

What is ResearchRabbit?

ResearchRabbit is an innovative “citation-based literature mapping tool” available online. The scope of such tool is to optimise your time searching for references as you start planning your essay, minor project, or literature review. The concept is simple: you start by using one or more papers (called seed papers), and the app will find more papers relevant to the topic of interest (which is dictated by the seed papers you previously selected).

The tool is designed to support your research without you switching between searching modes and databases, a process that is time consuming and often escalates into further citation mining; a truly unpleasant rabbit hole (and that’s what inspired the name ResearchRabbit)!

REMEMBER: ResearchRabbit is only one of the many literature mapping tools available online, some require you to create an account and others don’t. ResearchRabbit is completely free of charge, and you can find an additional insightful guide on ResearchRabbit by following the links below:

(<https://library.smu.edu.sg/topics-insights/new-literature-mapping-tool-researchrabbit>)

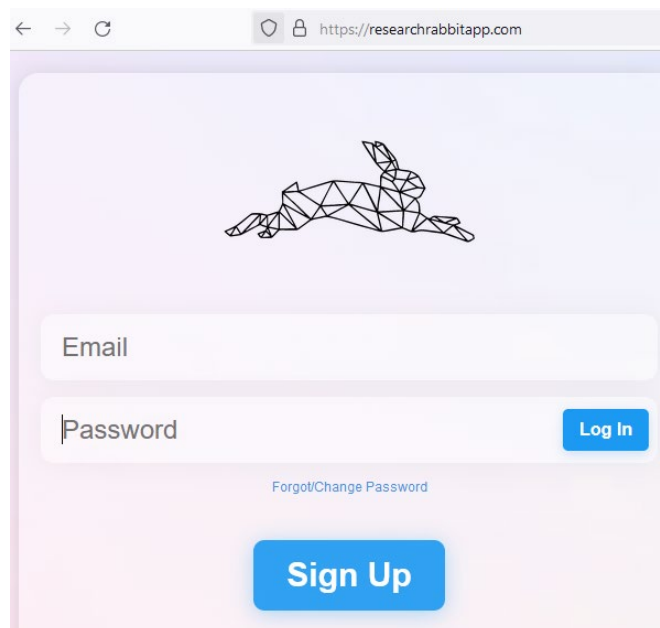
(<https://medium.com/a-academic-librarians-thoughts-on-open-access/researchrabbit-is-out-of-beta-my-review-of-this-new-literature-mapping-tool-3c593d061c63>).

The software scans for any publicly available source online and select papers based on their similarities. However, it seems to only work for scholarly papers, and therefore is unlikely to find other sources of information that are not journal articles, such as books.

Step by step tutorial.

Here, I’ll present a quick tutorial on how to use the ResearchRabbit app, so that you don’t force the inclusion of too many authors or references but develop a more functional workflow instead. First of all, the good news is that the app has been made freely available to everyone in 2021.

