

# Ben Scott - CV

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Working at the intersection of science and programming, I enjoy building innovative tools for people to explore, visualise and reuse research, collections and open data.

## Employment

- 2010 - Present**     **Data Portal Lead Architect, Biodiversity Informatics - Natural History Museum**  
I joined the Museum as senior developer on the Museum's EU-funded VIBRANT project, helping build the [Scratchpads](#) scientific data collaboration platform. In 2013 I was promoted to Data Portal Lead Architect, leading a team to build the Museum's new [open data platform](#), to release the Museum's research and collections data online. As part of the Biodiversity Informatics Group, I also develop tools and [visualisations](#) to help people explore Museum data, as well as promoting our activities at conferences and hackathons. For the 2014 science open evening, I devised and implemented [Crowdsourcing the collection](#), a live digitisation and transcription workflow and crowdsourcing app.
- 2012 - Present**     **Co-founder, Richseam**  
In 2012 I built [richseam.com](http://richseam.com), a music-recommendation site using open data sources aggregated into a graph database. What started as a hobby project was named a top-50 European startup at the Pioneers Challenge 2013 awards.
- 2005 - 2010**     **Director, Brighton Digital**  
For five years I worked as a freelancer and contractor, specialising in building websites for public sector and charitable organisations using Drupal, an open source CMS. I've worked with AgeUK, the NHS, Open Democracy, Food Ethics Council, Greenwich University, and Comic Relief. For Comic Relief I worked on three campaigns (for Red Nose Day and Sport Relief), as well as building their corporate site.
- 1999 - 2005**     **Customer Support Services, Seeboard / EDF Energy**  
I joined Seeboard soon after market liberalisation, and helped develop new systems and services to help support customer transfers, whilst working part time on my PG Dip.

## Skills & methods

### Technologies

I am proficient with many components of open source full stack development. I have worked with Drupal for over 8 years, but recently I work more with Python Frameworks - Flask and Django. I try not to be a language zealot - selecting the best tool and platform for a project is more important than the language it's written in. Similarly, I use many different database systems including MySQL, PostgreSQL, MongoDB and Neo4J.

On the front end I am experienced with many javascript libraries (NodeJS, jQuery, D3.js) and MVC frameworks (AngularJS, BackboneJS and ReactJS).

I enjoy building interfaces to explore geospatial data, and have worked with PostGIS, QGIS and CartoDB. The [geospatial search on the Museum data portal](#) is built using the same open source components as CartoDB, and is capable of rendering many millions of data points on one map.

### Agile & Open Source

I am an advocate of agile and open source development. Prior to joining the Museum I worked on many projects managed with Scrum, and have brought that experience to the Museum. For some Biodiversity Informatics Group projects with smaller teams, I implemented a Kanban-based approach - an approach which has now been widely adopted throughout the Museum. I set up and administer the Museum's Github account, to better distribute the Museum's open source software.

### Open Data

I have worked for many years to help get the Museum to release its collection and research data under an open licence. Outside of the Museum I have worked on my own sites which aggregate open data sources - like richseam.com and mpreportcard.co.uk. The financial interests data I collated was recently included in a Transparency International white paper. I am actively involved in the Open Data community, and have helped and advised two of the startups in the Open Data challenge series. PiC won the Jobs challenge; Rabble got through to the final three of the Heritage+Culture challenge.

## Education

- 2002 - 2004** Brighton University - Information Systems PG Dip (part-time)
- 1996 - 1999** Sussex University - History BA Hons 2:1
- 1994 - 1996** St Austell College - A levels (English, History & Maths)
- 1989 - 1994** The Roseland School - 9 GCSEs

## Presentations

- *The Natural History Museum's Data Portal Project: opening up locked-away collections* - Open Data Summit, November 2015
- *Releasing Collections Online* - Biodiversity Information standards conference, October 2014
- *NHM Data Portal and Virtual Herbarium* - Natural History Museum Informatics Day, July 2013

## Publications

- Bachman S, Moat J, Hill AW, De laTorre J, Scott B (2011) Supporting Red List threat assessments with GeoCAT: geospatial conservation assessment tool. *Zookeys*, 150 : 117 - 126. doi: [10.3897/zookeys.150.2109](https://doi.org/10.3897/zookeys.150.2109)
- Smith V, Rycroft S, Brake I, Scott B, Baker E, Livermore L, Blagoderov VA, Roberts D (2011) Scratchpads 2.0: a Virtual Research Environment supporting scholarly collaboration, communication and data publication in biodiversity science. *ZooKeys*, 150 (150) : 53–70 - 53–70. doi: [10.3897/zookeys.150.2193](https://doi.org/10.3897/zookeys.150.2193)
- Blagoderov V, Brake I, Georgiev T, Penev L, Roberts D, Rycroft S, Scott B, Agosti D, Catapano T, Smith V (2010) Streamlining taxonomic publication: a working example with Scratchpads and ZooKeys. *ZooKeys*, 50 (50) : 17 - 28. doi: [10.3897/zookeys.50.539](https://doi.org/10.3897/zookeys.50.539)
- Penev L, Agosti D, Georgiev T, Catapano T, Miller J, Blagoderov VA, Roberts D, Smith V, Brake I, Rycroft S, Scott B, Johnson NF, Morris RA, Sautter G, Chavan V, Robertson T, Remsen D, Stoev P, Parr C, Knapp S, Kress WJ, Thompson FC, Erwin T (2010) Semantic tagging of and semantic enhancements to systematics papers: ZooKeys working examples. *ZooKeys*, 50 (50) : 1 - 16. doi: [10.3897/zookeys.50.538](https://doi.org/10.3897/zookeys.50.538)
- Smith VS, Rycroft SD, Harman KT, Scott B, Roberts D (2009) Scratchpads: a data-publishing framework to build, share and manage information on the diversity of life. *BMC Bioinformatics*, 10 (Suppl 14) : DOI: [10.1186/1471-2105-10-S14-S6](https://doi.org/10.1186/1471-2105-10-S14-S6)