



# MSM 310

## Museology of Natural History

S2 External 2014

*Dept of Environment & Geography*

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## General Information

### Unit convenor and teaching staff

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E7A, room 717

By appointment

### Tutor

Gina Hammond

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### Credit points

3

### Prerequisites

Permission of Executive Dean of Faculty

### Corequisites

### Co-badged status

### Unit description

This unit investigates the western intellectual tradition of understanding and interpreting the natural world through museums from 'cabinets of curiosity' to 'museums of empire' including historical phases of natural history as popular culture. The unit focuses on how the developments in scientific understanding are reflected in a range of museum practice, including the impact of Linnean taxonomy and Darwinism. The impact of different biological preservation techniques is considered. There is a component on early western natural history practice in Australia and the value and future of natural history collections in relation to issues of biodiversity, ecological sustainability and the public understanding of science.

## Important Academic Dates

Information about important academic dates including deadlines for withdrawing from units are available at <https://www.mq.edu.au/study/calendar-of-dates>

## Learning Outcomes

On successful completion of this unit, you will be able to:

Explain how our knowledge of the natural world has changed over time and in different

cultural settings

Communicate how some individuals have impacted significantly on our views on the natural world

Identify issues critical to the work of natural history museums and collections

Explain issues of significance to natural history museums in connecting audiences with the natural world

## Assessment Tasks

Name	Weighting	Due
<a href="#"><u>Natural Historian</u></a>	15%	Friday, Week 3, 5pm
<a href="#"><u>Your Natural Historian</u></a>	25%	Friday, Week 8, 5pm
<a href="#"><u>Natural history museums</u></a>	50%	Friday, Week 12, 5pm
<a href="#"><u>Participation</u></a>	10%	Ongoing

### Natural Historian

Due: **Friday, Week 3, 5pm**

Weighting: **15%**

Annotated Bibliography - Natural historian. As a cultural endeavour, the history of natural history is populated by an extraordinary array of individuals, scientists, philosophers, collectors, explorers, populists, museum people that have made an indelible impact on our understanding of the natural world.

Early in the unit, you will be expected to select one natural historian to focus on for Major Assignment 1 and Major Assignment 2. The specific individual you chose can include both ancient and contemporary people (and many in between). If you are having difficulty selecting a natural historian a list of possible choices will be available on iLearn, although you do not need to be limited by this selection. [You cannot choose the following as they are covered in-depth in lecture material: Aristotle, Charles Darwin and Carolus Linnaeus (or Carl von Linné)].

Choose your natural historian carefully as this assignment will form the initial basis of research that you can build on for your second major assignment. If you are unsure if the person you wish to do your assignment on could be classified as a natural historian, please email the convenor [museumstudies@mq.edu.au](mailto:museumstudies@mq.edu.au).

This short assignment is due early in the semester so you need to start working on it straight away. It is expected that you will evaluate 6 scholarly journal articles or book chapters for this assignment.

The word count for this assignment is 1200+/- 10%. Please ensure you reference your assignment in a consistent academic style.

If you are unsure what an annotated bibliography entails, the following may be of use to you:

<http://olinuris.library.cornell.edu/content/how-prepare-annotated-bibliography>

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Explain how our knowledge of the natural world has changed over time and in different cultural settings
- Communicate how some individuals have impacted significantly on our views on the natural world

## Your Natural Historian

Due: **Friday, Week 8, 5pm**

Weighting: **25%**

Your Natural Historian in Context: Important and influential figures in natural history.

In Major Assignment 1 you developed an annotated bibliography, while this will help form part of the basis of the research for the essay which is Major Assignment 2 – this is a third year unit so you will be expected to critically engage with the literature and your topic. That means you will need to read more widely than you did for the first assignment.

Your report should include:

- An introduction to the significance of your chosen personality to the field of natural history.
- A clear discussion that covers biographical information, major achievements and assessment of that individual's impact on our understanding of the natural world.
- Include at least three images (these may include photos, drawings, maps, diagrams, charts etc) that relate to your topic, label these as Figures (Figure 1, Figure 2 etc) and indicate the source (ie: article, book, URL and date accessed for URLs - remember if you are the photographer you must state that in the figure caption as well). When you use a figure, it is expected that you will refer to it in text.
- You are expected to use and critically engage with adequate scholarly material.
- Consistent referencing throughout the body of the assignment (either in-text or footnotes).
- A full bibliography of the material that you referred to within the essay must be included at the end of the assignment.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Explain how our knowledge of the natural world has changed over time and in different cultural settings
- Communicate how some individuals have impacted significantly on our views on the natural world