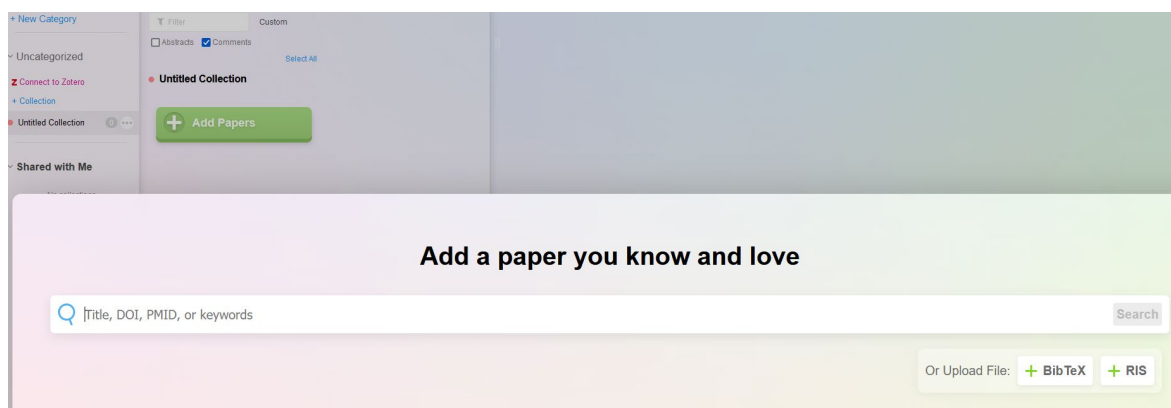
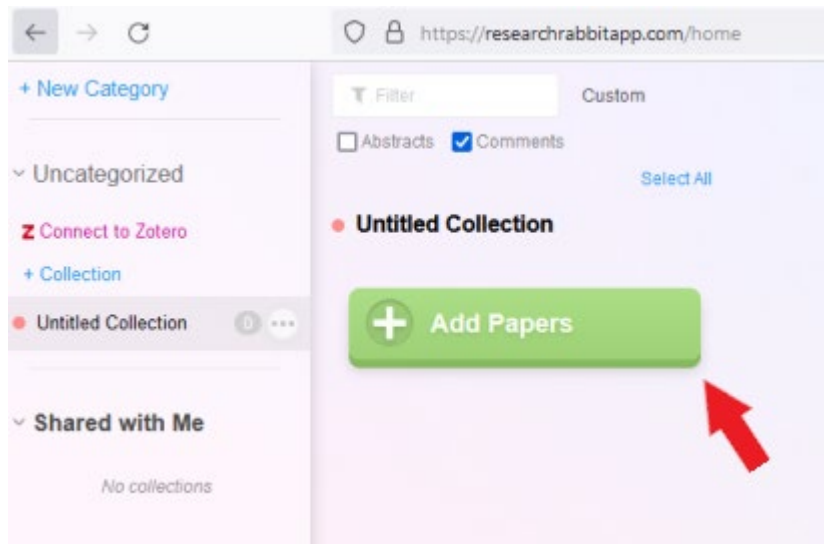
1. **Create an account** (<https://researchrabbitapp.com/>). It’s free of charge.

A screenshot of a web browser showing the ResearchRabbit app login page. The browser's address bar displays 'https://researchrabbitapp.com'. The page features a stylized wireframe rabbit logo at the top. Below the logo are two input fields: 'Email' and 'Password'. To the right of the 'Password' field is a blue 'Log In' button. Below these fields is a link that says 'Forgot/Change Password'. At the bottom of the form is a large blue 'Sign Up' button.

You can now see that your collection is untitled and empty, since you just opened the app for the first time.

