



# NFBR

NATIONAL FORUM  
FOR BIOLOGICAL  
RECORDING

Newsletter 55 – April 2018



# Contents

NFBR News	3-4
Seasearch snorkelling around the UK	5-7
30 Years of Seasearch and open data	8
Volunteer monitoring at Hampshire Wildlife Trust	9
Recorder 6 update	10-11
Powys Local Wildlife Sites	11
Beautiful Burial Grounds	12-13
Bee-flies – nature’s cutest parasitoids?	14-15
Field Studies Council BioLinks project	15-16
Recording for the State of Dragonflies report 2020	17
Launch of The Herpetofauna of Wiltshire	18
NFBR Archives	19
Oxford Coleopterists’ Day	20-21
‘Night flyers’: Bioacoustic monitoring	22-23
Jersey’s forgotten wildlife	24
BRC Update	25
Recording Scheme Spotlight on the British Dragonfly Society	26-27
UK Pollinator Monitoring Scheme	28-29
Square of the Month / Survey a Square	30-31
NBN update	32-33
LERC Spotlight on Devon Biodiversity Records Centre	34-35

**Welcome** to Issue 55 of the National Forum for Biological Recording Newsletter.

This edition showcases some of the many excellent projects across the UK which encourage and enhance biological recording efforts. From long standing schemes such as Seasearch (celebrating 30 years, page 8) to upcoming projects like Beautiful Burial Grounds (page 12), there are a myriad of ways to celebrate the arrival of spring and get out there recording wildlife.

We look forward to seeing many of you at the 2018 Conference next month; see page 4 for the jam-packed programme.

Elaine Wright (Editor) [editor@nfbr.org.uk](mailto:editor@nfbr.org.uk)





## GDPR Compliance

The NFBR Trustees and Advisory Council are working to ensure the organisation is compliant with the new GDPR rules. If you have any concerns about how NFBR store and use personal data, or would like to opt out of receiving communications from us, please get in touch on [membership@nfbr.org.uk](mailto:membership@nfbr.org.uk).

## NBN Working Group

Paula Lightfoot, Martin Harvey and Chris Raper represented NFBR at a meeting of the NBN “Data flow, Online Recording and Verification” working group in January 2018. The topics discussed were the addition of verification status to records on the NBN Atlas, ways of dealing with disputed records, increasing verification capacity by engaging more experts with online systems and making greater use of automated verification and developing learning programmes (concluding that there was no obvious need for the development of learning programmes).

## Social Media

NFBR now has a Facebook page ([www.facebook.com/NationalForumBiologicalRecording/](http://www.facebook.com/NationalForumBiologicalRecording/)) to go with the very active Facebook group ([www.facebook.com/groups/NatForumBioRecording/](http://www.facebook.com/groups/NatForumBioRecording/)). Please like the page to see announcements direct from NFBR. You can also find us on Twitter [@\\_nfbr](https://twitter.com/_nfbr).

## 2018 Conference

The 2018 NFBR Conference “Skill Development for Biological Recording” is being held in Shrewsbury on Thurs 10th & Fri 11th May, plus an optional field meeting to Brown Moss LNR on Sat 12th May. The event is joint with Field Studies Council and Manchester Metropolitan University, and is now open for booking via the Field Studies Council website:

[www.field-studies-council.org/individuals-and-families/courses/2018/pm/nfbr-conference-2018.aspx](http://www.field-studies-council.org/individuals-and-families/courses/2018/pm/nfbr-conference-2018.aspx)

Please find the provisional programme overleaf.



Scenes from previous NFBR Conferences / field trips



# NFBR Conference 2018 Provisional Programme

## Thursday 10th May 2018

10.30 Welcome *Sue Townsend*

10.40 Skills needed to identify and record *John Tweddle, Steph West*

### Perceptions on the skills gaps

11:10 Perceptions on the skills gaps *David Roy*

11:30 From a record centre data submissions *Debs Muscat*

11:40 From the use of collections in biological recording *Miranda Lowe*

11:50 From the needs analysis from an ID and recording project *Keiron Brown*

12:00 From the ecological consultancies *Carlos Abraham*

12:10 Discussion Groups

12:30 *Lunch*

13:30 Feedback from Discussion Groups

### Data and communication skills

13:50 Interesting ways to present data *Rich Burkmar*

14:05 Surveys in the Countryside *Simon Smart*

14:20 Social media for modern mentoring *Martin Harvey*

14:30 Structured and Unstructured Recording *Nick Moran*

14:50 *Tea Break*

### How recorders have gathered their skills

15:20 Possible Past and Present futures *Ian Wallace*

15:35 How the younger generation are developing skills *tbc*

15:50 A Government Agency approach to skill development *Mags Cousins*

16:05 A view on skills development from an environmental consultancy *Nick Law*

16:20 How on-line support can improve identification skills *tbc*

16:35 *Close*

## Friday 11th May 2018

10.00 Welcome *Sarah Whild*

10.05 A University perspective: how to prepare students for employment *Paul Ashton*

### Training schemes and success stories

10:30 A personal journey on the development of skills plant identification *Josh Styles*

10:40 Success in identification training and recording *Ryan Clark*

10:50 Training support from a wildlife trust *Juliette Butler*

11:00 Title *tbc* *April Windle*

11:20 Question Time

11:30 *Coffee Break*

### Training schemes and success stories cont.

11:50 Seasearch training in identification *Paula Lightfoot*

12:00 Field Identification Skills Certificates *Sarah Wild*

12:10 Training Courses for All *Sue Townsend*

12:30 How HLF project "Beautiful Burial Grounds" will train volunteers *Harriet Carty*

12:45 *Lunch*

13:30 NFBR AGM

### Sharing best practice

14:00 A government perspective on the importance of biological recording *Chris Cheffings*

14:15 Workshop: How do we fill the skills gaps in identification and recording?

