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LTER DataBits
Information Management Newsletter of
The Long Term Ecological Research Network
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Good Read: Biodiversity Datadiversity
- Karen Baker, *Palmer Station (PAL)*

Bowker, GC, 2000. Biodiversity Datadiversity. *Social Studies of Science* 30(5): 643-683.

One might consider this article by Bowker an ecological continuation of a conversational thread developed by Brooks in his book *The Mythical Man Month* (1975). Acknowledging the difficulties arising from the multiplicative factor inherent in team project communications, Bowker strides on into the territory of well-counted megafauna and under-valued microscopic entities to discuss the diversity in databases and transitions in frameworks. This work is a call for social scientists to consider potential contributions given their experience with naming and classifying, context and integration, organizational practice and scientific history. Attention to infrastructure layering impacts first the movement from data discovery to data management and ultimately the communication of knowledge through semantic synthesis. The challenges are confronted as Bowker articulates the nontrivial nature of the informatics task and summarizes: "The information collection effort that is being mounted worldwide is indeed heroic."