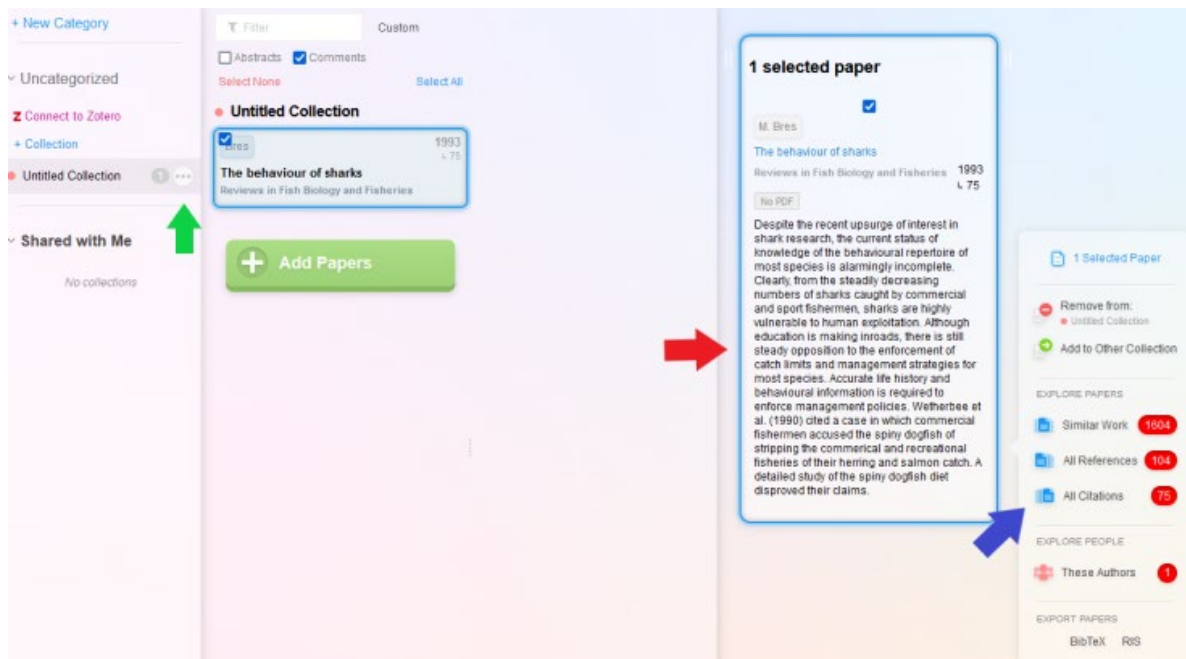
2. Add Papers.

By clicking on **+Add Papers** you can select a reference paper you want to use to start your research. Add a paper that you know is a key paper to your research question. You can add only one paper, or many.



For example, I will upload a paper called “The behaviour of sharks” as a reference, just to show you the process. After you select the paper and search it using the title, you can add it to your collection (see picture below). You can work on multiple projects at the same time, since you can create more than one collection and rename them (green arrow).

The reference paper you select will appear in the app with the abstract, author name, title, year of publication and journal where the paper was published (red arrow). On the right side of the screen (blue arrow), the app tells you how many similar papers have been found online, and it also explores the references and citations within the paper you selected.

