



~**Gameplay**~

There is a hint of irony calling this section Gameplay because it would be wrong to classify Electroplankton as a game at all. If I would have to choose one word to describe the game, it would be "instrument". Or "instruments", as everything in the game, from the haunting startup tone to the way of changing the sound on the last plankton Volvoice, is turned into some way of making music. Even the bubbles you make by touching the screen at the main menu have high and low notes depending on where you make the bubbles. The menu that has the Electroplankton selection makes string-plucking noises as you flip through the plankton.

Like in most early DS games, everything in the game makes good use of everything the DS is capable of. To make melodies with any of the ten Electroplankton, you will be dragging, spinning, sliding, blowing, and recording.

If you look for a game in Electroplankton, you fail and will hate the game and call it stupid, and be for one, horribly wrong, and second off be one of the thousands of idiots that were the main reason this game has had poor sales and was pulled from shelves. If you go towards Electroplankton with an open mind, ready to take whatever it shall give, you will be brought a joyful experience.

~**Graphics**~

As shown in other games such as Super Paper Mario, there is pure beauty in simplistic graphics. Toshio Iwai perfected the art style. Also, everything in Electroplankton, all of the sprites, if you will, are highly detailed, more detailed than the DS can even show. While some plankton, such as Nanocarp, show up as only a few pixels high, but upon zooming, shows they are quite beautiful. Speaking of beautiful, the colors seen in some of the Electroplankton settings is just astounding, such as Lumiloop. Toshio Iwai strives to merge light and

sound together in everything he makes, and this, strategy if you will, works wonders in every Electroplankton.

~Sound~

This game revolves around sound and music. Without it...well..would there be any point? As for reviewing this reasons, every sound is extremely high quality. Toshio Iwai perfected a way of letting even the most musically challenged make music, but not so wussied down as music fans would feel ignored. So, from BeatNES to Hanenbow, you can never make anything that sounds bad. But it is still entirely yours. One more thing, heavy-duty headphones are a must if you own Electroplankton. Playing with the DS speakers just make everything sound more "blah." So plug in those headphones!

~Difficulty~

At first, I thought of omitting this section, because Electroplankton is not a game in a normal sense. But then I compared it to an instrument, and as we all know, instruments take some amount of difficulty to learn. So I left the part in. Thanks to Toshio Iwai's genius, you can never make anything sound bad, so even horribly confused musical-suckers can play around randomly and make something amazing. There is little difficulty to Electroplankton at all. So, if you had the choice, choose to play the Electroplankton over trumpet or piano. :P

~The Plankton~



Rundown: The first plankton you will meet in Electroplankton. Basically, you draw a line, and the Tracy plankton follow it, playing a note on each segment of the line. They also follow the exact speed as how you drew the line. Other notes? ...the direction of the line determines the note. Pressing the left and arrows change the overall speed of all the Tracy plankton.

Is it easy to make music with? Yeah...I mean draw a line. How hard can it be? The plankton sound much prettier when slowed down all the way.

Is the music different everytime? Somewhat. If you scribble with every Tracy, it sounds a little blah. But if you plan out your Tracy, and

make bass and treble lines, Tracy actually will sound quite pleasant, and different, as you ask.


Percentage used? 60%

Overall: Tracy is a nice little plankton, but not my favorite, because of the difficulty of making the note you want, and the overall melody. Neither is this plankton too relaxing, unlike plankton like Luminaria. Plus its name is icky...

Hanenbow 

Rundown: Obviously the most famous Electroplankton. Every person who owns Brawl should recognize these little critters, who bounce around leaves. That is exactly what they do. Yet, the leaves angle can be changed, which changes the whole direction of the Hanenbow, and the whole tune. When one leaf is hit excessively, it starts changing the sound, and color of the leaves. When every leaf is turned red, for one the sound is much more prettier, but the nice white flower (as seen in Brawl) shows at the top of this microscopic plant. Like with most plankton, the rate of the Hanenbow shooting off the leaves can be sped up or slowed down by pressing the right and left arrows.

Is it easy to make music with? This plankton strays closest to the edge of "sound." If you want "music," press the right arrow once or twice. Getting the exact tune you want is hard... (of course)

Is the music different everytime? Yes!  The more you screw around with the angle of the leaves, the more it is yours! Also, pressing Select completely changes the, level, if you will, and brings completely different leaf structures. Guaranteed different music.

