

What is not a fractal

A line twice as wide is twice as big      Dimension 1

Width	Size
1	$1 = 1^1$
2	$2 = 2^1$
3	$3 = 3^1$
4	$4 = 4^1$

What is not a fractal

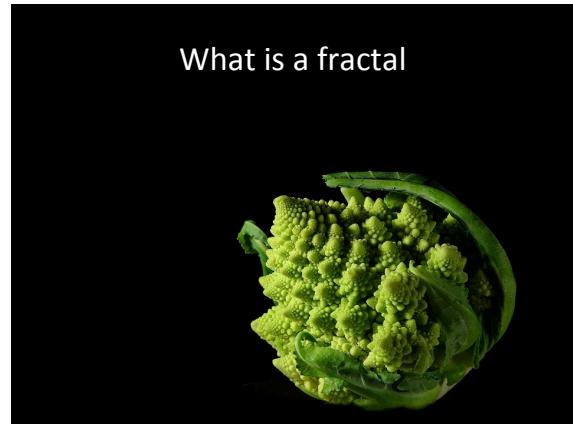
A square twice as wide is four times as big      Dimension 2

Width	Size
1	$1 = 1^2$
2	$4 = 2^2$
3	$9 = 3^2$
4	$16 = 4^2$

**What is not a fractal**

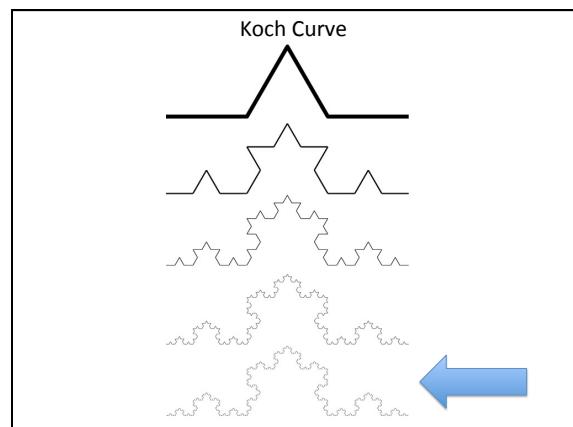
A cube twice as wide is eight times as big