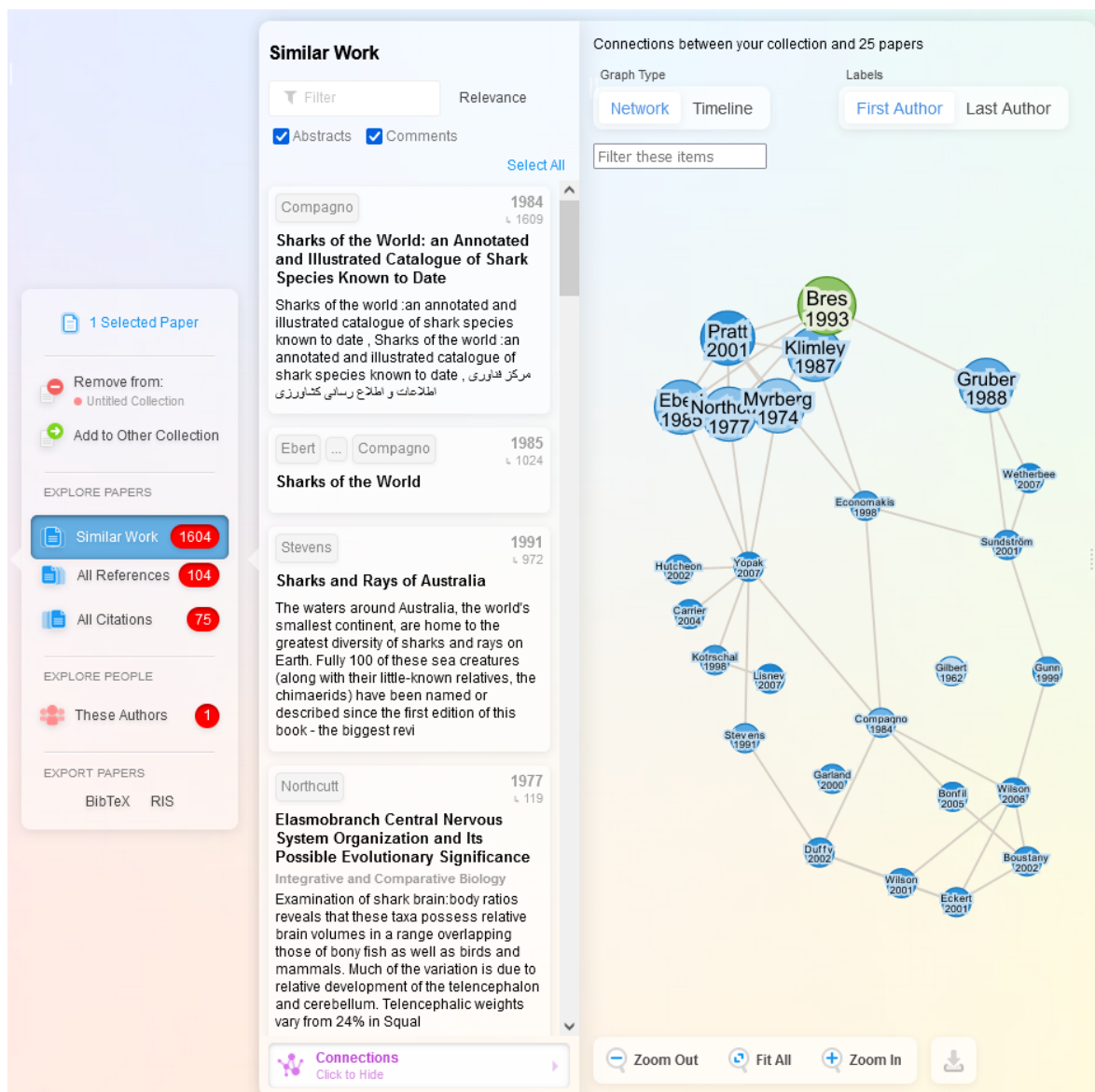


3. Visualise connections between your reference paper and similar papers the app found.

By clicking on “Similar work”, you will visualise the closest and best connection possible between your reference paper and the literature available online.

- All similar works are now listed in order of relevance. You can also filter them by citations or alphabetical order.
- By ticking the box “abstracts”, the app will show you the abstracts of all similar work listed, so that you can easily go through the results and decide which papers are actually relevant to your research and which ones are not.
- In the connection graph, select the graph type that better suits your research. A timeline graph type could be useful to discuss your topic chronologically, while the network type will favour similarities between references.
- The option “labels” can be handy if you are interested in looking at different authors, which might lead to the discovery of more papers and different pathways you could take.

REMEMBER: Abstracts can be extremely helpful, but sometimes can also be insightful to go through other sections (e.g. discussion or methodology). Don’t select papers a priori, take your time to read through them to optimise the quality of your research.



The screenshot displays the 'Similar Work' and 'Connections' sections of The Learning Centre interface. On the left, a sidebar shows '1 Selected Paper' and options to 'Remove from' or 'Add to Other Collection'. Below this are 'EXPLORE PAPERS' (Similar Work: 1604, All References: 104, All Citations: 75) and 'EXPLORE PEOPLE' (These Authors: 1). The main area is divided into 'Similar Work' and 'Connections between your collection and 25 papers'.

Similar Work

- Sharks of the World: an Annotated and Illustrated Catalogue of Shark Species Known to Date** (Compagno, 1984, 1609 pages). Abstracts and Comments are checked. The abstract describes a catalogue of shark species known to date.
- Sharks of the World** (Ebert, 1985, 1024 pages). The abstract describes the waters around Australia, home to the greatest diversity of sharks and rays.
- Sharks and Rays of Australia** (Stevens, 1991, 972 pages). The abstract describes the waters around Australia, home to the greatest diversity of sharks and rays.
- Elasmobranch Central Nervous System Organization and Its Possible Evolutionary Significance** (Northcutt, 1977, 119 pages). The abstract describes an examination of shark brain:body ratios.

