Museum Victoria Field Journals

This project is of great historical significance for both scientists and historians. The transcription of these field journals will yield invaluable historic data about the animals and environments observed by our early naturalists, as well as information about the places they visited and the people who accompanied them.

As well as a verbatim transcription of the journal, we also need a record of the species, places and people mentioned. Please read the tutorial below to help us gather this information as effectively as possible.

Using DigiVol

1. Login to DigiVol using your email and password
2. Click on the "Expeditions" tab
3. Select one of Museum Victoria's Field Journals
4. Click on "Start transcribing"
5. Transcribe the page (following the tutorial below)
6. When complete, click "Submit for validation" (or, if partly complete, click "Save unfinished record")
7. Select "Transcribe another task"

Transcription Tutorial

1. Verbatim text field

Page numbers & dates

- If the author has written a page number on the page, transcribe the number with "page number" written in square brackets after the number, e.g. 55 [page number] followed by a line break (see example below)
- Transcribe diary entry dates exactly as the author has written them, but if the author hasn't written the day, month or year, add the missing information between square brackets (if known), e.g. Saturday 14th [June 1947]
- If the date of the diary entry is not written on the current page (i.e. the entry continues from a previous page), write the date in square brackets (exactly as the author wrote it), e.g. [5.10.47]. Start the transcription of the diary entry on the next line (see example below)

Transcribe exactly what is on the page (following the points below)

- Format the transcription so that it matches the original (as best you can)
- Put line breaks exactly where the author has (including hyphenation at the end of a line)
- Where a paragraph is indented, put two spaces at the beginning of the line
- Use single spaces between sentences
- Please check your transcription once you've finished. (spelling, punctuation, formatting) This will pick up any spelling errors you may have inadvertently added (but remember to leave those made by the author – see above).

Anything you add should be written in square brackets

- Use rounded brackets when parentheses are used in the original document – square brackets are used to show insertions by the transcriber (see points below)
- If unsure of a word, transcribe it as [?]; if unsure of more than one word use a [?] for each word, e.g. [?] [?] [?]. Alternatively, if you can guess the word, write [guess] after the word, e.g. swooping [guess]
- If unsure of a letter in a word, use a [?] for the letter, e.g. lett[?]r, or l[?]tt[?]r
- Transcribe misspellings as they appear, then mark with a * and type the correct spelling in square brackets, e.g. rendersveu* [rendezvous]
- Identify diagrams, maps, sketches and photos in square brackets, at the place they appear on the page, e.g. [diagram] or [photo]. Add more detail if you can, e.g. [map of Macquarie Island] or [sketch of an albatross in flight]
- If the author has underlined or circled a word/section, type these words between [underlined] and [/underlined], or [circled] and [/circled]
- If the author has crossed out a word/section, type these words between [crossed out] and [/crossed out], e.g. I [crossed out] hate [/crossed out] dislike rain
- If the author has used abbreviations in the deleted section, do not expand these abbreviations.

Margins, columns & insertions

- If the author has written in the margin, transcribe this text at the end of the page or the end of the relevant section. Identify this text by typing it between the markers [margin] and [/margin]
- If there is text inserted ^ into a sentence, incorporate it into the text without indicator ^
- If the author has capitalised a word, transcribe the word in capitals
- Transcribe columns within the markers [columns] and [/columns]. Try to follow the author's formatting as best you can.

Symbols & dashes

- Transcribe dashes as ' – ' (an m-dash). You can create this dash using the ALT code 0150 (hold down the ALT key and type 0150).
- Lists of ALT codes for symbols can be found online, e.g. http://www.tedmontgomery.com/tutorial/ALTchrc-a.html. Hold the ALT key down and type the code, e.g. ALT 11 is the code for ♂; ALT 12 for ♀; ALT 167 for º.
- Alternatively, spell out the symbol in square brackets:

Original	Transcription
15º	15 [degrees]
♀	[female]

2a. Species & common names field

- All species (animals and plants) that were actually observed (sighted or heard) should be recorded in section 2 – do not record very vague descriptions such as fowl, wader, bird-of-prey
- Record the names used by the author, even if the name has now changed.
- Record scientific names in the scientific name field (leave party field blank)
- Record common names in the common name field (leave party field blank)
- Record common names in the singular not plural form, e.g. Silver Gull, not Silver Gulls
- Common names should be capitalised, except for words directly after a hyphen, e.g. Silver Gull, New Holland Honeyeater, Rainbow Bee-eater, Wedge-tailed Eagle
- If the species name has been spelled incorrectly in the main text, put the corrected name in the species fields (if known).
- Record the locality giving as many details as the author has, e.g. "swampy ground near limekilns at Sorell, Tasmania". Always record the state/territory if known.
- Record dates using the format yyyy-mm-dd e.g. 1958-03-25; the day and even the month may be omitted if the date is vague. A range of dates can be indicated with a /, e.g. 1958-03-25/1958-03-31
- Add a new row for each observation

2b. Parties field – people & institutions/organisations

- All people and institutions/organisations mentioned by name (except for citations when the author is referencing a publication)
- Record the name exactly as it written in the original text (leave animal fields blank)
- If only part of the name is mentioned and you know who the person is, please provide the full name in square brackets, e.g. for "Robert", write "Robert Carrick, CSIRO".
- Add a new row for each mention of person or organisation

3. Notes field

- Record any comments here that may assist in validating this task.