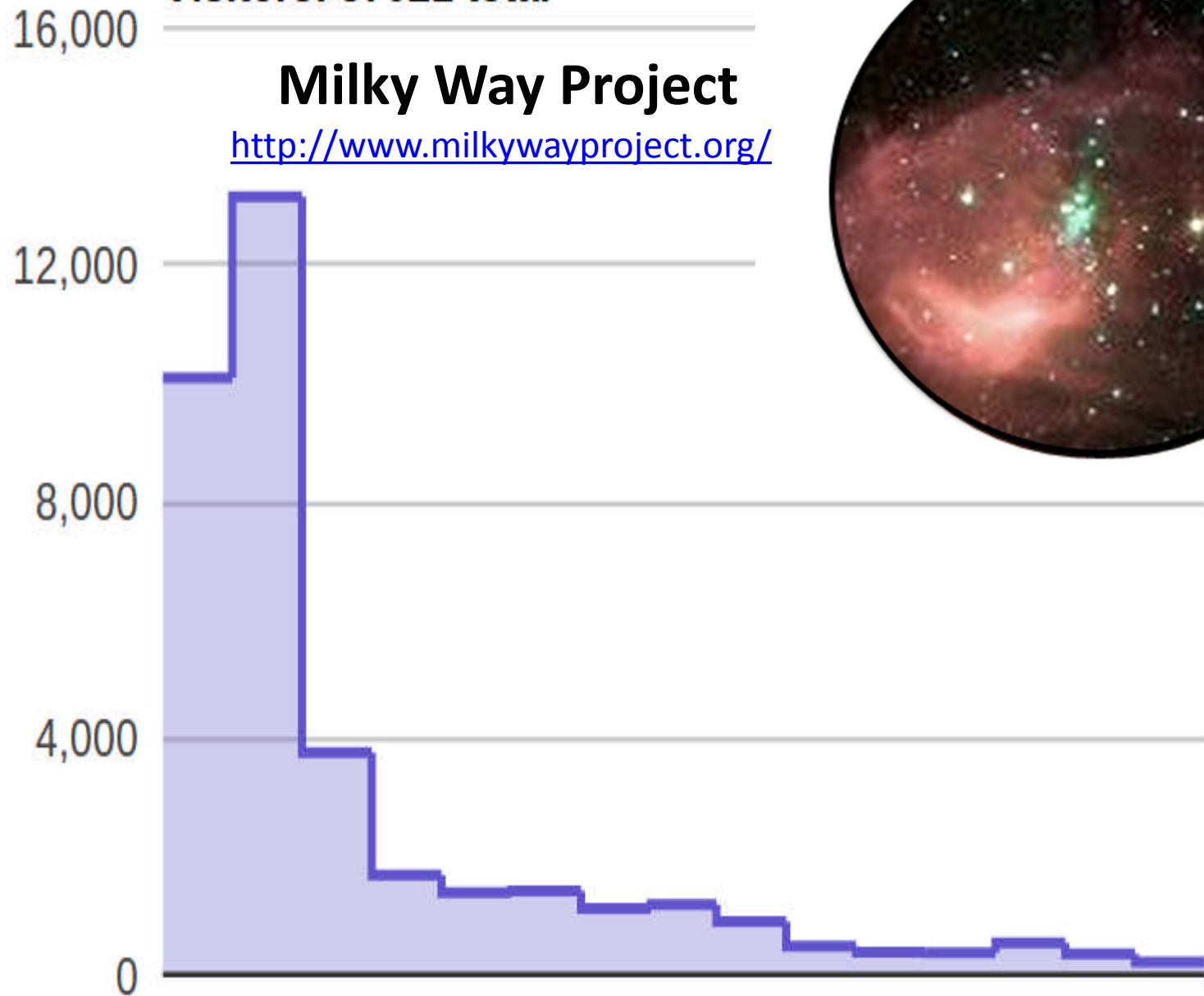
Why do people  
participate in  
academic  
crowdsourcing?

Many volunteers want to further real research: contributing to knowledge is an end in itself. Zooniverse designs for this reality.