Connections between your collection and 25 papers

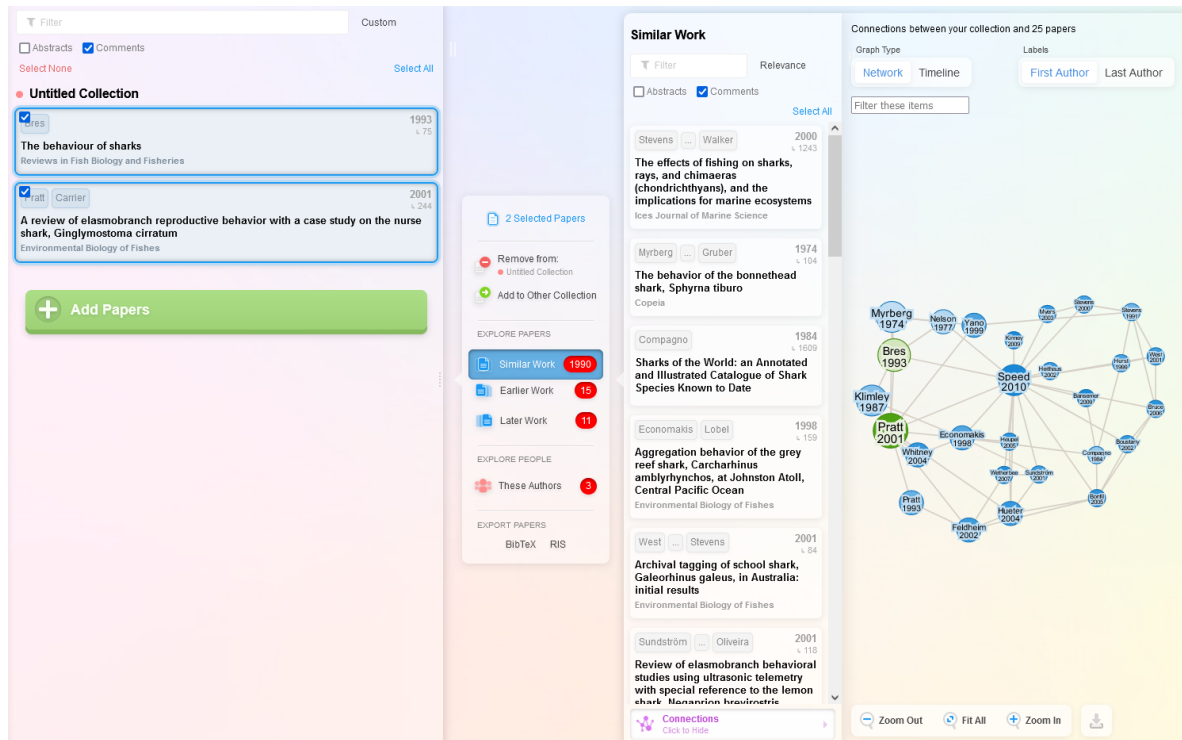
Graph Type: Network (selected), Timeline. Labels: First Author (selected), Last Author. Filter these items: []

The network graph shows connections between 25 papers. Nodes are labeled with author names and years (e.g., Bres 1993, Kimley 1987, Gruber 1988, Pratt 2001, Ebert 1985, Northcutt 1977, Myrberg 1974, Yopak 2007, Stevens 1991, Compagno 1984, Wilson 2006, Boustany 2002, Eckert 2001, Duffly 2002, Garland 2000, Bonfil 2005, Wilson 2001, Wetherbee 2007, Sundstrom 2001, Gilbert 1962, Gunn 1999, Economakis 1998, Hultineon 2002, Carrier 2004, Kotschal 1998, Lisnev 2007). Nodes are colored green (papers in your collection) or blue (papers that might be relevant).