15:00 Workshop: Do we need a common biological recording skills policy/protocol to be supported by the main groups in the sector ?

15:50 Plenary Question: How do we promote the need for developing, extending and maintaining skills to local and national government?

16:15 *Close*



# Data, data everywhere, nor any need to sink!

Paula Lightfoot, Seasearch North East England



Seasearch is a citizen science project coordinated nationally by the Marine Conservation Society which trains participants to record marine species and habitats around the coasts of Britain and Ireland. These records are made fully publicly

available via the NBN Atlas and used for marine conservation, research and education. But did you know that you don't have to be a SCUBA diver to get involved in Seasearch? You can carry out Seasearch recording while snorkelling – this is safe, fun and does not require expensive equipment or training. Seasearch snorkelling can generate extremely useful records of the habitats and species of the subtidal fringe, an area not usually surveyed by divers or rockpoolers.

In the north east of England, Seasearch snorkelling has proved a great way to fill gaps between the sites which are accessible to shore diving and charter boats. Eighteen new sites from Yorkshire to Northumberland were surveyed by snorkelling in 2017, including previously unsurveyed parts of two Marine Protected Areas. One of the most interesting finds was a local population of the stalked jellyfish *Calvadosia cruxmelitensis*, a priority species for conservation not previously

recorded on the English east coast. Seasearch forms completed after snorkel surveys constituted only 15% of the total number of forms received in the north east of England last year, but accounted for almost 40% of the individual sites surveyed.

This shows that snorkelling can make a huge contribution to improving knowledge and 'putting new dots on the map'!

If you would like to get involved in Seasearch, visit our website

[www.seasearch.org.uk](http://www.seasearch.org.uk) for a list of training events around the country and contact your regional coordinator, who will be delighted to hear from you. Seasearch celebrates its thirtieth anniversary this year – there has never been a better time to get involved, so grab your mask, fins and snorkel and join us! Read accounts of Seasearch snorkelling around the UK (overleaf) to find out more and be inspired.



Seasearch North East England survey locations 2017



*Calvadosia cruxmelitensis* Paula Lightfoot



## Alderney

*Mel Broadhurst-Allen, Alderney Wildlife Trust*  
Seasearch is extremely active across the Channel Islands, primarily through locally based groups, but there is no active group or regular diving on the northernmost island of Alderney; here the only Seasearch surveys have been completed by visiting Seasearch divers when weather and tide allows. However, there is an appetite for snorkelling by the locals and frequent visitors. Alderney hosts a number of bays, which support a variety of marine features, interesting habitats and great diversity of species. There are limited records of the marine life in Alderney's inshore shallows, and such data are needed for marine conservation, research, planning, outreach and education. It therefore seemed a logical approach to set up a local Seasearch Group on Alderney which uses snorkelling techniques, to complement any potential diving activities. In autumn 2017, the Alderney Seasearch Snorkel Group was formed by Alderney Wildlife Trust with the aim of recording marine life using the Seasearch methodology. The group currently comprises twelve members (die-hard enthusiasts), half of whom completed the Seasearch Observer Course with national Seasearch coordinator Charlotte Bolton to develop their surveying skills. The group managed to complete a few surveys before winter ensued, which were remarkably simple to organise (a grab your fins and go moment!) and thoroughly enjoyable – even when it got a bit cold and murky. For 2018, the group aims to take a proper look at the island's inshore kelp beds and eelgrass habitats, as well as general recording and 'just getting out there!'. Snorkelling using Seasearch techniques has created fantastic potential for surveying the shallows in unknown areas with new and old friends.



*Kelp Paula Lightfoot*

## East Anglia

*Rob Spray, Seasearch East*

North Norfolk's chalk reef is very accessible. Rather than needing mysterious directions to a secret cove it simply stretches for 20 miles past the county's resorts. This enticing proximity is a two edged sword; without a focal point even some quite well informed people have stormed into the sea and bobbed back to the surface confused... The reef is within easy reach but its enigma needs to be unravelled with a little patience! My local sea tends to murk at its sandy edge and getting fledgling Cousteaus across that to the good stuff is the challenge.



*Diving off Norfolk Rob Spray / Dawn Watson*

A solution emerged when I realised Victorian debris off Sheringham was actually a visitor attraction waiting to happen. Much as a walkway across a marsh guides visitors to rewarding sights, the town's old iron outflow pipe can get snorkelers to the



reef. It was a ready-made snorkel trail!

Buoy marked and a beginner-friendly 2-5m deep, the pipe runs across the chalk as well as being an artificial reef in its own right. The trail is just a gateway leading to the longest chalk reef in Europe. It hosts hundreds of local species in a gloriously bright setting, because one thing that sets this reef apart is how welcoming the white rock, pale sand and blue shallows make the North Sea.

If you're in Norfolk next summer (when we have over 10m visibility and over 20°C water temperature!) then a mask, snorkel and swimming costume or wetsuit are all you need to start exploring the UK's most underrated sea. The trail starts between the Funky Mackerel cafe and the Wee Retreat (a tasteful ex-toilet), and if you drop into the nearby museum's underwater gallery afterwards you can see what you missed!

## Orkney

*Anne Bignall and Penny Martin*

Orkney is well known as a diving location and the scuttled WWI German Fleet wrecks in Scapa Flow, draw thousands of visiting divers each year. However, the islands also offer superb snorkelling opportunities. Orkney boasts an extensive coastline with many shallow and easily accessible shore sites. There are a wide range of habitats to explore, including eelgrass beds, rocky shores, kelp beds, sediment areas and a variety of man-made structures. Surveying is best undertaken at low tide where the site can be examined in detail and at close quarters.