## Natural history museums

Due: **Friday, Week 12, 5pm**

Weighting: **50%**

In this assignment students explore an essay topic related to the lectures presented during the unit in greater depth. You may select one of the following topics:-

- i) Early European natural historians in Australia were immersed in a curious, new —upside down world and completely ignored indigenous knowledge systems. This dismissal of indigenous knowledge still hampers our understanding of the continent of Australia today. Discuss.
- ii) Biologists argue that the Darwinian revolution is complete; the impact of the theory of natural selection has permeated our understanding of the biological world and beyond. Yet studies show that many people do not believe in evolution. Should natural history museums strive to promote a Darwinian understanding of the world, are they already doing this, could more be done or is it not their role and responsibility?
- iii) Is it appropriate to conclude that any system of taxonomic classification is essentially a cultural construct and does not, by itself, provide insights into how the natural world works? Discuss this proposal with illustrations and examples from the history of natural history.
- iv) How should natural history museums respond to the challenge of climate change? Do they have a role to either educate or alarm the populace about the need for behavioural change and/or political action? Are they already doing this or could more be done?

Word count is 2500 words +/- 10%. Read your chosen topic carefully, you will need to ensure you have adequately unpacked and addressed all aspects of the question.

The essay should be logically structured, well argued and correctly referenced. We will expect you to use scholarly journal articles and book chapters in your research.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Identify issues critical to the work of natural history museums and collections
- Explain issues of significance to natural history museums in connecting audiences with the natural world

## Participation

Due: **Ongoing**

Weighting: **10%**

The 10% assessment for tutorial participation will be based on discussions on iLearn throughout the whole semester. To facilitate this discussion topics will be posed online; there will be four different topics throughout the semester; you will have roughly a fortnight during which to engage with each topic. Your final participation mark will be based on the quality and thoughtfulness of your contributions to each discussion. The lectures which will be available online will help to provide context to these topics – failure to listen to these lectures will diminish your ability to participate adequately. Online discussion contributions will not be recognised and marked after the last day of semester as marking will have commenced (Closed for recognised contributions at: 5pm, Friday 14th November 2014).

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Identify issues critical to the work of natural history museums and collections

- Explain issues of significance to natural history museums in connecting audiences with the natural world

## Delivery and Resources

### Technology

You will require computer access and an ability to use common programs such as word and powerpoint.

### Information

The unit will be run by a coordinating team and invited guest lecturers who will be responsible for dovetailing various unit components into a coherent program. These components will include lectures, tutorials, workshops, site visits and specific project work. The type of activity will vary from week to week depending on the staff involved. Some workshops will be completed at home and submitted on the due date. Other workshops, tutorials and site visits will also be undertaken and you are encouraged to explore beyond the scheduled activities. Lecture material and support materials will be available on-line via iLearn.

iLearn: Readings and other material for this unit are available online from the iLearn site for MSM310: <https://ilearn.mq.edu.au/login/MQ>

If the Museum Studies unit is not available to you on iLearn, please advise us by email: [museumstudies@mq.edu.au](mailto:museumstudies@mq.edu.au)

### Museum Studies social media sites:

*Twitter:* [twitter.com/museumstudiesmq](https://twitter.com/museumstudiesmq)

*Facebook.com group:* [Museum Studies at Macquarie University](#)

*LinkedIn group:* <http://tinyurl.com/MQlinkedin>

*Amusine:* [amusine.typepad.com/amusine](http://amusine.typepad.com/amusine)

For Semester Dates go to: [mq.edu.au/about/calendar.html](http://mq.edu.au/about/calendar.html) (for semester breaks, classes, exam periods, etc).

For the University Timeline go to: [senate.mq.edu.au/docs/2013AcademicYear.pdf](http://senate.mq.edu.au/docs/2013AcademicYear.pdf)

## Changes since the last offering of this unit

The assessment requirements have been changed from last year to tie assessment tasks more closely with learning outcomes and as a result of feedback from students.