Visitors: 37021 total

## Milky Way Project

<http://www.milkywayproject.org/>





Zoomanities

Mostly text-based

No audio

No video

yet

# Humanities and Transcription Projects

- Existing projects:
  - 'Ancient Lives': [www.ancientlives.org/](http://www.ancientlives.org/)
  - 'Old Weather': [www.oldweather.org/](http://www.oldweather.org/)
  - 'Notes from Nature': [www.notesfromnature.org/](http://www.notesfromnature.org/)
  - 'Operation War Diary': [www.operationwardiary.org/](http://www.operationwardiary.org/)
  - 'Science Gossip': [www.sciencegossip.org/](http://www.sciencegossip.org/)
- Upcoming Projects:
  - 'AnnoTate' with Tate Britain
  - 'Shakespeare's World' with Folger Shakespeare Library

# Ancient Lives

- launched July 2011
- >1.5 million transcriptions of ancient Greek papyri
- 250,000 unique volunteer contributors

## Study the lives of ancient Greeks

// Information

The data gathered by Ancient Lives helps scholars study the Oxyrhynchus collection.

Transcriptions collected digitally are combined with human and computer logic to identify known texts and documents.

Take part

No thanks

Projects Lab

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Image by Imaging Papyri Project-Oxford/Egypt Exploration Society