Despite the proximity to land, this zone - between the low shore and the shallow sublittoral, is under-explored, being beyond the reach of shore surveys and too shallow for most dives. Surveying these places can therefore provide invaluable information about areas that are likely to be data deficient at present. The waters are of course a little chilly, but with the use of a drysuit, it is possible to stay comfortable for up to two hours, allowing detailed and leisurely observations.

Some of the best and most easily accessed sites to snorkel are the Churchill Barriers - a series of four causeways built during WWII to link Orkney's south isles and close the eastward entrances of Scapa Flow. Each causeway differs slightly, but all offer good opportunities for surveying. The concrete blocks used to build the barriers create an artificial wall, colonised by seaweeds, sedentary animals and shallow faunal turf, as well as providing extensive cavities for mobile species to shelter. In the vicinity of the causeways there are large areas of sand and gravel, whilst seaweed and kelp communities colonise the natural rocky substrate. In addition, the remains of 'blockships' lie nearby in a few metres of water. These are disused ships that were used to block the channels in WWI and WWII, before the building of the Barriers. Remnants of these wrecks can be found in very shallow water but it is also possible to swim out and view them from above.

To see more examples of snorkelling in Orkney, visit the 'Snorkel Orkney' Facebook group ([www.facebook.com/groups/371185452913250](https://www.facebook.com/groups/371185452913250)).



Lion's Mane Anne Bignall





# Celebrating 30 Years of Seasearch and Open Data

Charlotte Bolton, Seasearch National Coordinator  
[charlotte.bolton@mcsuk.org](mailto:charlotte.bolton@mcsuk.org)

Seasearch is extremely proud to be celebrating its 30th anniversary in 2018, or at least 30 years of using volunteers to gather marine species and habitat records under that particular name! The project grew out of the Marine Conservation Society (previously Underwater Conservation Society) scheme of the late 1970s and early 1980s but the first survey to bear the Seasearch label was the “1988 Seasearch Skye sealochs sublittoral survey” from May 9th-19th 1988, closely followed by Canna at the end of that month. As part of our anniversary celebrations we are attempting to revisit the ‘first surveys’ around Britain and Ireland and record any changes over the last 30 years. Our USP of training volunteers to recognise and record the marine environment is still going strong, and in 2017 over 10 weeks was spent underwater doing just that. This remarkable figure doesn’t include the time spent travelling to and from the actual dives and also omits the dedicated effort in filling in the survey forms afterwards. Our volunteers are motivated not only by their increasing understanding and enjoyment of the marine environment but also by the value of the data they are collecting. This value is demonstrated by designation and informed management of marine protected areas, many of which would not exist without Seasearch data.

As a testament to those sterling volunteer labours and the commitment to making all that hard-won data freely and publicly available via the National Biodiversity Network (NBN), we were amazed and exceedingly proud to be presented with the John Sawyer Open Data award at the annual NBN conference in Cardiff last November. It is a beautiful work of art and worthy recognition of our endeavours. Here’s to the next thirty years!



Charlotte Bolton (National Seasearch Coordinator), David Kipling (Marine Conservation Society Trustee) and Michael Hassell (Chair of the NBN Trust) at the awards ceremony in Cardiff. *Mark Hawkins*



# Volunteers: key to monitoring success

*Sarah Jackson, Senior Ecologist, Hampshire & Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust*



**Hampshire & Isle of Wight**

Wildlife Trust

A Heritage Lottery Funded landscape partnership scheme in the New Forest has just reached the half way mark of a four year landscape scale project. Led by the New Forest National Park Authority with 10 key partners, the Our Past, Our Future scheme consists of 21 projects to restore lost habitats, develop Forest skills and inspire a new generation to champion and care for the New Forest. To find out more about the scheme, please visit: [http://www.newforestnpa.gov.uk/info/20187/our\\_past\\_our\\_future](http://www.newforestnpa.gov.uk/info/20187/our_past_our_future)

Hampshire & Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust are leading all biodiversity monitoring within the scheme, overseeing progress on four of the scheme's projects; Working Woodlands, Better Boundaries, Nature's Stepping Stones and New Forest Invasive Non-Native plants. Through monitoring biodiversity over the four years of the scheme, it will be clear to see how the practical tasks in each of the projects have benefitted wildlife.

The project is giving experienced and amateur naturalists the opportunity to carry out surveys, with participants including local surveyors, groups and University of Southampton students and placements. A whole range of surveys are being undertaken, including birds, bats, butterflies, bees, dragonflies, damselflies, botanical and hedgerow surveys. Many of the sites have not previously been surveyed, so the data collected not only helps us monitor changes on these sites but makes a valuable contribution to the species records for the New Forest, helping us understand what species are where.



**Volunteers receiving training in Bumblebee identification**

In the first two years of the biodiversity monitoring project, a massive 123 days of volunteer survey time have been contributed. This has generated a lot of records, with the first year of monitoring producing 1,950 new records for 143 species, including Barbastelle (a rare woodland bat), nine protected and/or notable birds including bullfinch, cuckoo, firecrest and kingfisher; and 10 of the 24 UK bumblebee species. The second year has proved just as successful with 2809 records for 122 species, and with the first signs of suc-

cess being noted such as a newly planted hedgerow being used for the first time by common pipistrelle when previously this area was not used by bats, highlighting the importance of hedgerow in the landscape as connecting habitat.