Percentage used? 40%

Overall: Hanenbow, although famous, are not the best. As I said earlier, Hanenbow verge on the line of being "sound." When it comes to sounding pretty, you will have to make the leaves red first.

Luminaria 

Rundown: By far my favorite plankton. There are four individual Luminaria, a blue one, a green one, a red one, and a yellow one. When poked, the Luminaria follow the arrows assorted throughout the

screen, and play a note upon hitting each arrow. The note of each arrow depends on where that arrow is located on the screen. Red Luminaria is Speedy Gonzales, while the blue Luminaria is the fat 3rd grader. >_> The ranges of each ones sounds can be from music box to piano. Each arrow can be tapped to change its angle, or you can press up or down to change the whole arrow pattern. Pressing the left and right arrows make every arrow point one direction. Also, you might recognize Luminaria from iBand's first song.

Is it easy to make music with? Absolutely! You can alter the whole tone exactly how you want with just a few taps and button presses.

Is the music different everytime? Yes. This plankton is one you have complete control of, unlike the previous two when everything is more random.

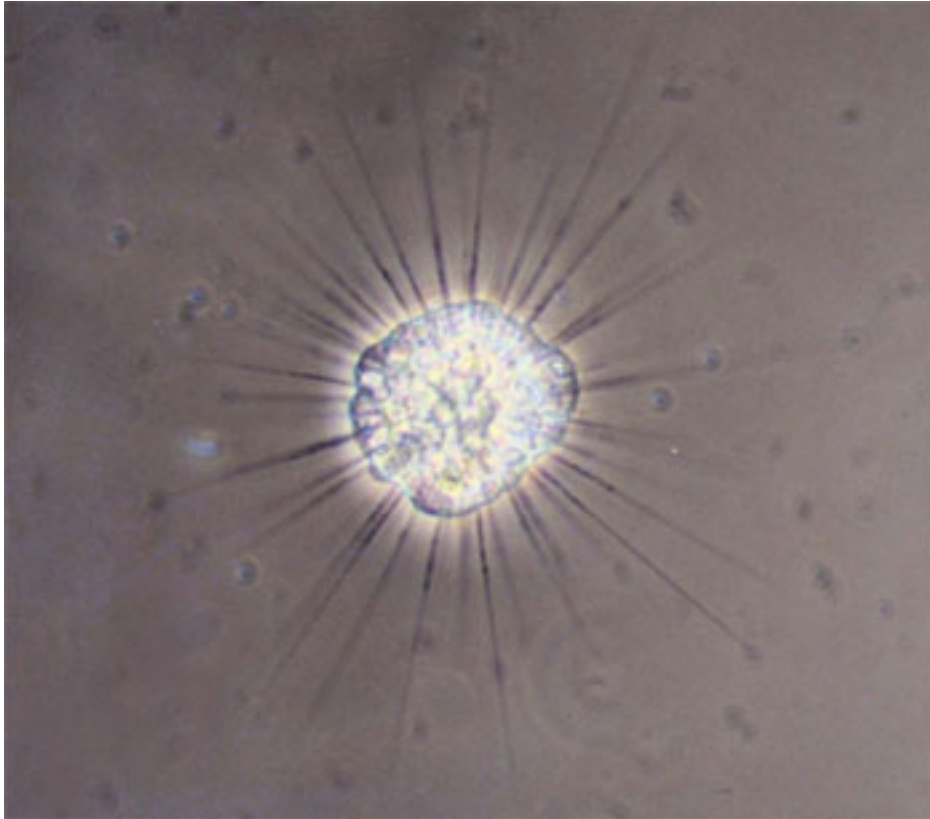
Percentage used? 100%

Overall: Luminaria pwn. You feel like you are actually in control of the plankton, and the results can be amazing. When it comes to relaxation, you could fall asleep to these guys.

