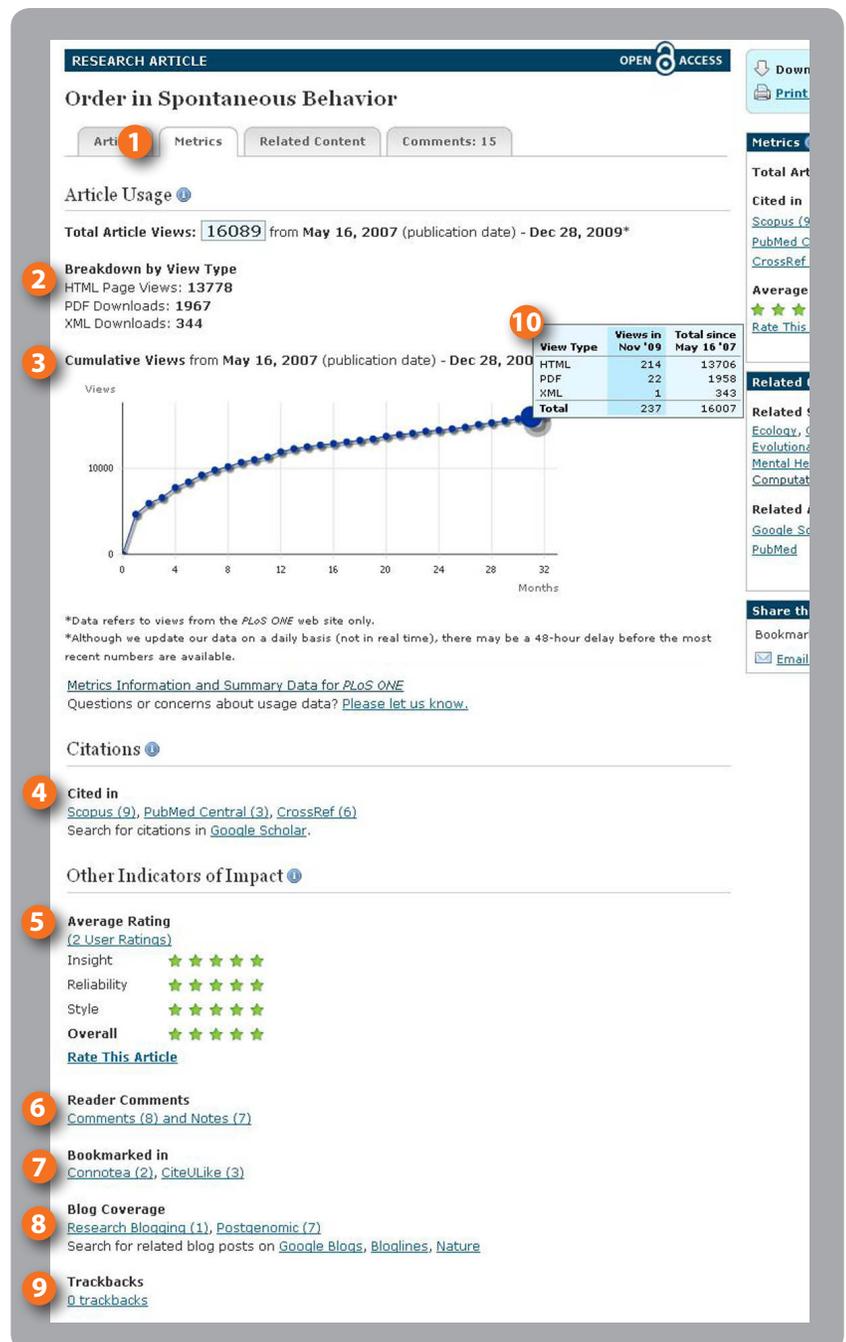# The Impact of Article-Level Metrics

Traditionally, the impact of research articles has been measured by the journal in which they are published, however it is clearly more informative to look at the performance of the articles themselves. When you do this, it is apparent that there are many possible ways to assess the impact of any piece of research, including: citations; usage; media coverage; blog coverage; discussion activity; expert ratings; user ratings; social bookmarking activity; whether or not public policy was affected; where the research was done; who is citing it; who is reading it and so on. These types of measures can be more powerful and useful than citations or usage metrics alone and so PLoS is embarking on a program to present many of these measures with our Article-Level Metrics program. This new approach has been implemented to evaluate and filter PLoS journal articles and to give a window on the true impact of any piece of research.

Shown below is an example of a PLoS ONE article opened to the (Article-Level) Metrics tab.

1. **Metrics tab** - this tab contains summary information for every Article-Level Metric that we track.

2. **Breakdown by View Type**  –
   HTML Page Views - this is a total number of views to each article.
   PDF and XML Downloads -  this is a total number of  downloads for each article.

3. **Cumulative Views** - this is a graph that shows the entire progessive  views of the article.

4. **Cited in** - the number of articles that have cited this PLoS article in CrossRef, PubMed Central and Scopus.. Links to additional citations.

5. **Ratings** - this indicates the average ratings that this article has received in 4 categories.

6. **Comments and Notes** - users can leave a comment or note on a specific piece of text or on the entire article. Once this has been left, it forms a discussion thread to which other users can reply.

7. **Bookmarked in** -  this is a count of how many bookmarks have been made to this article by users of the CiteULike and Connetea social bookmarking services.

8. **Blog Coverage** - this is a count of how many blog postings refer to this article, as indexed by the Post-genomic, Nature Blogs and Blogline services.

9. **Trackbacks** -  this is an indication of the number of trackbacks that have been made to this article by external sites.

10. **Usage Graph** -  a monthly data box appears when you mouse over one of the blue points.

**11. Article tab**

**12. Related Content tab**

**13. Comments tab**



**Additional Features**
• Competing interest statements are added
  to all notes, comments and ratings.
• Formal corrections and retractions are now displayed
  in the Table of Contents next to
  the appropriate article.
• Support for NLM DTD 2.3.

**COUNTER compliance**
COUNTER compliance is a standard for measuring
online journal usage at the journal level, for use within
an institution. COUNTER has not yet set standards as
to how to measure global usage at the article level,
however we are currently adhering to the spirit of their
definitions, and as soon as they define article level
standards, we will aim to adhere to them as well (and
receive a compliance audit).

… and we're not finished yet. We're working to
develop further measures and to refine and develop
tools that allow users to search and sort articles on
the basis of these metrics. We're continuing to expand
the Article-Level Metrics program because we believe
that articles should be considered on their own merits,
and that the impact of an individual article should not
be determined by the journal in which it happened to
be published. As a result, we hope that new ways of
measuring and evaluating research quality (or 'impact')
can and will evolve.
The data can be found under the 'Metrics' tab of each
PLoS article.

Read more: **http://article-level-metrics.plos.**

We welcome your thoughts (feedback@plos.org)
on our new design and features.





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