# Recorder 6 (and all that)- A brief update

*Steve Whitbread, ALERC Director*



In late 2017, the Recorder 6 Steering Group announced that all official funding support for 'the ultimate tool for those entering, collating and exchanging records of species and habitats' would end in March 2018. Recorder 6 is still the most important wildlife recording database system in the UK, so this underlines pressures on agency budgets and, in some quarters, a lack of understanding of the country's biodiversity information infrastructure; the 25 Year Plan for the Environment in England makes no mention of the National Biodiversity Network.

ALERC had already been giving thought to next steps in biodiversity data management, with a Life After Recorder 6 workshop organised by our East of England group following on from Tom Hunt's NBN news article and, most timely, Andy Foy's Recorder 6 consultation (commissioned by GiGL and SxBRC on behalf of ALERC's London and SE region). At November's NBN conference, I had the opportunity to publicise the consultation and to speak about what was happening with Recorder 6. As much as anything this was a plea to learn from past missteps and missed opportunities, to try to ensure that any decisions are guided by users' needs. I was also delighted to be able to announce that a 'Mystery Benefactor' had offered to contribute some £4k towards support costs, at least for the year ahead.

Our consultation attracted 120 responses over 7 weeks. Of these 90 were from Recorder 6 users. Just under half of these were records centres, highlighting how important it is to them but also that it is widely used by others. Moreover, 73% of these Recorder 6 users presently hold databases with more than 100,000 species records and the combined holdings (or those responding) amounted to 124 million species occurrences (compared to 217M on the entire NBN Atlas at the time of writing). Although widespread disapprobation of Recorder 6's mapping function will provide no great shock, what did come as a surprise was just how many of its numerous features are employed by its users – a testament to its design. This might help to explain why 81% describe it as very or extremely (64%) important to their activities with the great majority (83%) of users expecting to still be using the program in more than 5 years' time. This is made more likely by the general willingness to contribute funds to its ongoing support and development alongside investing in its eventual replacement. Read the full report and you'll see that rumours of the death of Recorder 6 appear to be greatly exaggerated.

Support and development (largely undertaken by the Recorder 6 Consortium at present) will come at a cost. Additionally, support for some of the external software elements on which Recorder depends is only guaranteed by their developers for a limited period. There is also a need for some organisation or new steering group to take financial and legal responsibility for Recorder 6, to oversee the collection and distribution of funds, and to agree a development roadmap for Recorder 6 and its successor, ensuring that new arrangements take account of all users' needs. Time will tell, but a series of important discussions and decisions now lie ahead for members of NFBR, ALERC's Databases Working Group, national schemes and societies, the NBN Trust and other interested parties. This will include a Part 2 consultation to investi-



gate what features recorders, database managers, scheme organisers and others will need in the future - another reason to forge links across the Network.

Recorder 6 was developed by Charles Copp, one of NFBR's founders and former Chairs who, from the earliest days of the Federation, invested a huge amount of time and passion in advancing the cause of biological recording. It's to be hoped that not only will Recorder 6 continue for as long as it is useful but that that Recorder 7 (or whatever it will be called) will expand on its capabilities, and capitalise on new technologies, to better support the recording community and the use of biodiversity data (and all the dedication and effort that underpins it) as Charlie would have wished.

*Thanks to everyone who responded and helped publicise the consultation.*



## Where the Wild Things Are

*Tammy Stretton, Montgomeryshire Wildlife Trust*

From mystical ancient woodlands to quiet churchyards and bustling flower-rich roadsides; and from field-bordering hedgerows to tiny copses the UK enjoys special, often unnoticed wild places where nature thrives. Whether they are in the depths of the countryside or nestled in busy towns and cities, Local Wildlife Sites are the most important places for nature, outside of protected areas such as Sites of Special Scientific Interest.

Local Wildlife Sites (LWS) are truly exceptional areas of land, vital for both wildlife and people. However, despite being part of the planning system, these sites and the services they provide to the local community (e.g. access, tourism, health and well-being) are under threat like never before.

This Welsh project aims to tackle this threat by giving the people of Powys a reason to leave their living rooms and step into a whole new world "Where the Wild Things Are..." often just round the corner or down the street.

Working across Powys, Montgomeryshire, Radnorshire and Brecknock Wildlife Trusts are:

- Overhauling the existing system by which Powys' LWS are assessed and selected
- Surveying existing and potential new LWS
- Running events and activities to engage people with LWS and train/upskill volunteers and landowners
- Seeking opportunities and supporting enhanced access to existing and future LWS
- Promoting the role that the LWS network plays in the health and well-being of our social and ecological communities

Now in its second year, we have already surveyed 55 existing and potential LWS and run 6 events across Powys. In 2018 and 2019, the wildlife trusts will be carrying out further surveys and running more events. We would be delighted to hear from experienced recorders who are willing to help us with surveys. Likewise, these surveys provide a great opportunity for complete beginners or improvers to learn more, 'on the job'. If you would like to find out more or are the owner of a Local Wildlife Site in Powys or if you think your land may qualify, Tammy Stretton, Project Coordinator, would love to hear from you. Email – [tammy@montwt.co.uk](mailto:tammy@montwt.co.uk) or call 01938 555654. Montgomeryshire Wildlife Trust, 42 Broad Street, Welshpool, Powys, SY21 7RR.



# Beautiful Burial Grounds

*Andrea Gilpin, Caring for God's Acre*

Caring for God's Acre has been working in the field of burial ground conservation for 20 years and during this time we have been highlighting their importance as heritage hot-spots. Found in every town, city and country parish across the UK, the estimated number of burial sites is more than 20,000, ranging in size from a small lawn to over 100 acres.

These sites are more valuable to biodiversity than their size suggests, due to the longevity and continuity of existence and management. The oldest sites may have been enclosed for over a thousand years and all sites are unlikely to have been exposed to either intensive management or chemical use.