Width	Size
1	$1 = 1^3$
2	$8 = 2^3$
3	$27 = 3^3$
4	$64 = 4^3$



**What is a fractal**

- Dimension that is not a whole number
- Self similar



**Koch Curve**

Dimension	Width	Size
1	3	$3 = 3^1$
2	3	$9 = 3^2$
x	3	$4 = 3^x$

**Koch Curve**

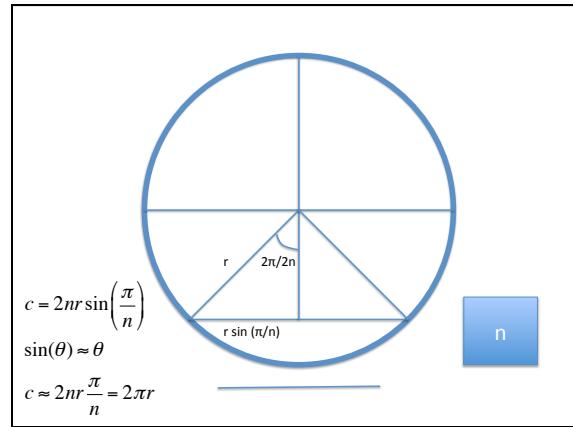
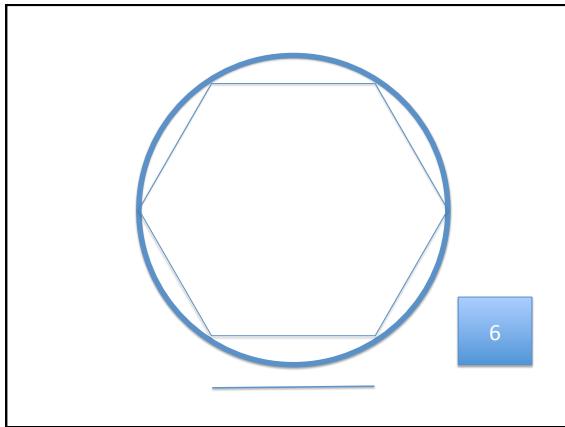
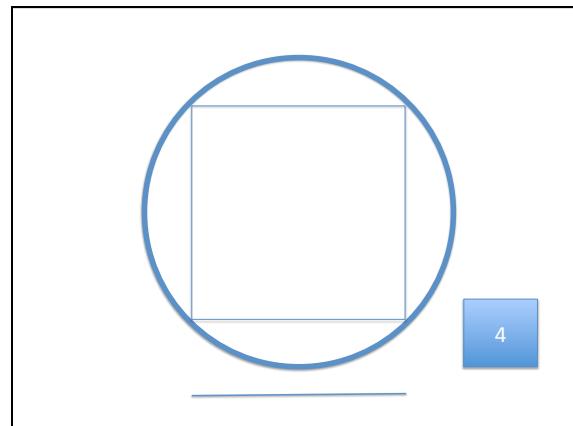
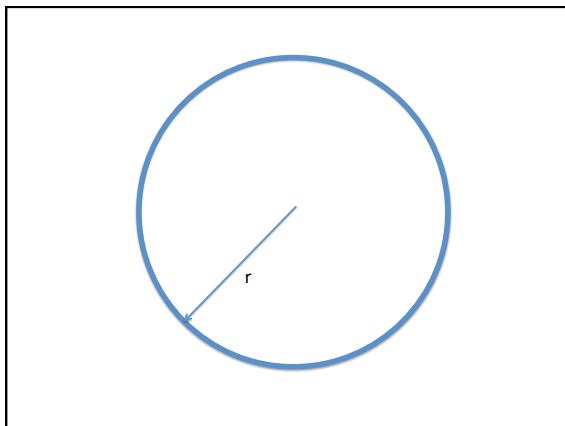
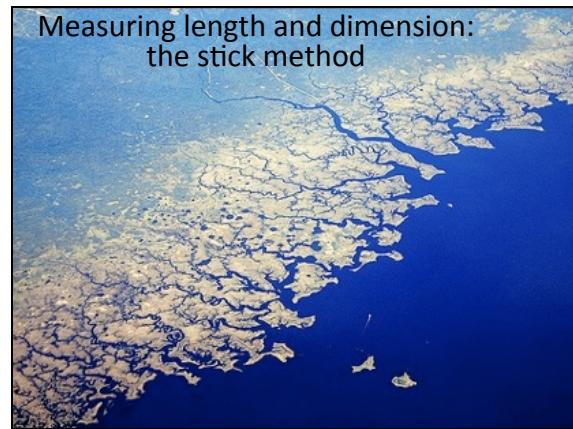
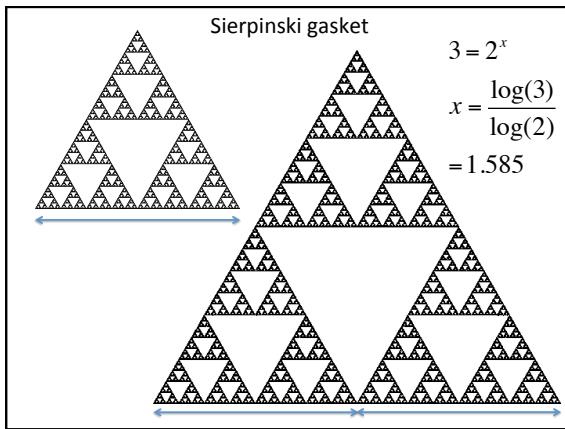
Dimension	Width	Size
1	3	$3 = 3^1$
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x	3	$4 = 3^x$