## Unit Schedule

Week. Commencing	Lecture	Readings	Online Discussions	Assessment – Due by 5pm

1. 4 August	Introduction to 310	Read the Study Guide – ask any questions relating to the unit in the online discussion area	General introductions and questions	
1. 11 August	Early Greek natural history concepts and biological classification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>McRae (e-book chapter) <a href="http://ebooks.adelaide.edu.au/science/fathers-of-biology/chapter2.html">http://ebooks.adelaide.edu.au/science/fathers-of-biology/chapter2.html</a></li> </ul>	<p><b>Online Discussion Topic 1 **</b></p> <p><i>Aristotle is credited with having developed the idea of grouping knowledge into different classifications. Consider and discuss the reasons why this may be considered as fundamental to natural history.</i></p>	
1. 18 August	Linnaeus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Driscoll 2006</li> </ul>		22 Aug – Major Assessment 1 due
1. 25 August	The Darwinian Revolution – Part 1 – ideas and history	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bowler 2009</li> <li>Padian 2008</li> <li>Oldroyd 1980</li> <li>Ruse 2005</li> </ul>		
1. 1 September	The Darwinian Revolution – Part 2 – Impacts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Stegman 2010</li> <li>Walsh 2000</li> </ul>	<p><b>Online Discussion Topic 2**</b> <i>Darwin's theory of evolution explains how species of living things have changed over geological time – For your discussion this time consider with the group whether Humans might still be evolving. How might you go about substantiating your points of view?</i></p>	
1. 8 September	The Darwinian Revolution – Part 3			
1. 15 September	The Ethnographic Object	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Carlyle 1849</li> <li>Kipling 1899</li> </ul>	<p><b>Online Discussion Topic 3**</b> <i>As university students your education is likely to have been dominated by a western-oriented system of knowledge. When considering natural history, do you think it is possible to incorporate non-western knowledge systems with Western-centric concepts ? Think about examples of how this may work, or may cause difficulties.</i></p>	
<b>19 September – Start of mid-semester break</b>				

1. 6 October	Modern Natural History Museums	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>O'Reilly, 2013</li> </ul>		10 Oct – Major Assessment 2 due
1. 13 October	Zoos and Zoos			
1. 20 October	Repatriation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Moyal 1993</li> <li>Klinge &amp; Murphy 2001</li> <li>Oldfield 1855</li> </ul>	<p><b>Online Discussion Topic 4**</b></p> <p><i>Repatriation has become an important part of the role of many Australian and international museums. Discuss with the group the type of difficulties museums may face as they work towards the repatriation of human remains.</i></p>	
1. 27 October	Sustainability and museums	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Wallace 2000</li> </ul>		
1. 3 November	Ecomuseums			7 Nov – Major Assessment 3 due
1. 10 November	Natural History Museums on-line			

## Policies and Procedures

Macquarie University policies and procedures are accessible from [Policy Central](#). Students should be aware of the following policies in particular with regard to Learning and Teaching:

Academic Honesty Policy [http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/academic\\_honesty/policy.html](http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/academic_honesty/policy.html)

Assessment Policy <http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/assessment/policy.html>

Grading Policy <http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/grading/policy.html>

Grade Appeal Policy <http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/gradeappeal/policy.html>

Grievance Management Policy [http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/grievance\\_management/policy.html](http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/grievance_management/policy.html)



Disruption to Studies Policy [http://www.mq.edu.au/policy/docs/disruption\\_studies/policy.html](http://www.mq.edu.au/policy/docs/disruption_studies/policy.html) *The Disruption to Studies Policy is effective from March 3 2014 and replaces the Special Consideration Policy.*

In addition, a number of other policies can be found in the [Learning and Teaching Category](#) of Policy Central.

## Student Code of Conduct

Macquarie University students have a responsibility to be familiar with the Student Code of Conduct: [https://students.mq.edu.au/support/student\\_conduct/](https://students.mq.edu.au/support/student_conduct/)

## Student Support

Macquarie University provides a range of support services for students. For details, visit <http://students.mq.edu.au/support/>

## Learning Skills

Learning Skills ([mq.edu.au/learningskills](http://mq.edu.au/learningskills)) provides academic writing resources and study strategies to improve your marks and take control of your study.

- [Workshops](#)
- [StudyWise](#)
- [Academic Integrity Module for Students](#)
- [Ask a Learning Adviser](#)

## Student Services and Support

Students with a disability are encouraged to contact the [Disability Service](#) who can provide appropriate help with any issues that arise during their studies.

## Student Enquiries

For all student enquiries, visit Student Connect at [ask.mq.edu.au](http://ask.mq.edu.au)

## IT Help

For help with University computer systems and technology, visit <http://informatics.mq.edu.au/help/>.

When using the University's IT, you must adhere to the [Acceptable Use Policy](#). The policy applies to all who connect to the MQ network including students.

## Graduate Capabilities

### Capable of Professional and Personal Judgement and Initiative

We want our graduates to have emotional intelligence and sound interpersonal skills and to demonstrate discernment and common sense in their professional and personal judgement. They will exercise initiative as needed. They will be capable of risk assessment, and be able to

handle ambiguity and complexity, enabling them to be adaptable in diverse and changing environments.

