Leah Miller   @Culturalgeek

crafted apple gatherer

Tower Guardian

crafted bowman

In Breath of the Wild there's always something there

If you see an area that looks cool, it will always have relevant content.

A visual language suggests content's presence.

Treasure Radar and other systems also motivate exploration.

Let's Define Some Terms

Collectables are finite in number and set in location

Checklists
Tomes
Specific Gear

Gatherables are fungible resources that are theoretically infinite.

Crafting Materials
Advancement Currency
Randomized Lootables

Gatherables and Collectables Working Together

The Abandoned Gym

Pokémon Go heavily incentivized going to places off the beaten path. Then it made changes that reduced these incentives.

2ND ANNUAL PROTOSTAR PROTOSALE

Everything is the Economy

Cmdre Ronjamin J. Merriwether, ... ✔
@travismcelroy

Follow

I've played so much of Monster Hunter : World and I'm STILL learning new things! For example, did you know that you can take a break from picking flowers to hunt monsters?!

6:13 AM - 30 Jan 2018

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Collecting and Gathering vs Grinding

- interacting with static objects or entities placed in the world

- action may be involved, but it usually doesn't imply violence

- rare monster spawning can leverage similar principles

But Why?

Hollistic Game Design

Item spawning, gatherables, and collectables relate to many other systems.

- combat in the area
- story and characters relevant to the space
- world and prop art
- economic/symbolic weight of items

Collectable Type: Tome

Ivy Tansu:
[Mastery +6]

Collectable Type:
Checklist

Collectable Type:
Specific Gear

Gatherable Type:
Crafting Materials

Avoid the obstacles as you slide down the mountain!

Gatherable Type:
Advancement Currency

Gatherable Type: Randomized Lootables

When Collectables and Gatherables Fail

- Tedious – too many, completion is too grueling
- Incongrous – don't fit with the theme and feel out of place
- Antagonistic – Inconsistent implementation is unintuitive
- Economically Unsupported – gathered items aren't useful

What Constitutes Success?

Rewarding Different Gameplay Types

Challenge – appealing items visibly behind challenging gameplay

Exploration – huge resource caches in less traveled areas

Role-playing – thematic items linked to environmental storytelling

Observation – place items according to patterns

In the Zone

Basic preparation

1. Main route/mandatory quests
2. Alternate quests
3. Safe routes with few mobs
4. Story
5. Aesthetic

Hot spots

- Major Quest Hubs
- Towns and cities
- Zone transitions

Cool Spots

- Few quests
- Require platforming
- Optional content
- Content for one group/class

Shared World Spawn Systems

Spawn group – spawn points managed together
Spawn minimum – lowest before respawn is triggered
Spawn low – spawning is sped up when below this point
Spawn max – the maximum number of objects allowed