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TRANSCRIBE MEASURE



Zoom



Rotate



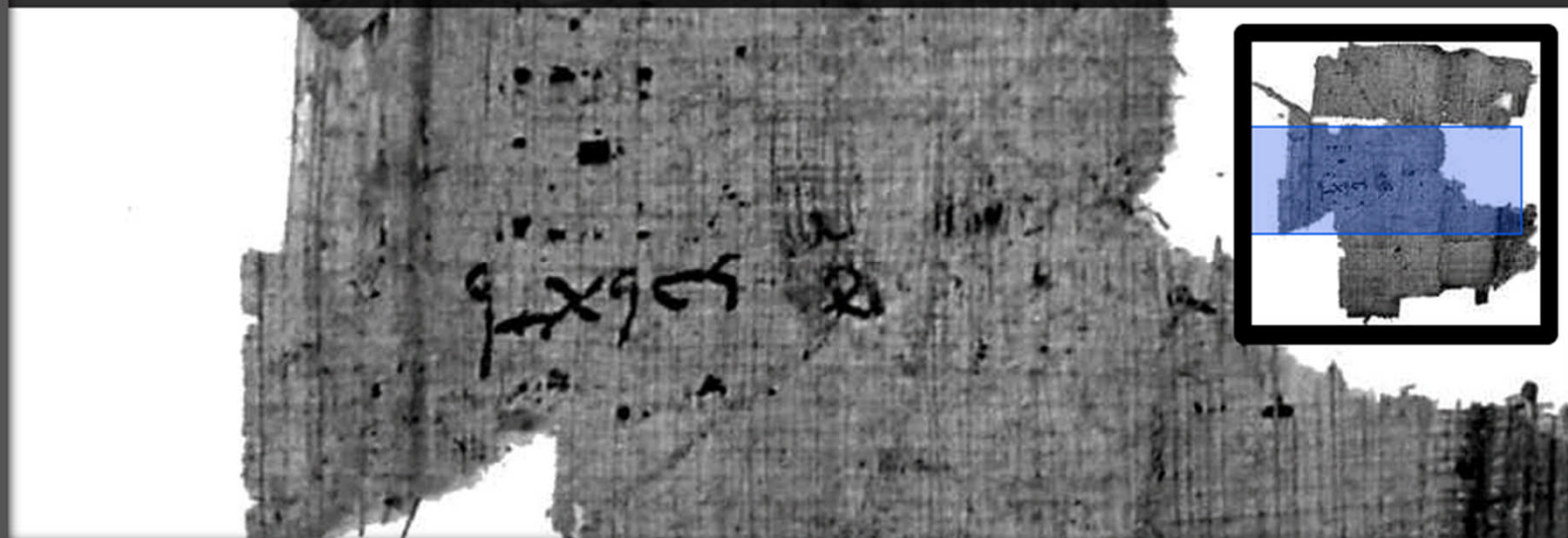
Toggle



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Delete



Colour



Map



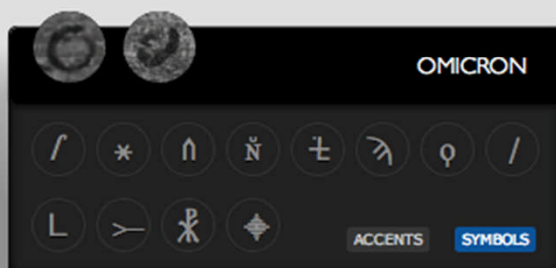
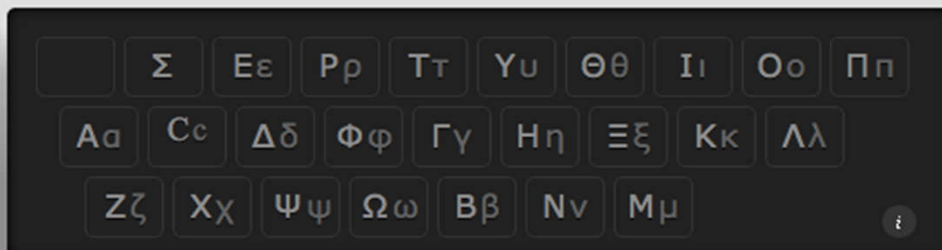
Match



Talk



Next



OMICRON

FAVOURITE

ISSUE

A successful user interface (UI) allows non-specialists to participate. A great UI allows them to learn and acquire new skills.



# SCIENCE GOSSIP

HOME CLASSIFY PROFILE PERIODICALS ABOUT TALK BLOG 

## Uncover the history of citizen science

In the Victorian period, just like today, scientists and members of the public worked together to further scientific discovery. Before computers and cameras they had to draw what they saw. Their drawings are locked away in the pages of Victorian periodicals, such as *Science Gossip*, *Recreative Science* and *The Intellectual Observer*. Help us to classify their drawings and map the origins of citizen science.

**Get started!**

<http://www.sciencegossip.org/>



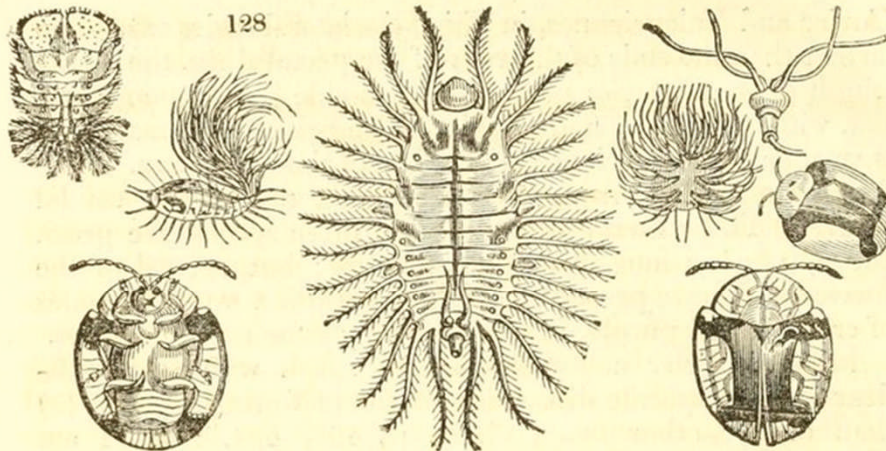
Magazine of natural history and journal of zoology, botany, mineralogy, geology and meteorology.

Volume: v. 3 (1830) Year: 1830 Page: Page 524

524

*Metamorphosis of a Species of Cássida.*

128



which surround the lower margin of the abdomen. The tail, at first sight, appears to constitute a natural and inseparable part of the larva. It is, however, formed by accumulation of the fæces, which, when ejected, are received and retained on a sort of fork, springing from the apex of the body, and form-



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