However, if someone asked for figures on the occurrence of meadow saxifrage in Shropshire churchyards, or the importance of burial grounds for reptiles we would have to say we didn't know. Because, despite burial grounds brimming with biodiversity, they are surprisingly under recorded.

There is scant species data - individual naturalists or groups rarely record in these sites\* - and when they do, the records are not necessarily recognisable as being from a burial ground because database systems are not site-specific but based on grid references.



**Meadow Saxifrage at Bridgenorth Cemetery** *Dan Wrench*

## **Lack of data and awareness – the impact**

Areas of high ecological importance would normally be regularly visited by naturalists and managed with ecologists' input. This is rarely the case for burial grounds where management is usually well-intentioned but often inappropriate and damaging. Tree planting in species-rich grassland, re-positioning or cleaning lichen-rich memorials and using the 2000 year old yew as a container for grass clippings are just a few of the regular occurrences.

Another risky time for English churchyards occurs when they are 'full' and are then officially 'closed for burials' (this situation is different in Wales). At this point the management of the site is handed over to the local authority, almost always without an agreed management plan in place and not one which is based on biodiversity and habitat. Subsequent management decisions are often detrimental. A further threat comes with the increase in sale of burial grounds; the absence of biological records makes it much more difficult to make a case for their preservation, or know what we are losing to development.

## **When great records exist - Lichens**

The exception to the lack of burial ground species records are lichen records. These have been collected by the British Lichen Society since the 1970's and now total over

450,000 records from 11,200 visits to 8,000 churchyards, all of which are held on the BLS database. This data enables the BLS to know some interesting facts:

- Of the 2000 British species, over a third have been found in churchyards and more than 600 have been found growing on churchyard stone in lowland England.
- Many are scarce and some seldom, if ever, occur in other habitats.
- Many churchyards are found to have well over 100 species.

With knowledge comes protection. For example the trustees of a historic chest tomb in St Andrew's Churchyard in Worcestershire wished to carry out restoration work which had over 30 lichen species growing on the top slab alone. Ivan Pedley from the British Lichen Society resurveyed the tomb and gave advice that made it possible to both preserve the lichens and conserve the monument.

### **Lack of data and awareness – a solution**

Over the past three years we have been consulting with recorders and other organisations on how we can address the problem of the lack of data. We have now come up with a plan and have been awarded a grant of nearly £600,000 by the Heritage Lottery Fund to deliver the 'Beautiful Burial Ground' project.

This project will literally put burial grounds on the map by:

- Creating a platform within the NBN Atlas where individual burial sites can be mapped and the biodiversity records from them viewed and drawn together into a national burial ground dataset. Links can be made to historical and cultural surveying or research as well, giving a full picture of the combined heritage value of these amazing sites.
- Encouraging and supporting citizen science, social and historical recording and research to give a better picture of the whole range of heritage present.
- Establishing partnerships in England and Wales, where people new to recording are supported in a variety of ways.

We currently recruiting and the four year project should be in full swing this summer. Currently we are developing a new website and planning activities with partners. We will have a budget for volunteer training and travel expenses and would love to hear

from you if you would like to be involved or be kept up to date via e-newsletter as things progress.

Learn more online:

[www.caringforgodsacre.org.uk](http://www.caringforgodsacre.org.uk)

Twitter: [@godsacre](https://twitter.com/godsacre)

Email: [andrea@cfga.org.uk](mailto:andrea@cfga.org.uk)



**Grassland ID training in a Shropshire churchyard**

*\*Nearly 500 biological recorders took part in our survey and over 50% said they had never recorded in a burial ground and of those who did, 22% didn't send their records anywhere.*



# Bee-flies – nature’s cutest parasitoids?

Alex Dye and Martin Harvey, *Soldierflies and Allies Recording Scheme*

The Dark-edged Bee-fly (*Bombylius major*), could well be a contender for Britain’s ‘cutest’ insect. These little critters are often mistaken for bumblebees, due to their body shape and foraging behaviours. They buzz about just above the ground, zipping back and forth to drink nectar from flowers. However, closer inspection will quickly reveal these insects to be imposters. They have a fluffy, round body often orange to brown in colour, a single pair of wings (unlike the bees, which have two pairs) and an almost comically long proboscis. This proboscis has been known to alarm some who are unfamiliar with the species,



Chloe Wrench watches a Dark-edged Bee-fly Dan Wrench

causing concern that the fly is a type of mosquito or other biting fly capable of inflicting harm. There is no reason to worry though, the long mouthparts are used only for feeding on nectar, much like the mouth of a butterfly. Contrary to the fluffy appearance and harmless nature of the adults, the larvae are nest parasites of various solitary bee species. The adult female will collect small amounts of sand on the tip of her abdomen, which will be used to coat her soft, light eggs. She will then find a nest hole, and ‘flick’ the sand-weighted egg into the nest, where the larva will hatch and feed upon the larvae of pupae of the solitary bee.

The Dark-edged Bee-fly is the most common of the four *Bombylius* bee flies native to the UK, with the other species (the Dotted Bee-fly, Heath Bee-fly and Western Bee-fly) being less common and with more limited distributions. Dark-edged Bee-flies normally start to become active around March each year, with the first recorded sighting coming in on March 15th this year (later than the March 2nd record from last year!) They can often be spotted zipping about gardens or parks and are especially common in areas with ground-nesting solitary bee populations. They’re a great species to go out looking for, and quite often you can see them buzzing about when you least expect it – if you’re very lucky, you could even find one of the less common species, just have a look at the pattern on the wings!

