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Why EcoCor?

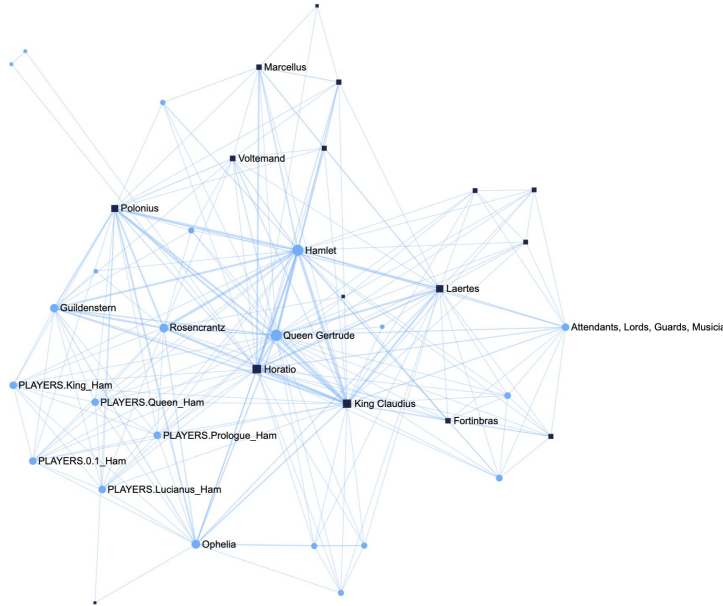
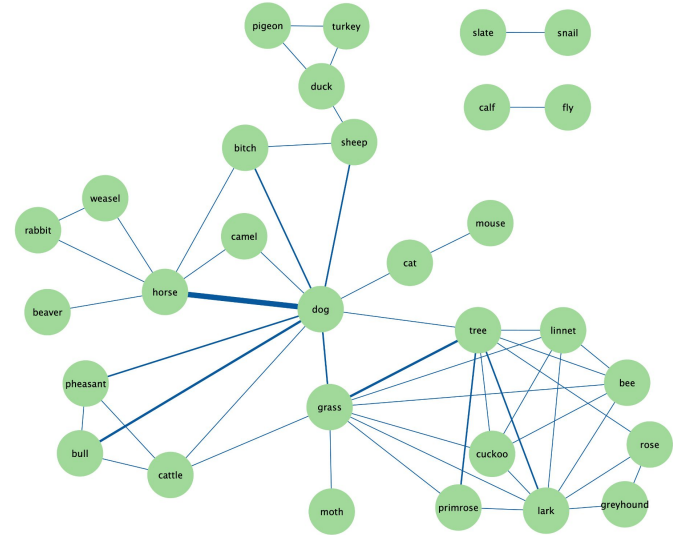
Digital Environmental Humanities

- We are in an ecological multi-crisis
- Environmentally conscious scholarship in DH is growing (Jørgensen 2014, Posthumus et al. 2018, Langer et al. 2022, Ryan et al. 2023)
- 'Ecocritical Enlightenment': An anthropocritical inquiry through digital methods
 - human environment relations
 - activities and sufferings of 'more-than-human' agents
 - representation of non-human entities



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Digital Ecocriticism



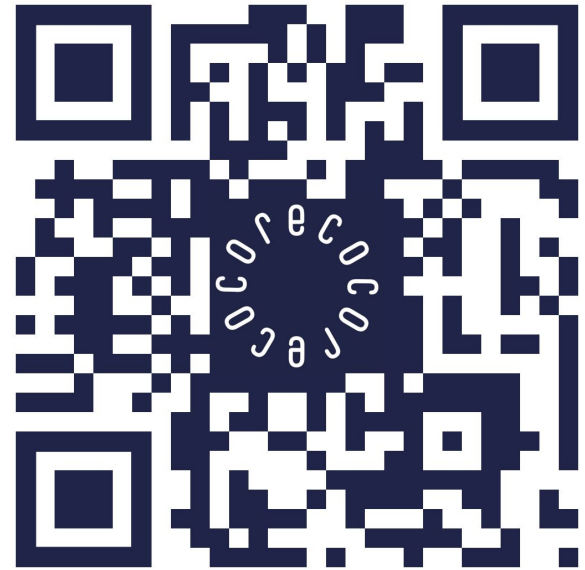
→ Texts not as human-centred documents but as assemblages of beings, materials, and relations

Areas of Action for Digital Ecocriticism

1. Foster digital collections of texts relevant to ecocritical inquiry
2. Application of methods from Computational Literary Studies to scale up ecocritical readings beyond the canon to the “great unread” (Cohen 1999: 23; cf. Moretti 2000)
3. Application of digital methods to deconstruct interpretative routines and shift the focus from human-centered to non-human-centered analyses

What is EcoCor?