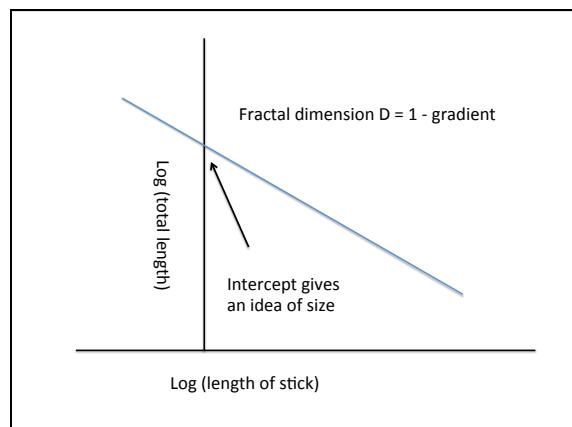
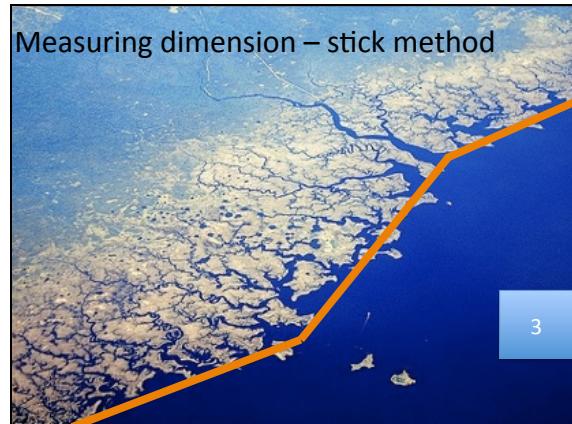
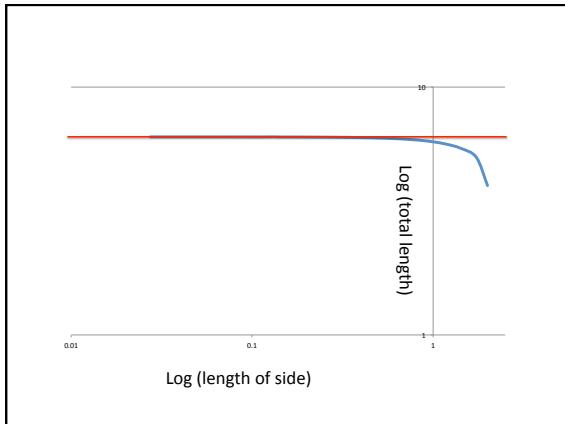
$$4 = 3^x$$

$$\log(4) = \log(3^x)$$

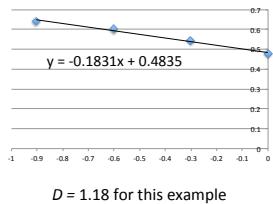
$$\log(4) = x \cdot \log(3)$$

$$x = \frac{\log(4)}{\log(3)} = 1.262$$





### The dimension of various coastlines



$D = 1.25$  for the west coast of Britain,  
 $D = 1.15$  for the land frontier of Germany,  
 $D = 1.14$  for the land frontier of Portugal,  
 $D = 1.13$  for the Australian coast, and  
 $D = 1.02$  for the South African coast,

### The stick method formalized

$$C(\delta) = K\delta^{1-D}$$

Annotations pointing to the variables:

- Total length (stick length)
- Dimension
- Constant
- Stick length

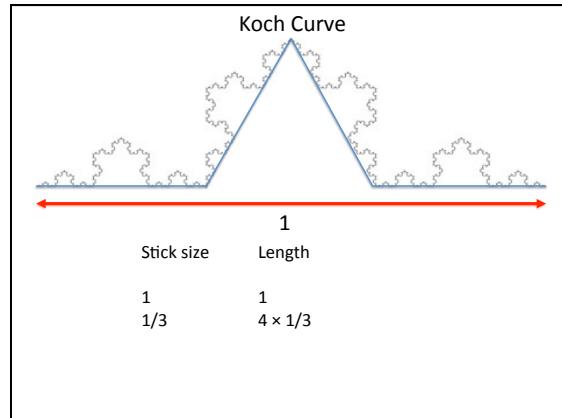
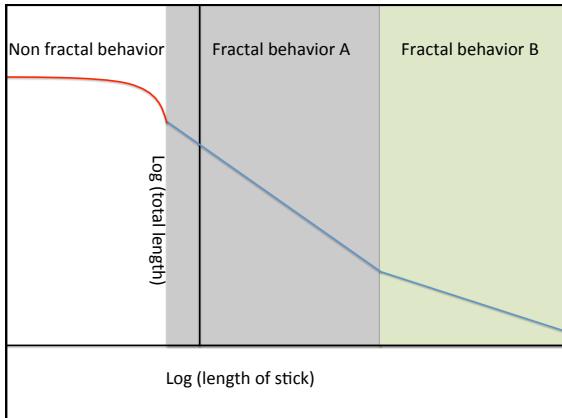
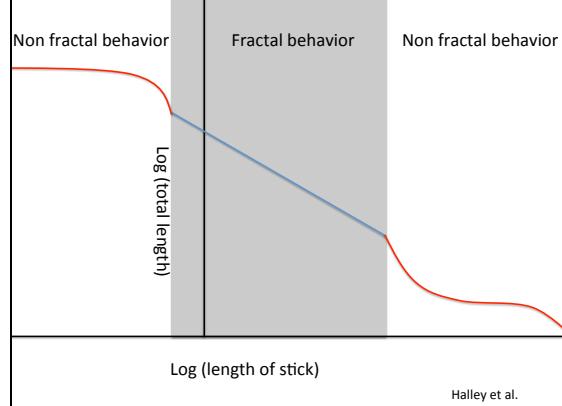
$$\log(C(\delta)) = \log(K) + (1 - D)\log(\delta)$$