Since 2016 the recording scheme has run an annual Bee-fly Watch, encouraging people to look out for any of the spring bee-flies and send their records in. The project has been very successful in increasing the number of record – before 2016 the scheme received about 200 bee-fly records per year, but with a small amount of promotion via Facebook and Twitter we had over 800 records in 2016 and nearly 1,300 in 2017.



up to 25 March 2017:  
147 records



up to 25 March 2018:  
11 records



This year records have been thin on the ground so far, with the cold weather in March, but bee-flies will be out and about as soon as it warms up a little. If you see one please do add the record to iRecord – last year there were quite a lot of records that were new for their 10km-square, and some signs of range expansion in Scotland, so there are still new discoveries to be made.

For information on how to take part, and to download an identification guide, go to Bee-fly Watch on the recording scheme website: [www.brc.ac.uk/soldierflies-and-allies/bee-fly-watch](http://www.brc.ac.uk/soldierflies-and-allies/bee-fly-watch). The scheme is also on Twitter: [@SoldierfliesRS](https://twitter.com/SoldierfliesRS) and Facebook: [www.facebook.com/groups/633973796697869/](https://www.facebook.com/groups/633973796697869/).

## Field Studies Council BioLinks project

Keiron Brown, Field Studies Council  
[biolinks@field-studies-council.org](mailto:biolinks@field-studies-council.org)



In 2017 the Heritage Lottery Fund approved a grant of £1.23 million towards a new 5-year invertebrate identification and recording project from the Field Studies Council (FSC).

FSC BioLinks has 3 strands:

1. **West Midlands** (Charlie Bell) – The project will build upon the successes of previous FSC biodiversity projects in the region and run a range of training courses, predominantly at the FSC Bishops Wood and FSC Preston Montford field centres (in Worcestershire and Shropshire respectively). In addition, there will be host of development opportunities for recorders including Collections Workshops, Open Lab Days and Field Recorder Days.



**2. South East England** (Keiron Brown) – We aim to strengthen the existing invertebrate recording networks across London, Surrey and Berkshire. Training courses will be predominantly at the FSC London: Bushy Park and FSC Juniper Hall field centres, as well as the British Entomological & Natural History Society facilities at Dinton Pastures. As in the West Midlands, training courses will be complemented by a host of recorder-focused events.

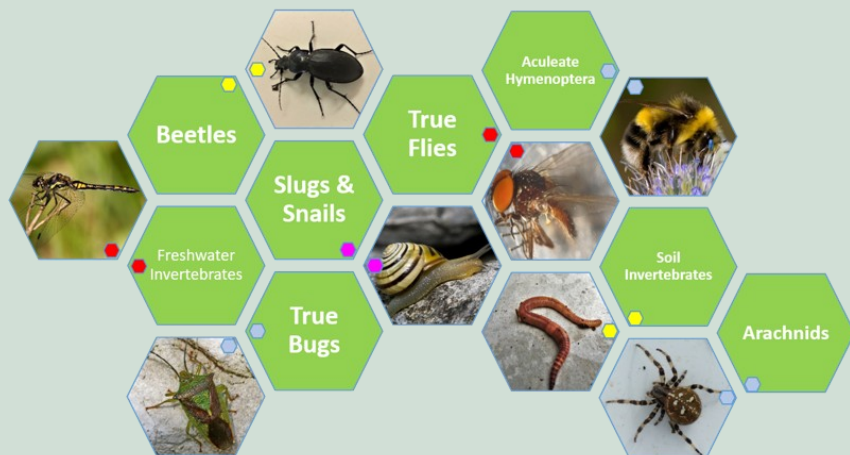
**3. Digital** (Rich Burkmar) – We will continue to develop the digital tools produced by the FSC Tomorrow's Biodiversity project and start a number of new initiatives. We will enlarge and improve the FSC identiKit tool (previous called the 'ID Framework'), add to our QGIS plugins and expand the signposting resources to include biodiversity training courses.

The focus for the training in the first year will introducing our *Learn To Love* training courses, e.g. Learn to Love Beetles, Learn to Love Spiders etc. We'll be running 20+ Learn To Love training courses across the two regions with the aim of bringing new faces to the existing biological recording network.

The *Learn To Love* courses focus on the ecology, natural history and behaviour of a specific taxonomic group rather than species identification, demonstrating the difference between different groupings rather than using scientific species names (for example, earthworms are categorised into four 'ecotypes' rather than the 29 species found in Great Britain). This enables a soft introduction to those interested in natural history but new to biological recording so that they feel less intimidated when they attend follow up field and microscope identification courses and have some background knowledge of the taxonomic group and the respective recording scheme (s). At £5 per day course they have been filling really fast!

At the NFBR conference I will be presenting how the Learn To Love training courses fit into our structured training programme, but for those who can't attend our FSC BioLinks Development Plan For Training Provision is available to all as a free download from the [www.fscbiodiversity.uk](http://www.fscbiodiversity.uk) website.

We'll be starting to plan our training programme for 2019 very soon so sign up to the FSC BioLinks e-Newsletter to be the first to hear when our courses open for bookings: <http://www.fscbiodiversity.uk/biolinks-signup>.



# The British Dragonfly Society Needs Your Records

*Eleanor Colver, British Dragonfly Society*

Following on from the 2014 Atlas of Dragonflies and Damselflies in Britain and Ireland, the BDS aims to produce a State of Dragonflies report 2020 and we need your help!



We are currently undergoing one of the greatest periods of change in dragonfly distribution, with a number of species newly colonising the UK and spreading at an unprecedented rate. At the same time, climate change is raising interesting questions on an uncertain future for some of our species. In response to this, the BDS plans to release a State of Dragonflies report 2020, with trend analysis revealing how our breeding species have fared since the Atlas' release.