Sun-Animalcule (and Falcato)



Rundown: Sun Animalcule are actually real plankton:



As you place teeny Sun Animalcule eggs, they sing and grow. Immediately from birth. And they seem happy about it. I don't....never mind. Each makes 3 tones, stops, then does it again a few beats later. Where you place the Sun-Animalcule alters the note. If they play a fowl note, just move them, they will get into key. 🎵 Also, when "night" falls (either in a few minutes or a few arrow presses), you will not lay Sun-Animalcule eggs, but Falcato eggs. Falcato make slightly haunting tones; a vast change from day to night occurs.

Is it easy to make music with? Depends on how well you place the plankton. The music won't sound so much like music if you just poke the screen randomly. Although doing that sometimes does have positive outcomes...

Is the music different every time? This really depends on how you poke the screen. So the real answer is do you poke your DS screen the same way everytime?

Percentage used? 70%

Overall: These plankton really rely on how well you are at making music. You might stumble upon a good tune, or a few, but Sun-Animalcule take skill to make what you want.

RecRec



Rundown: the first Electroplankton to rely on the microphone. Upon starting, you see 4 fish (the RecRec) swimming across the screen. Also a nice drumbeat plays.... Tap one of these fish to make him turn red. You might be saying, "OMG waht did i du!!!1!", and then the RecRec would say back "OMG waht did i du!!!1!". And in a few beats, "OMG waht did i du!!!1!" Tap another plankton, and say something. With two plankton saying what they recorded, it might sound like a garbled mess. Well, it does (that's just your voice though), but, almost magically, the recordings are starting to sound like music almost. With that strong beat going too... BTW, pressing up and down can change the beats, and pressing left and right can change the overall speed of the RecRec.

Is it easy to make music with? Insanely easy. Trying at all isn't too necessary...

Is the music different every time? If you record you saying stuff for every RecRec every time, then no. It is actually quite fun to go into town and record random noises. Just prepare to look a little strange...

Percentage used? 90%

Overall: quite nifty Electroplankton. This one can make music out of the weirdest things...like...um... Using it in public will make you look like a moron though.

Nanocarp



Rundown: So cute...most likely the reason it is Electroplankton's mascot. Like how the green Elebit gets all the fame and glory while the red, blue, gray, pink, yellow, and black Elebits are ignored. Nanocarp only show up as a few pixels high on the bottom screen. Thank goodness there are 16 of them... tapping the screen releases a purple circle (do I sound like I had a bunch of LSD? Speaking of which, Electroplankton must *induce* the visual perception of drugs...like lava lamps) and that purple circle, if it touches the Nanocarp, it makes a guitar like sound. Like with most plankton, how high up it is on the screen, the higher pitch the note. Pressing any arrows makes a screen-wide wave that hits every Nanocarp with deadly force! No, it

makes a xylophone like sound when it meets each Nanocarp. Don't forget, Nanocarp are very good listeners (I mean, just look at those ears! Darn!) So, if you clap for them, they will go into formation. If you sing for them, expect a more interesting formation. These formations purposes? To make it sound different when you press the arrows, duh.

Is it easy to make music with? The limitations to the music are the amount of formations you make, which is...40 or so. But, even so, Nanocarp wander around quite a bit...

Is the music different every time? Of course, the music will sound the same if you make the same formations every time (duh). But since the Nanocarp don't stay in formation for too long (their attention span is smaller than themselves), so even if you do the same formation every time, if you wait a little bit, it should sound different due to wandering Nanocarp.

Percentage used? 50 %

Overall: Nanocarp are cute and all, but just not my favorite plankton. Mostly due to the reason you don't have too much control over the Nanocarp. They doesn't sound to great either...

Lumiloop 

Rundown: Upon startup, 5 Lumiloop (which happens to be really fun to say over and over. Don't try it now, maybe with RecRec later...) just sit there on the screen, *with their piercing gaze*. These plankton require major spin power. By frantically spinning, the Lumiloop emit a ring of color, and create a beautiful string sound. Spin another, it's free. XP Together, they sound better then ever! With all five going, you are having a microscopic orchestra at hand!

Is it easy to make music with? The spinning can be a little difficult and annoying, but otherwise Lumiloop is a no-brainer.

Is the music different every time? No. But the sheer beauty of the sound (and the color rings) is enough to make you not care.