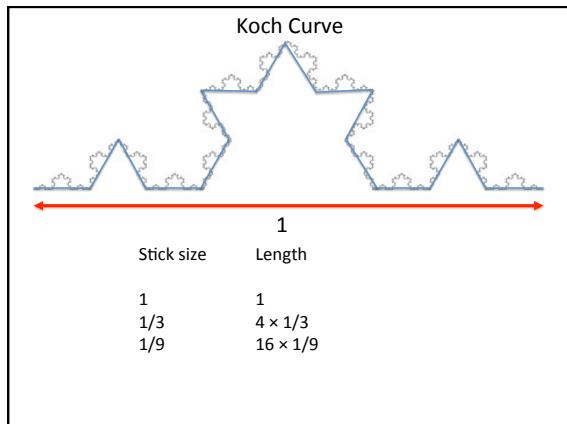
Annotations pointing to the variables:

- intercept
- gradient

Log (total length)  
 Log (length of stick)

Fractal dimension  $D = 1 - \text{gradient}$   
 Intercept gives an idea of size





**Koch Curve**

Stick size	Length
1	1
1/3	$4 \times 1/3$
1/9	$16 \times 1/9$
$1/3^n$	$64 \times 1/27$
$3^{(1-n)}$	$4^n \times 3^{-n}$

$$C(\delta) = K\delta^{1-D}$$

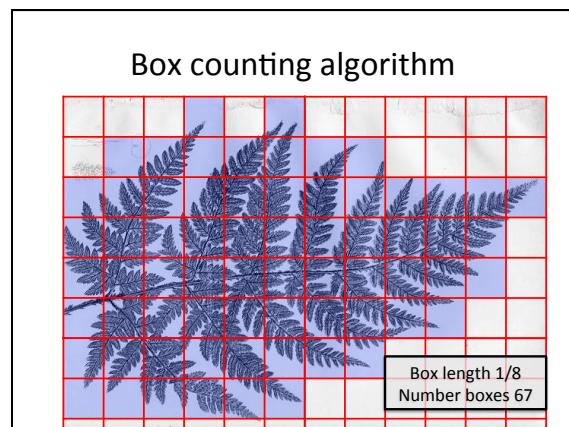
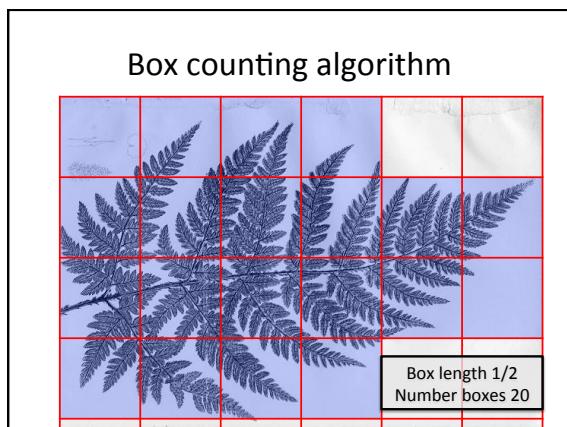
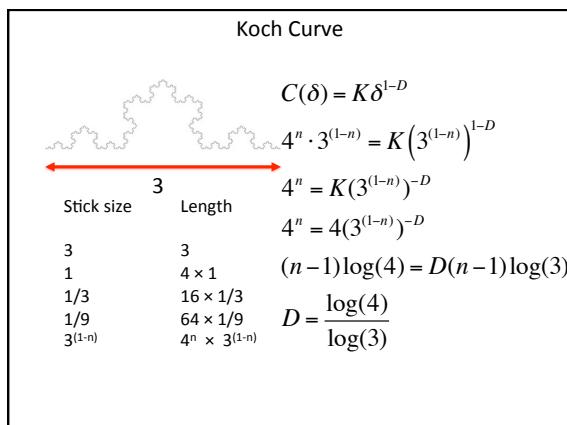
$$4^n \cdot 3^{-n} = K(3^{-n})^{1-D}$$