- Open infrastructure for the presentation, exploration, and analysis of corpora with ecocritically relevant literary texts
- Community of researchers
- Access via
 - <https://github.com/EcoCor>
 - <https://ecocor.org/>

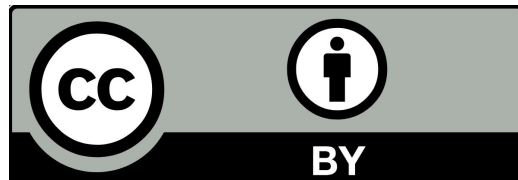


Concept: Building on DraCor

- Sustainable approach to DH infrastructure by reusing the DraCor tech stack: www.dracor.org
- Programmable corpora as guiding principle (Fischer et al. 2019; cf. Börner & Trilcke 2023, Börner & Trilcke 2025)
- Components: Corpus, Microservice, Frontend, API



Corpus Component



- Aim: highlight a large number of ecocritically relevant texts
- Two techniques to determine what counts as 'relevant':
 - by secondary literature
 - find texts with high numbers of references to ecological entities
- Encoded in TEI-XML, based on guidelines and schemata of the ELTeC project
- Collaborative and distributed corpus building: texts are stored in a public GitHub repository
- Automated ingest from repository to EcoCor's eXistDB

Corpora Available in EcoCor

German EcoCor		English EcoCor	
190	Number of texts	23	Number of texts
95	Number of authors	21	Number of authors
123,638	Number of paragraphs	46,457	Number of paragraphs
7,395,276	Number of Words	2,346,818	Number of Words
692	Number of Entities	233	Number of Entities
514	Number of Animals	200	Number of Animals
180	Number of Plants	32	Number of Plants
 f086cb0	Git commit	 8e9c9f0	Git commit
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Microservice Component

- Computational functions for ecocritical text analysis
 - Automatic extraction of dictionaries from Wikidata and manual refinement
 - Dictionary-based entity extraction of plants and animals
 - In the future: ML models for entity extraction (Schumacher et al. 2025)

Microservice - Entity Visualisation



Plants and animals in EcoCor-en

Frontend Component

- Frontend as central interface for human-machine interaction
- Increase visibility of ecocritically relevant texts
- Promote ecocritical perspectives on texts

Frontend – Corpus Browser

English EcoCor



Search

Author ▲ ▼	Title ▲ ▼	Year ▲ ▼	Chapters ▲ ▼	Entities ▲ ▼
White, Gilbert Q772840	The Natural History and Antiquities of Selborne	1789	2	149 (3)
Radcliffe, Ann Q231944	The Mysteries of Udolpho	1794	57	46 (2)
Godwin, Mary Q47152	Frankenstein	1818	11	27 (2)

Frontend – Visualisation of non-human entities



Plants and animals in Gilbert White's *The Natural History and Antiquities of Selborne*

Frontend – Full Text Reader

White, Gilbert

The Natural History and Antiquities of Selborne

eco_en_000065



Gilbert White

 [Q772840](#)

b. 1720, Selborne

d. 1793, Selborne

Entities

Animals

Plants

Full text

Downloads

THE NATURAL HISTORY OF SELBORNE.

LETTER I.

TO THOMAS PENNANT, ESQ.

A HE parish of Selborne lies in the extreme eastern corner of the county of Hampshire, bordering on the county of Sussex, and not far from the county of Surrey ; is about fifty miles south-west of London, in latitude 51, and near midway between the towns of Alton and Petersfield. Being very large and extensive, it abuts on twelve parishes, two of which are in Sussex, viz. Trotton and Rogate. If you begin from the south, and proceed westward, the adjacent parishes are Emshot, Newton, Valence, Faringdon, Harteley, Mauduit, Great Ward-le-ham, Kingsley, Hedleigh, Bramshot, Trotton, Rogate, Lysse, and Greatham. The soils of this district are almost as various and diversified as the views and aspects. The high part to the south-west consists of a vast hill of chalk, rising three hundred feet above the village ; and is divided into a sheep down, the high wood, and a long hanging wood called the Hanger. The covert of this eminence is altogether beech, the most lovely of all forest trees, whether we consider its smooth rind, or bark, its glossy foliage, or graceful pendulous boughs.* The down, or sheep-walk, is a pleasing park-like spot, of about one mile by half that space, jutting out on the verge of the hill country, where it begins to break down into the plains, and commanding a very engaging view, being an assemblage of hill, dale, woodlands, heath, and water. The prospect is bounded to the south-east and east by the vast range of mountains called the Sussex Downs, by Guild-down near Guildford, and by the Downs round Dork- ing, and Ryegate in Surrey, to the north-east, which altogether, with the country beyond Alton and Farnham, form a noble and extensive outline.