Percentage used? 100%

Overall: By far the prettiest plankton in the game. Spinning these guys, besides making a string sound, make a ring of color around them. With the 5 plankton spinning, it surely is a sight to behold. But

one thing I have noticed, is that the most, and in some cases only entertainment you will find in Lumiloop is if you play it when you are tired. Most of Electroplankton is better when you are tired, actually.

Marine Snow



Rundown: A piano with some keys missing. I wish Toshio Iwai would have put more time into this one, as it is quite...well...Epic Fail Plankton. Pressing Select changes the Marine Snow's appearance, sound, and arrangement, which is kind of nice.

Is it easy to make music with? If your definition of music is playing random keys on pianos and xylophones, then yes. Full out grand masterpiece? The new Beethoven? No.

Is the music different every time? Yes...

Percentage used? 30%

Overall: Boring...plunking out a tune isn't too possible, as the plankton move when you tap them. Plus some rather staple notes, like D and B (if Marine Snow are in C major) are no where to be seen...

BeatNES



Rundown: BeatNES could appeal to any living being in the universe. A classic video game beat plays out (such as the Starman theme from Super Mario Bros.) and 5 BeatNES (which look like snakes almost) appear to dance to the melody. Aw, but they are key to the melody too. Poke them and a note plays. Thankfully the BeatNES have 8 segments, so they have every note in an octave, unlike a certain someone *points fingers at Marine snow*. Tapping their heads makes a sound effect, such as the infamous jump sound from Super Mario Bros. With 5 tunes playing on 5 different "instruments," you have a created a tune better than every techno song in existence.

Is it easy to make music with? Hell yes. Even if you have no clue what you are doing, you can have 7th chords, minor chords, and as complex chords as you want. Music geeks such as mua surely will freak.

Is the music different every time? As this is another plankton you have control of, you have option as to how BeatNES will sound everytime.

Percentage used? 100% (w00t)

Overall: Mondomonius! BeatNES is by far one of my favorite plankton. The sheer ease on how to make music with him is extraordinary. They even are as just fun to watch as to make music with. Also, pressing select changes the theme from Mario to Kid Icarus, an assortment of NES sounds, and even an ROB theme.

Volvoice 

Rundown: Feeling immature? Volvoice is guaranteed to make you feel like an obnoxious elementary school student as you toy around with him. He records you saying something, and then he will play it back in various silly ways. Did you know my username said backwards sounds like "speck and simmer"?

Is it easy to make music with? It isn't something I would call music...

Is the music different every time? ...

Percentage used? 50%

Overall: Volvoice is fun to screw around with and all, but it's not music. It is interesting if you record music on Volvoice though...

~**Replay Value**~

Electroplankton, with only 10 plankton, is quite a short game. The longest possible gameplay time max in one sitting is 30 minutes, as your attention span evaporates after playing with every plankton a few times or so. This game is absolutely perfect for if you are feeling laid back, or just tired. If it is midday, and you really feel the need to have some action and to play some hardcore game, I can assure you are not going to pop in Electroplankton.

Maybe it's just me, but I play this game everyday, right when I wake up. It's refreshing...>_>...but it does not exactly fill that gaming need gap that we all have everyday. Without a doubt.

~**Summary**~

Gameplay: 10/10 A stray from every video game in existence, and it did a good job at becoming great. But unfortunately people try to put this game down in every way possible, which made the sales suck and ended up being unavailable...anywhere. If you do wish to find a copy of Electroplankton, you will have to go to eBay and find a copy for 50 or more dollars. You may think it's a lot, but it costs as much as a Wii game.

Graphics: 9/10 Simplistic is the way to go!

Sound: 10/10 The game basically is sound. How can a game based on sound and music ever go wrong?

Plankton: 7/10 Some pwn, some fail.

Replay Value: 5/10 It doesn't fill that gaming need like it should. Fun at other points in the day though.

Overall: 8/10

It is unfortunate this game had bad sales. Quite unfortunate. I think everyone who owns a DS should have bought a copy. The game can be beautiful, calming, and can appeal to just about every audience. Some plankton have their flaws, but nothing should deter you from finding a copy.

For more info, check out Electroplankton's nifty little site. They have videos of each plankton in action, interviews with Toshio Iwai, and...um...yeah, check it out: www.electroplankton.nintendods.com

EDIT: Site seems to be down...darn.