$$4^n = K(3^{-n})^{-D}$$

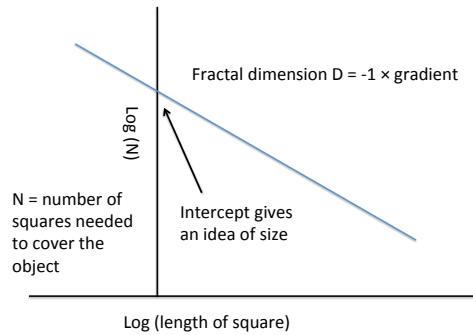
$$4^n = (3^{-n})^{-D}$$

$$n \log(4) = Dn \log(3)$$

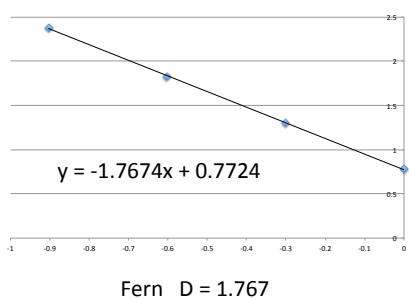
$$D = \frac{\log(4)}{\log(3)}$$



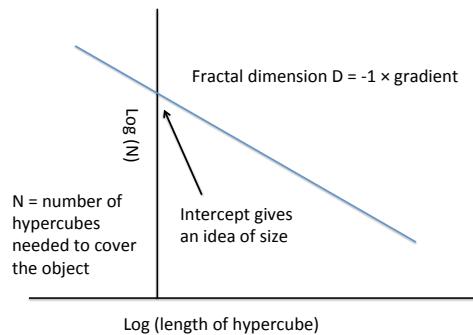
### Box counting algorithm



### In our example



### Box counting algorithm



### The box counting algorithm formalized

$$N(\delta) = K\delta^{-D}$$

number of hypercubes needed to cover the object

Dimension

Constant

Hypercube length

$\log(N(\delta)) = \log(K) + -D\log(\delta)$

intercept

gradient

### Comparing box and stick methods

number of sticks needed to go round the perimeter

$$N(\delta) = K\delta^{-D}$$

Dimension

Constant

Stick length

### Comparing box and stick methods

number of sticks needed to go round the perimeter

$$N(\delta) = K\delta^{-D}$$

Dimension

Constant

Stick length

Total length

$$C(\delta) = \delta N(\delta) = K\delta^{1-D}$$

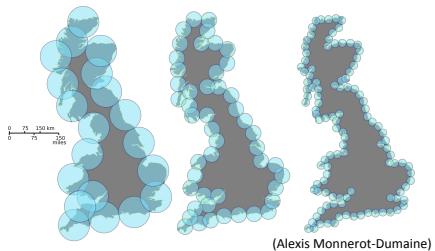
Dimension

Constant

Stick length

## Hausdorff dimension

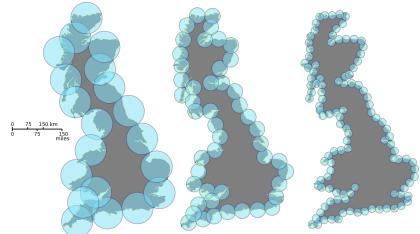
The hausdorff dimension  $d$  of an object has the property that the number of balls of radius  $r$  needed to cover the object grows proportionally to  $r^d$  as  $r$  becomes small



## Hausdorff dimension

$$\inf\{d \geq 0 | C^d = 0\}$$

$$C^d = \inf\left\{\sum_i r_i^d \mid \text{Balls of radius } r_i > 0 \text{ can cover the object}\right\}$$



## Why do fractals appear in nature?

### In organisms

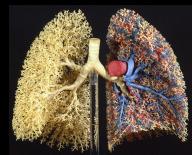
- A simple set of rules (DNA)
- Fractal structures are heritable  
(Bailey et al. 2004)
- Need to maximize surface area but minimize volume
- Efficiency of transportation



## Why do fractals appear in nature?

### In geography

- Same processes at multiple scales



### In landscape ecology

### In animal behavior

### Chaos

*Wait for the next lecture*

