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Robot of the Day

Neophyte



Built by Kyle Juedes

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Newest Robots

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- 24 Oct 2008 Romulus
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Berkley Sends 100 Robots Down River

Posted 16 May 2012 at 19:48 UTC by [steve](#)



Berkley's [Floating Sensor Network](#) project launched 100 floating robots equipped with GPS-enabled smartphones down the Sacramento River on May 9. The launch was designed to test a new generation of water monitoring technologies. The 12 inch robots, called [Drifters](#), are designed to provide real-time, high-resolution data of hard-to-map waterways. One of many possible uses is [locating breaches in levee systems](#) quickly enough to allow repair, before erosion destroys the levee. Other uses include identifying contaminants. [Andrew Tinka](#), lead graduate student on the project notes:

"If something spills in the water, if there's a contaminant, you need to know where it is now, you need to know where it's going, you need to know where it will be later on. The Floating Sensor Network project can help by tracking water flow at a level of detail not currently possible."

Deploying the robots is as simple as throwing them into the water from boats, docks, or helicopters. Each robot has a buoyancy control system, differential drive, GPS, compass, depth sensor, salinity sensor, Zigbee and GSM radios, and 72 hours of power from a lithium battery. The open source control system is written entirely in Python and runs on top of Linux. The project is headed by [Alexandre Bayen](#) of the [Center for Information Technology Research in the Interest of Society \(CITRIS\)](#). For more details see the [Berkley news release](#). The project has also released quite a few [technical reports and papers](#) describing the developments that went into designing the drifter robots. You can also check several [videos of the robots](#) in action.

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