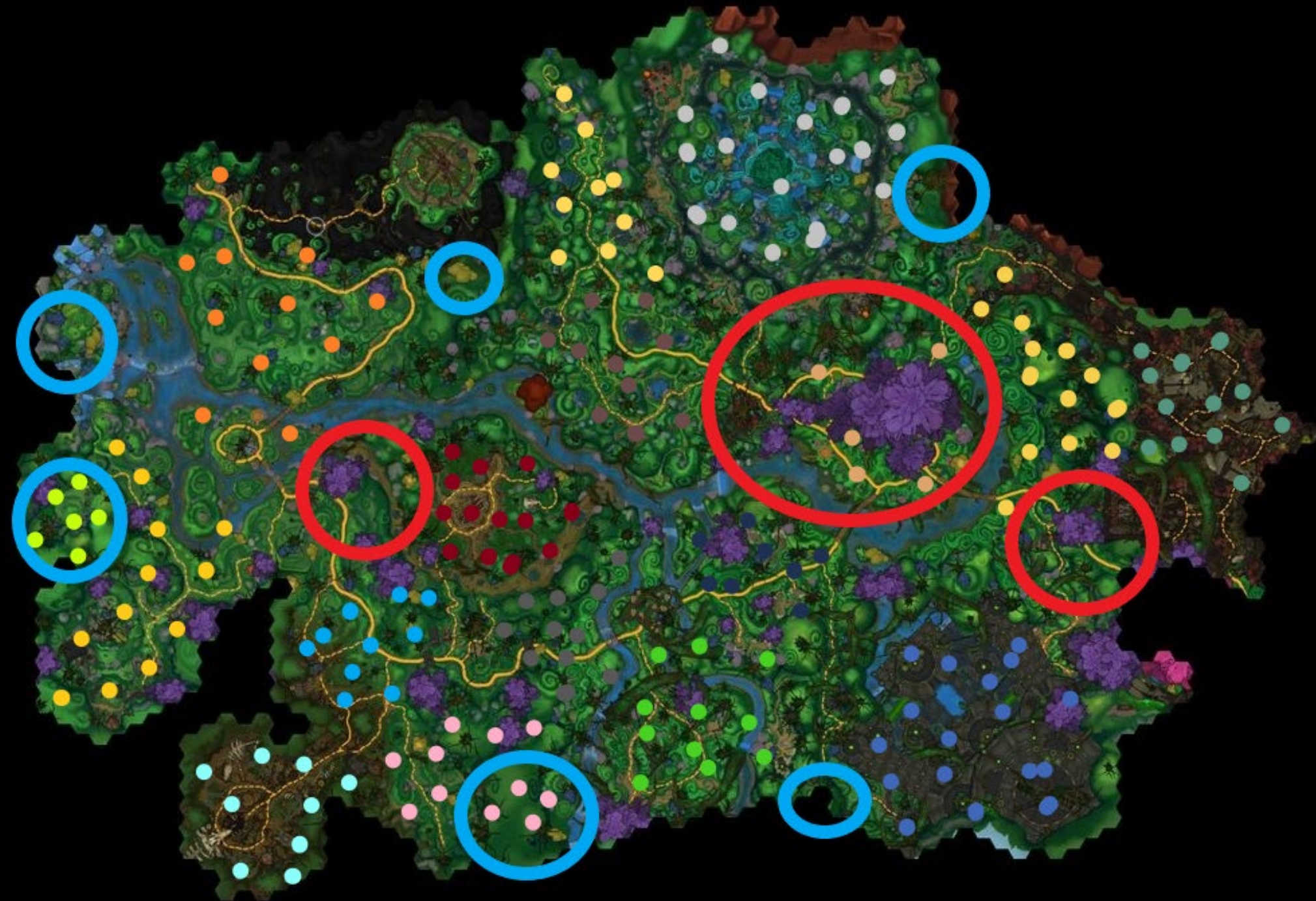Example: Herb spawn group has 30 points, spawns herb every 60 sec