* While the beech is admitted to be one of the most beautiful trees of the forest, it must yield in grandeur, dignity? and picturesque beauty, to the oak, which, in these respects, stands pre-eminent in the British sylva : like the lion amongst animals, it is the unquestionable king of the forest. Beauty of a sublime kind, united with strength, is characteristic of the oak ED.

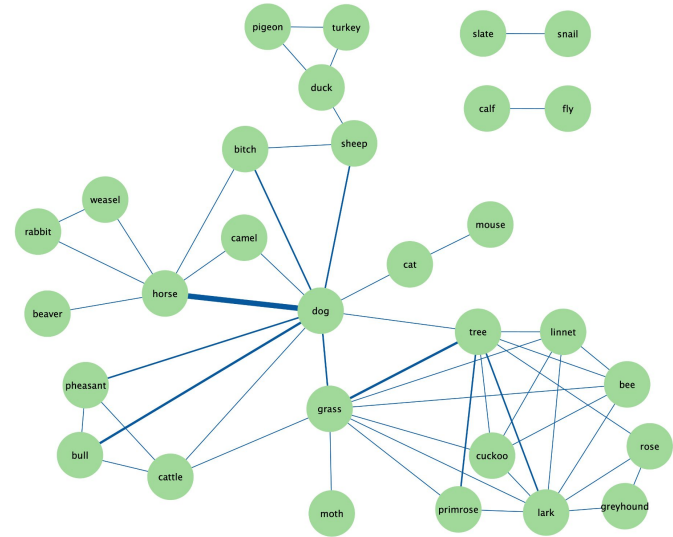
Components: API

- Makes the EcoCor data machine-actionable
- Data can be used directly in downstream analysis

meta	Information about this service.	^
GET	/info API info	▼
corpus	Analyze a corpus.	^
GET	/corpora List available corpora	▼
GET	/corpora/{corpusname} Get metadata of a single corpus	▼
GET	/corpora/{corpusname}/texts List texts in a corpus	▼
text	Analyze a text.	^
GET	/corpora/{corpusname}/texts/{textname} Get a single text information	▼
GET	/corpora/{corpusname}/texts/{textname}/tei Get a single text	▼
GET	/corpora/{corpusname}/texts/{textname}/plaintext Get plain text version of a single text	▼
entities	Analyze occurrences of animals and plants in corpora and texts.	^
GET	/entities/{wikidataId} Get single entity	▼
GET	/corpora/{corpusname}/entities Get entities of a single corpus	▼
GET	/corpora/{corpusname}/texts/{textname}/entities Get entities of a single text	▼
GET	/corpora/{corpusname}/texts/{textname}/entities/csv Get entities of a single text as CSV	▼

API – Downstream Analysis

- More-than-human entities in Emily Brontë's *Wuthering Heights*
- A novel about the companionship between horse and dog OR
- Human-centered more-than-human entities?



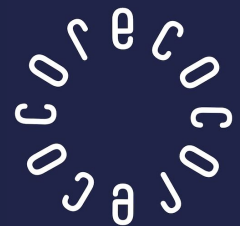
Outlook

- EcoCor is evolving and ever growing
- Our current focus: collaborative corpus development
- Further plans:
 - Upgrade microservice: annotate references to animals and plants beyond biological taxa (Schumacher et al. 2025)
 - Extend microservice to create network visualisations

Outlook

- EcoCor as social software
- All further development is part of an active discussion in the EcoCor collective
- EcoCor aims to serve as a modest infrastructural component forming part of a dynamic “assemblage” (Latour 2005) committed to the ecological dimensions of humanities scholarship

Interested in joining? 🙏🙏



**We are looking forward to
your ideas and thoughts!**

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