*Female Four-Spotted Chaser David Kitching*

There are three ways in which you can help us:

**1. Send us Complete Lists:** These are as simple as they sound. A list of all the adult dragonfly species you see during a single visit to a wetland site. You can carry out a Complete List on any visit you make to a wetland site, even if you only visit it once. You don't even need to include individual counts, life stage or behavioural information, although all of these are welcome additions to your record. Complete Lists should be carried out in warm, dry

weather between May and September, although lists made in less ideal conditions can still be useful. Submit your records through iRecord and we will pick them up, or send them to your County Dragonfly Recorder: <https://www.british-dragonflies.org.uk/content/county-dragonfly-recorders>.

**2. Adopt a Site:** You can adopt a chosen wetland site on which to carry out complete lists two or three times between May and September over successive years. This will increase the value of the records for trend analysis. Get in touch with your County Dragonfly Recorder to inform them of your adopted site or for help choosing a site.

**3. Spread the word:** Please let others know about our project and point them to our website for more information and a printable flyer to help spread the word further: <https://www.british-dragonflies.org.uk/content/state-dragonflies-2020>.

Please contact Conservation Officer Eleanor Colver if you need further information: [eleanor.colver@british-dragonflies.org.uk](mailto:eleanor.colver@british-dragonflies.org.uk).



# Launch of The Herpetofauna of Wiltshire

*Gareth Harris, Wiltshire & Swindon Biological Records Centre*

It is with great pleasure that Wiltshire & Swindon Biological Records Centre (WSBRC) and Wiltshire Amphibian & Reptile Group announce that *The Herpetofauna of Wiltshire*, First Edition, is published. This is the first document in Wiltshire to outline the distribution of the county's reptile and amphibian populations, to promote their current distribution in the county and to focus future survey and recording efforts.

The Herpetofauna of Wiltshire has been produced to promote the importance of Wiltshire's populations of amphibians and reptiles and the landscapes that support them. Wiltshire offers diverse habitats for each of the common and widespread species in the UK, ranging from the ponds of the clay vales for Great Crested Newt, the wetlands of the Cotswold Water Park for Common Toad and Grass Snake, the ephemeral ponds of the Salisbury Plain chalk plateau for Common Toad and Great Crested Newt, and the chalk hilltops for Common Lizard.

Wiltshire supports the four species of native common and widespread reptiles found in the UK; Slow Worm, Common Lizard, Grass Snake and Adder, as well as all five species of native amphibian; Common Frog, Common Toad, Smooth Newt, Palmate Newt and Great Crested Newt. At least three non-native species have been recorded including American Bullfrog, Alpine Newt and Red-eared Terrapin. It is hoped that this document will stimulate further recording and that greater effort will result in the discovery of new breeding sites and new species in the county.

Over 10,000 records, covering the period 1996 to 2017, have been included in the atlas, offering the most up-to-date assessment of the county's herpetofauna to date. As well as highlighting the core range of the native species, this work also aids the identification of gaps in knowledge and distribution to prioritise and direct future survey effort. It also highlights the potential to promote national and local recording schemes to volunteers and community groups to feed monitoring data towards national conservation efforts.

The atlas can be downloaded, free-of-charge from the WSBRC website:

<http://wsbrc.org.uk/herpetofaunaofwiltshire/>



**Common Lizard** *Graham Coules*



**Juvenile Adder** *Gareth Harris*

# A home for some NFBR Archives

Paul T. Harding, c/o Centre for Ecology and Hydrology

[pha@ceh.ac.uk](mailto:pha@ceh.ac.uk)



NATIONAL FORUM  
FOR  
BIOLOGICAL RECORDING

Documents relating to the NFBR Council, mainly from a pre-digital era, have been collated and preserved. In my various roles as a Council member and/or office holder of NFBR, almost continuously from 1986 to 2015, I had become a default 'depository' for documents relating to the work of Council, including some conferences and publications. By agreement with Graham Walley, NFBR Chairman, two boxes of documents relating to NFBR were deposited at a publicly accessible archive in April 2017. The more important material was scanned before this took place so that a full digital archive will eventually be made available, probably via the NFBR website (*G.Walley, pers.comm.*).

This NFBR material forms part of my archives at the Centre for Ecology and Hydrology (CEH), Lancaster, in two boxes titled NFBR Archives. The scope of this material is summarised below and a comprehensive descriptive list is available from me. All this material is available for consultation at CEH Lancaster through the CEH Library Service. Although I am the listed owner of the NFBR material, it is a discrete component of my archives and will be due for review in 2030. NFBR may wish at some time to remove the NFBR Archives and deposit them at another appropriate, recognised archive. In my lifetime this would require my approval.

The material covers the formation of NFBR, Council and other minutes, AGM minutes, sampled Council and Officers' correspondence, sundry documents relating to NFBR Conferences, Conference publications and a collection of unpublished papers from the NFBR seminar in 1994 Data for Action on Biodiversity.

## Summary of the contents

### NFBR Archives Box 1

Minutes Book 1985-1990 including Steering Committee, Council, Executive Committee, AGM. Lever-arch file containing Council minutes 1990 to 2011, inventory of NFBR Conferences and Seminars (1986-2006), spreadsheet with dates, chairs and secretaries of NFBR Business meetings (1985 - 2006).

Binder containing AGM minutes 2 to 25 (1988 to 2012)

Wallet file containing Steering Committee papers 1985 to 1986; minutes and associated papers, correspondence, Biological Recording Forum 1985, Inaugural Conference 1986.

Wallet file containing Council/Executive Minutes and correspondence 1986 to 1989.

Five wallet files covering NFBR Council from 1991 - 2013 with correspondence, briefing documents, development of NBN, Recorder, and complete papers relating to 7 meetings of NFBR Council (Nos 56, 63-68).