Spawn min = 5, there will never be <5 herbs spawned

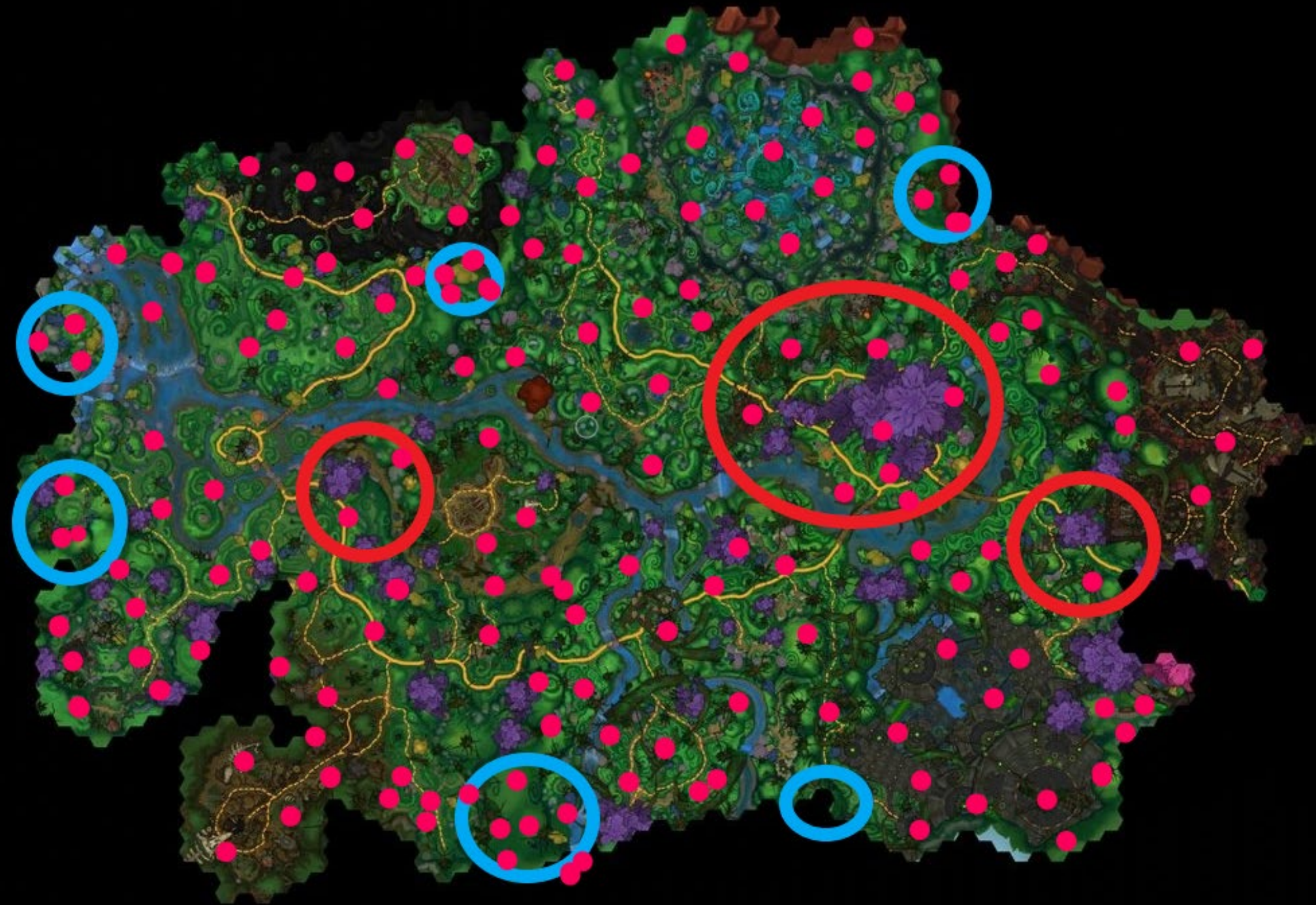Low = 10, when <10 spawned, 1 new herb spawns every 30 sec

Max = 15, index will never be completely full. Stops spawning at 15

Optimal times and numbers will vary based on individual design.

