

Firefly | A game of Dark Intentions | Pollie Barden & Chloe Varelidi



Demonstration Submission | contact: p.barden@sussex.ac.uk.

How to Play: Each round is 30 seconds. Players collect as many fireflies as they can before time runs out. Players with most badges (Fireflies) of the same flash pattern win!

For video of game in action: Website: <http://www.fireflygame.com/>

Play in the DARK!!

Firefly is a tagging game played in the dark that explores temporal memory, and exploits the balance of collaboration and competition. The “Fireflies” are LED badges that flash on and off based on the patterns of North American fireflies (Photurinae). These flashes are based on light patterns real fireflies exhibit to communicate with each other. The key component of Firefly is that player can only steal a badge when the light is OFF. This is where the exploration of temporal memory comes into play. The players track the “fireflies” while lit up but must find and steal a firefly when it goes dark. The core goal is to collect as many badges as possible. The additional layer is to collect the firefly badges with the same flashing pattern. For example, two players both end up with five badges each, the one with the most badges of the same pattern (species) wins.

Negotiating Play

We investigate the influences on the evolution of the interactions among the players.

The rounds are intentionally short to retain players engagement over several rounds of play. The game is a platform to investigate human-to-human interaction mediated by technology (fireflies). If a player steals a firefly that is “ON” there is no technological intervention to signal a “cheat”. This intentional as it is designed to investigate how a different groups negotiate the rules during gameplay. These negotiations of the players mimic the behavior of fireflies in nature. As their flashing patterns are used to attract mates and warn of danger. Some groups individual self-regulate by apologizing when they grab a lit firefly. Others promote who can “cheat” better. The players augment meaning of the components of the game with their own rules and procedures for determining “fair play” and what constitute a “win”.