Doing Citizen Science Exercise
BSC 5936-04
Spring 2015

Learning Objectives: Gain experience with an active citizen science project, reflect upon that experience in a structured way, and present your assessment of the project to the class.

In order to gain a better understanding of active citizen science projects, you will each choose a project to participate in as a citizen scientist. You may select any project you wish, online or in-person, as long as it is not a project that you have been actively involved with in the past. The websites that you visited in preparation for discussion last week (zooniverse.org, scistarter.org, etc.) are a good place to start to find a project. It might make sense for you to choose a project that gathers data similar to what you might like to gather with the help of citizen scientists.

Over the next month, spend at least two hours participating in the project, documenting your experiences and thoughts along the way. Explore available project content as if you were a citizen scientist with only the minimal background knowledge for participation, rather than an expert in the field. This project content might include the project introduction, training modules and help features, community forums, further opportunities for participation, etc.

You will report on your critical evaluation of the project during a 10-minute presentation to class on either February 25 or March 4 (for FSU) or March 11 (for UF). The presentation should follow the following format, in which you answer questions in a small number of slides. The distribution of info below is a guideline that may be tweaked.

Slide 1
What is the name of the project, what group manages the project, and what is the project's URL?
What are the goals of the project?
Why did you choose this project?

Slide 2
How long has the project been going on?
What is the target group for participation?
How many citizen scientists have participated in this project?
What, if any, special training is required to be successful as a citizen scientist in this project?
What incentives are provided to participate?

Slide 3
Is the project contributory, collaborative, or co-created? See Shirk et al. (2012), Table 2.

What are the outputs, likely (or realized) outcomes, and likely impacts (*sensu* Shirk et al., 2012)?
Is there evidence that the administrators are evaluating learning outcomes?

Slide 4
Are the data or results of this project freely available, and in what format are the data provided?
What evidence is there that the project administrators are following data management best practices (e.g., as found in Wiggins et al., 2013)?
Is there evidence that the administrators are thinking deeply about data quality?

Slide 5
Succinctly tell us about your experience with the project. For example, were there particular ways that the project was challenging, difficult, boring or tedious? Fun, entertaining, educational, or engaging? Did you feel like you made a worthwhile contribution to the project? Feel free to address other questions with this slide.
Might you continue to participate in this project beyond the requirements of this course?

An additional five minutes will be allotted for questions.