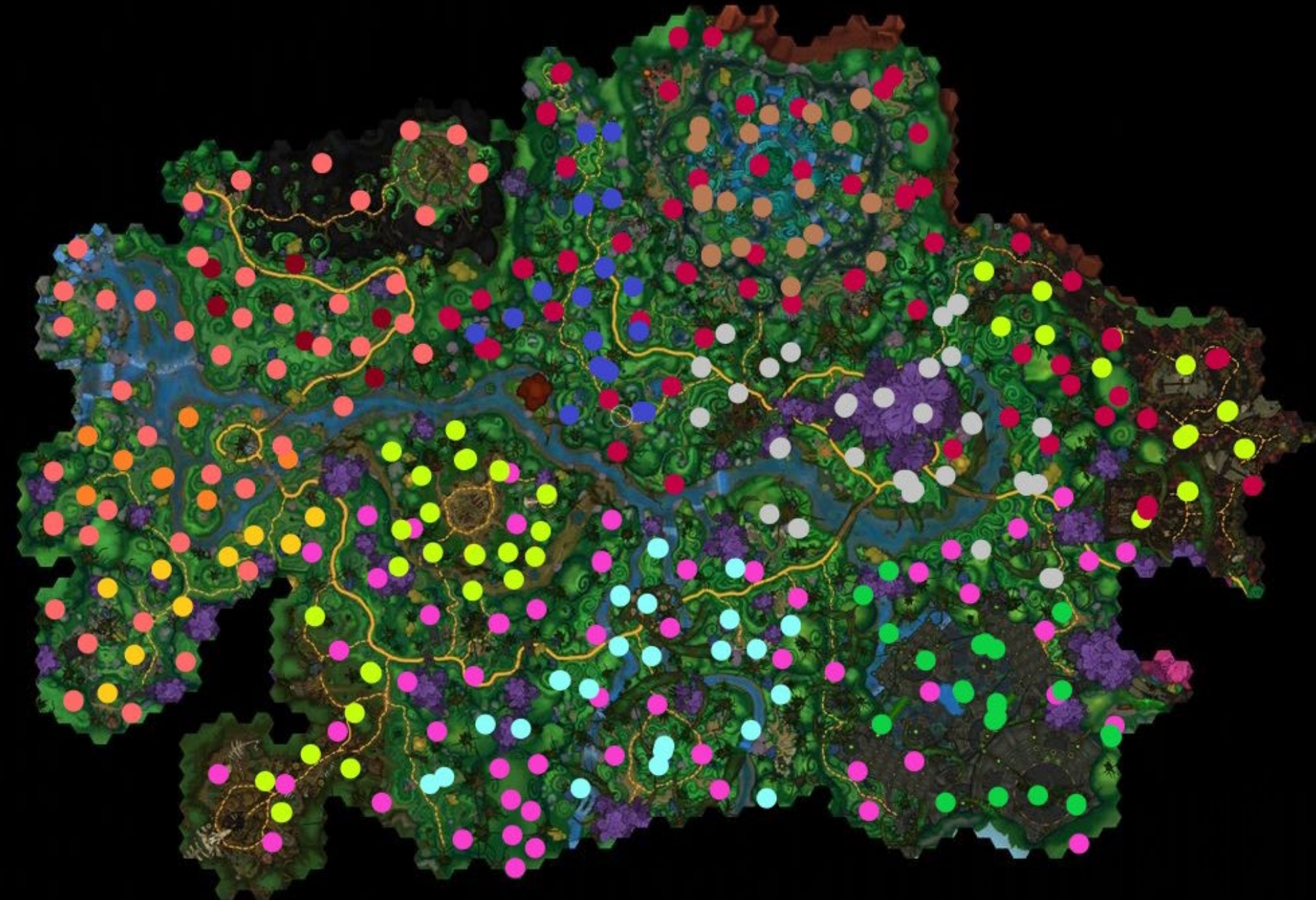Discrete Spawn Groups
No spawn migration

GDC

All spawns in a single group. Maximum spawn migration.

Spawn Migration Aftermath

Hybrid spawn: a mix of regional and local

Hybrid Spawn Result

Platformers & Non-linear Action

- alert players to alternate paths
- reward memory & backtracking
- challenge skills

RPGs & Story Exploration Games

- Every space is a mini open world
- Reward exploration & cleverness
- Environmental storytelling
- Secret Tunnel!

Linear or Narrow World

- Match visibility and difficulty to playstyle
- Reward skill and pattern recognition
- Completionist tasks if game is designed for replayability

Genre Agnostic Design Principles

- People like secrets
- Visibility is good
- Breadcrumb trails work
- Teach people where to look (and do it early)
- Too many empty drawers and barrels is bad
- Achievements are nice (but can be compulsive)
- Collection and Gathering should not halt flow
- There are exceptions to all these rules

Get out there and explore!

Leah Miller

@CulturalGeek

LeahKatherineMiller@Gmail

GDC