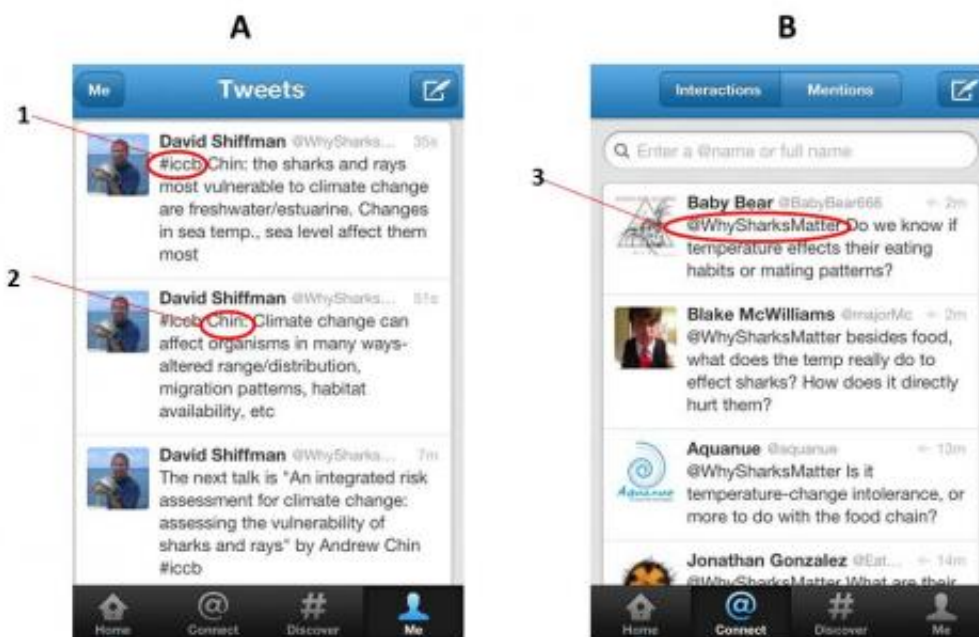


UM researcher revolutionizing scientific communication, one tweet at a time

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Screenshots of live-tweets from the International Congress of Conservation Biology, New Zealand, 2011. A. Sample of the author's tweets from the meeting. B. Questions about the author's tweets. Credit: David Shiffman, doctoral student at the Leonard and Jayne Abess Center for Ecosystem Science and Policy, at the University of Miami

University of Miami (UM) doctoral student in Environmental Science

and Policy, David Shiffman was invited to tweet updates in real-time, at the International Congress of Conservation Biology, New Zealand, 2011. As a result, more than 100,000 twitter users worldwide saw at least one tweet from the conference, and nearly 200 people from more than 40 countries, on six continents shared at least one tweet from the conference—greatly exceeding the number of conference attendees.

"While live-tweeting is not a new phenomenon, to my knowledge this was the first time that anyone has ever been invited to a conference specifically for this purpose," says Shiffman, a [doctoral student](#) at the Leonard and Jayne Abess Center for Ecosystem Science and Policy, at UM. "Due to [twitter](#)'s instantaneous nature, I was able to relay my follower's questions to the presenters who were in the room with me. In one case, a presenter was discussing his study site in Brazil, and I received a question from someone in that town interested in his research," says Shiffman.

Shiffman shares the findings of this project in a paper titled "Twitter as a tool for conservation education and outreach: what scientific conferences can do to promote live-tweeting" published in the *Journal of Environmental Studies and Sciences*. The report includes an introduction to the use of twitter for science, general advice for other scientific conferences to facilitate a similar discussion and analysis of the impact of live-tweeting.

"Twitter is particularly well suited for sharing information from conferences," the report states. "[It] allows users to share easily categorized and searchable information instantly with another user around the world."

Shiffman is studying marine conservation policies and outreach, focusing on shark research which he carries out through the UM RJ Dunlap Marine Conservation Program. He was recently named one of

the top biologists to follow on twitter ([@WhySharksMatter](#)) by the *Huffington Post*. Shiffman also writes for an ocean science blog called Southern Fried Science.

More information: The study is available online at:
<http://rjd.miami.edu/assets/pdfs/pubs/Shiffman%202012%20conference%20live-tweeting.pdf>.

Provided by University of Miami

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