

MEDIA RELEASE

NEWS FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF TASMANIA

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ATTENTION: Chiefs of Staff, News Directors



Geography Conference yields more varied research

The final day of the Institute of Australian Geographers (IAG) Conference, hosted by the UTAS School of Geography and Environmental Studies, is set to yield more exciting and varied research topics for discussion.

Highlights of the final day of the IAG Conference for **Wednesday July 3:**

- **“The use of a mixed-methods approach in understanding the influence of World Heritage zoning on forest cover change”**
Nathan Wales, Eleanor Bruce, R. Murphy, University of Sydney (11.40-12 room 237)

World Heritage Site (WHS) boundaries are often defined on administrative lines, with boundaries imposed on local communities who have lived in these areas over generations. At the Angkor World Heritage Site, Cambodia, restrictions on forest use have been imposed as a consequence of the inscription of the site on to the World Heritage List in the early 1990s. The result has been reduced access and with it reduced vegetation cover beyond the influence of the local communities. The purpose of this research is to examine vegetation response to changing use levels enforced through forest management policy across the broader Angkor area.

- **“Twitchers, ornithologists or bird-lovers? Mapping a virtual community of birdwatchers in Australia”**
Laurence Knight, Queensland University of Technology (2.20-2.40 lecture theatre 211)

Birdwatchers are an unobtrusive lot and relatively little is known of their numbers, movements and roosting sites in Australia. Birding-Aus is an internet chat group used by birdwatchers. This paper examines the demography, chat group, birdwatching activities and travel patterns of Birding-Aus survey respondents. It provides insights into both a virtual birdwatching network and the wider birding community.

- **“Trans-equatorial migratory birds and Avian Influenza: An Australian perspective”**
Hugo Bekle, Edith Cowan University (2.40-3 lecture theatre 211)

The Avian influenza, commonly known as ‘bird flu’, has emerged as a high priority global public health issue with potential risks to the Australasian region. Government and media speculation has identified the possibility that migratory birds could be responsible for spread of this disease. This paper considers the history and

geographical extent of reported virus outbreaks where migratory birds are likely to have transported the virus.

- **“Participation of young people in the creative life of cities”**
Andrew Warren, University of Wollongong (3.20-3.40 room 227)

This paper discusses the participation of young people in the creative life of cities. Much academic work has emerged recently on the contributions of creative activities such as art and music to the social, cultural and economic vitality of cities. The role of children and young adults in this is often ignored. The implication is that their creativity is more like 'play' than 'real work'. This research seeks to challenge these ideas and explore how young people become creative and what creativity means to them in their everyday lives in the urban and regional context.

All presentations take place in the UTAS School of Geography and Environmental Studies.

For more information on the conference or to arrange interviews, please contact Associate Professor Elaine Stratford, Head of the UTAS School of Geography and Environmental Studies.

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