This graduate capability is supported by:

### **Learning outcome**

- Explain issues of significance to natural history museums in connecting audiences with the natural world

### **Assessment task**

- Participation

## **Commitment to Continuous Learning**

Our graduates will have enquiring minds and a literate curiosity which will lead them to pursue knowledge for its own sake. They will continue to pursue learning in their careers and as they participate in the world. They will be capable of reflecting on their experiences and relationships with others and the environment, learning from them, and growing - personally, professionally and socially.

This graduate capability is supported by:

### **Assessment task**

- Participation

## **Discipline Specific Knowledge and Skills**

Our graduates will take with them the intellectual development, depth and breadth of knowledge, scholarly understanding, and specific subject content in their chosen fields to make them competent and confident in their subject or profession. They will be able to demonstrate, where relevant, professional technical competence and meet professional standards. They will be able to articulate the structure of knowledge of their discipline, be able to adapt discipline-specific knowledge to novel situations, and be able to contribute from their discipline to inter-disciplinary solutions to problems.

This graduate capability is supported by:

### **Learning outcomes**

- Identify issues critical to the work of natural history museums and collections
- Explain issues of significance to natural history museums in connecting audiences with the natural world

### **Assessment tasks**

- Natural Historian
- Your Natural Historian
- Natural history museums

## Critical, Analytical and Integrative Thinking

We want our graduates to be capable of reasoning, questioning and analysing, and to integrate and synthesise learning and knowledge from a range of sources and environments; to be able to critique constraints, assumptions and limitations; to be able to think independently and systemically in relation to scholarly activity, in the workplace, and in the world. We want them to have a level of scientific and information technology literacy.

This graduate capability is supported by:

### Learning outcomes

- Explain how our knowledge of the natural world has changed over time and in different cultural settings
- Communicate how some individuals have impacted significantly on our views on the natural world
- Explain issues of significance to natural history museums in connecting audiences with the natural world

### Assessment tasks

- Natural Historian
- Your Natural Historian
- Natural history museums

## Problem Solving and Research Capability

Our graduates should be capable of researching; of analysing, and interpreting and assessing data and information in various forms; of drawing connections across fields of knowledge; and they should be able to relate their knowledge to complex situations at work or in the world, in order to diagnose and solve problems. We want them to have the confidence to take the initiative in doing so, within an awareness of their own limitations.

This graduate capability is supported by:

### Learning outcomes

- Explain how our knowledge of the natural world has changed over time and in different cultural settings
- Identify issues critical to the work of natural history museums and collections
- Explain issues of significance to natural history museums in connecting audiences with the natural world

### Assessment tasks

- Natural Historian
- Your Natural Historian

- Natural history museums

## Creative and Innovative

Our graduates will also be capable of creative thinking and of creating knowledge. They will be imaginative and open to experience and capable of innovation at work and in the community. We want them to be engaged in applying their critical, creative thinking.

This graduate capability is supported by:

### Assessment task

- Natural history museums

## Effective Communication

We want to develop in our students the ability to communicate and convey their views in forms effective with different audiences. We want our graduates to take with them the capability to read, listen, question, gather and evaluate information resources in a variety of formats, assess, write clearly, speak effectively, and to use visual communication and communication technologies as appropriate.

This graduate capability is supported by:

### Learning outcomes

- Explain how our knowledge of the natural world has changed over time and in different cultural settings
- Communicate how some individuals have impacted significantly on our views on the natural world
- Identify issues critical to the work of natural history museums and collections
- Explain issues of significance to natural history museums in connecting audiences with the natural world

### Assessment tasks

- Natural Historian
- Your Natural Historian
- Natural history museums
- Participation

## Engaged and Ethical Local and Global citizens

As local citizens our graduates will be aware of indigenous perspectives and of the nation's historical context. They will be engaged with the challenges of contemporary society and with knowledge and ideas. We want our graduates to have respect for diversity, to be open-minded, sensitive to others and inclusive, and to be open to other cultures and perspectives: they should have a level of cultural literacy. Our graduates should be aware of disadvantage and social

justice, and be willing to participate to help create a wiser and better society.

This graduate capability is supported by:

### **Learning outcome**

- Communicate how some individuals have impacted significantly on our views on the natural world

### **Assessment task**

- Participation

## **Socially and Environmentally Active and Responsible**

We want our graduates to be aware of and have respect for self and others; to be able to work with others as a leader and a team player; to have a sense of connectedness with others and country; and to have a sense of mutual obligation. Our graduates should be informed and active participants in moving society towards sustainability.

This graduate capability is supported by:

### **Learning outcomes**

- Identify issues critical to the work of natural history museums and collections
- Explain issues of significance to natural history museums in connecting audiences with the natural world

### **Assessment task**

- Participation

## **Changes since First Published**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Description</b>
16/01/2014	The Prerequisites was updated.