4. Build up your network of references.

Now that you found your main connections, you can start building your research. The papers that are in your collection are shown in green, while all the papers that might be relevant to your project are displayed in blue. As you proceed reading through the references, you can add the papers you consider relevant to your collection. These papers will then be displayed in green, and will automatically create more connections.

You can add papers from the graph to your collection just by clicking on the author name from the graph itself. By doing so, the paper selected will open on the right side of the graph with the full abstract in display. Then, by clicking on the option "Add to" you can add the new paper into your collection. Right after the paper is added to the collection, the graph changes and other similar work and connections will appear.



The screenshot displays the Research Rabbit interface, which is used for managing and exploring research papers. On the left, there's a sidebar with a filter dropdown set to 'Custom'. Below it, a collection titled 'Untitled Collection' is shown, containing two papers: 'The behaviour of sharks' (1993) and 'A review of elasmobranch reproductive behavior with a case study on the nurse shark, *Ginglymostoma cirratum*' (2001). A green 'Add Papers' button is at the bottom of the sidebar. The main area is divided into two panels. The left panel, titled '2 Selected Papers', shows options to 'Remove from: Untitled Collection' and 'Add to Other Collection'. It also has sections for 'EXPLORE PAPERS' (Similar Work: 1990, Earlier Work: 16, Later Work: 11) and 'EXPLORE PEOPLE' (These Authors: 3). The right panel, titled 'Similar Work', lists several papers related to the selected ones, including 'The effects of fishing on sharks, rays, and chimaeras', 'The behavior of the bonnethead shark, *Sphyrna tiburo*', 'Sharks of the World: an Annotated and Illustrated Catalogue of Shark Species Known to Date', 'Aggregation behavior of the grey reef shark, *Carcharhinus amblyrhynchos*, at Johnston Atoll, Central Pacific Ocean', 'Archival tagging of school shark, *Galeorhinus galeus*, in Australia: initial results', and 'Review of elasmobranch behavioral studies using ultrasonic telemetry with special reference to the lemon shark, *Manania hirsuticetus*'. On the far right, a network graph titled 'Connections between your collection and 25 papers' shows a complex web of connections between various authors and papers, with nodes labeled with names and years (e.g., Myrberg 1974, Nelson 1977, Yano 1991, Kimley 1987, Bres 1993, Pratt 2001, Spence 2010, Compagno 1984, Economakis 1998, West 1998, Stevens 2000, Sundström 2001, Oliveira 2001, Huster 2004, Fieldham 2002, Pratt 1993, Whitney 2004, Wetherbee-Suprenant 2007, Corns 1986, Hester 1987, Hester 1988, Hester 1989, Hester 1990, Hester 1991, Hester 1992, Hester 1993, Hester 1994, Hester 1995, Hester 1996, Hester 1997, Hester 1998, Hester 1999, Hester 2000, Hester 2001, Hester 2002, Hester 2003, Hester 2004, Hester 2005, Hester 2006, Hester 2007, Hester 2008, Hester 2009, Hester 2010, Hester 2011, Hester 2012, Hester 2013, Hester 2014, Hester 2015, Hester 2016, Hester 2017, Hester 2018, Hester 2019, Hester 2020, Hester 2021, Hester 2022, Hester 2023, Hester 2024, Hester 2025).

Now you can keep building your research and add all the papers you want to your collection. As you can create multiple collections, you can also use them to separate different paragraphs and topics so that your searching won't get confusing.

The best part? The software will keep all your papers saved and organised, and you will not have hundreds of tabs opened on your computer!

REFERENCE

The software was developed and is periodically updated by Krishnan Chandra, Ben Slater and Mike Ma (<https://www.researchrabbit.ai/team>)