SOCIAL TAPESTRIES
Robotic Feral
Public Authoring

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– *What background environmental factors such as air quality, noise and light pollution affect our neighburhoods?*
– *How can we measure pollution in our own localities and do something about it?*
– *How can we make sense of this in the context of what we already know about the places we live, work and play in?*

Robotic Feral Public Authoring links together two branches of research for community fun and action. Hobbyist robotics and public authoring (knowledge mapping and sharing) both enable people to use emerging technologies in dynamic and exciting new ways. Brought together they open up whole vistas of possibilities for exploring our local environments with electronic sensors to detect all kinds of phenomena and map them using online tools.

Everyday Archaeology
Electronic sensors are now cheaply available for detecting a wide range of phenomena such as carbon monoxide, nitrogen dioxide, solvent vapours, electro-magnetic emissions (mobile phone masts, electricity generators etc), light and noise pollution. These can be combined with other cheap electronics (such as toy robots) that engage people in evidence collecting in a fun and tactile way.
Adding the sensor readings to online mapping tools, such as *Urban Tapestries*, suddenly brings the relationships between environment and home vividly into life. It enables people to feel they can learn about their environment and have the evidence to do something about it. By linking robot building and mapping workshops into traditional community events (village fetes and local festivals etc) a wide range of people can become involved in gathering and sharing knowledge about their environment.

∞ **proboscis**   http://socialtapestries.net/feralrobots/

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