### NFBR Archives Box 2

Wallet file containing materials relating to NFBR Conferences from 1985 to 1989.

Wallet file containing single copies of the NFBR Conference publications from 1985, 1986, 1988, 1990 and 1994. One copy of Biological Survey: Need and Network (1988) - The Berry/Linnean Society Report.

Wallet file relating to a one-day seminar Data for Action on Biodiversity organised by NFBR in 1994. Includes six papers that were never published, some of which are of historical interest regarding governmental agency policies at the time.

Wallet file containing programmes and fliers for NFBR conferences in 1992 and 1995 to 2014.



# Oxford Coleopterists' Day

Siobhan Hillman & Alex Dye

[@AphidsToZ](#) & [@AlexLikesFlies](#)

This year was the third year I've had the pleasure of attending the Oxford Coleopterists' Day, after being introduced to it in the third year of my undergrad by members of the Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire Entomological Society (DaNES). And as expected, it was fantastic and definitely remains as one of my favourite, can't miss, events of the year. It was also lovely to see so many younger people attending an entomological event! Thanks to Amo Spooner ([@EntoAmo](#)) for organising such an incredible day and Helen Roy ([@UKLadybirds](#)) for chairing the talks.

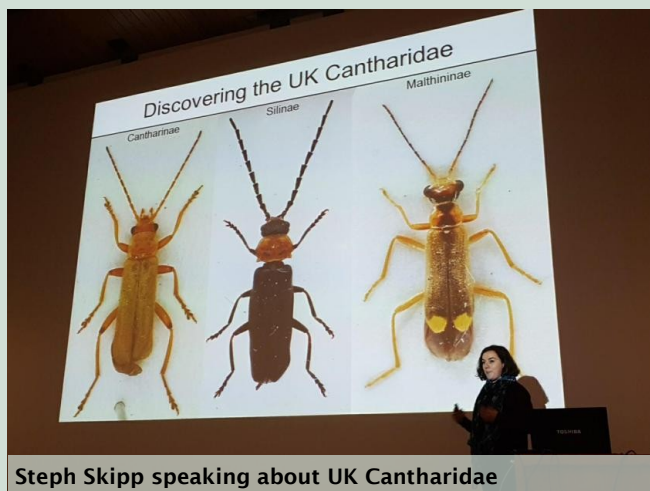
The first talk of the day was on the genus *Anthrenus* in the Dermestidae by Graham Holloway. As most entomologists will know, the Museum Beetle (*Anthrenus verbasci*) is widely abhorred by many for eating our insect collections! But Graham provided an eye-opening talk, discussing how some species in the genus may only be rare because we choose to overlook them. A good example of his was 'oh, it's just a pigeon or a gull', his response 'well, how do you know?'. And I know I'm also guilty of this, 'oh, it's just a butterfly'. So, I think the take home message was, don't overlook species because you think they're common, because it might well not be what you think it is! The next talk was by Wil 'the Ponker' Heeney, who decided to put aside his longhorn beetle recording scheme (aside from a quick update) in favour of speaking about his finding of darkling beetles and journey into being a Coleopterist. Jordan Chetcuti ([@JordanChetcuti](#)) from the University of Leeds and the Centre for Hydrology and Ecology spoke to us about

Weevil Alex Dye



his PhD research on creating multi-species simulations of ground beetles. I loved all of the animations and we're all interested to see how his PhD progresses over the coming years!

And possibly my favourite terms of the day were 'squishy beetles' and 'squishy journey', with Steph Skipp speaking about her role as a trainee for the future at the NHM and her work with Cantharids and the Cantharidae recording scheme. This talk has definitely made me want to go out and record some of these



Steph Skipp speaking about UK Cantharidae



wonderfully squishy beetles this year! This was followed by a ‘rant’ on why more people should study beetles by Richard Jones. Seizing the chance to plug his newly published book on beetles, Richard spoke about the importance of not only spreading interest and joy in the study of beetles (and insects in general), but also emphasized that we as entomologists had a duty to educate and defend the value of collecting specimens for science.

Just before we attended the afternoon workshop, we had the opportunity to look at the fantastic collections behind the scenes at the museum. Alex became rather absorbed in the weevil collection (see one of his awesome pictures on the previous page!).



Darren Mann talking Aphodini

Darren Mann (@BlattaMann) then took centre stage in the afternoon to run a workshop on the *Aphodini*, a group of small but occasionally complex dung beetles. Alex brought along a few of his collected specimens to identify after Darren ran us through some of their morphological differences. The session proved more popular than Darren and the team were expecting, with people gathering in the corridor behind just to listen in. If you like dung beetles and would like to identify and record them, then be

sure to check out Team Dump’s website (<https://dungbeetlemap.wordpress.com>) and follow them on Twitter (@Team\_DUMP).

The Coleopterists’ Day also provides the opportunity to see some of my favourite people in the world. If anyone knows Dave Budworth, they’ll know what a character he is, and an absolutely incredible entomologist. And naturally, as the treasurer of DaNES, he was after our subs money, yet again. Another fantastic entomologist I had the pleasure of seeing again was Darren Clarke, chairman of DaNES, fantastic entomologist and completely eccentric. Both of these men are very much father figures, and probably the two most influential men in the start of my entomological career. So, if you live in Derbyshire or Nottinghamshire, I’d highly recommend joining the society and following them on twitter (@DaNES\_Insects)!

Please check out the national recording schemes on twitter (@NLonghornRS, @Silphi-daeUk, @WeevilRS) and the coleopteran recording schemes ([www.coleoptera.org.uk/recording-schemes](http://www.coleoptera.org.uk/recording-schemes)) and the inspirational people who run them! I’ll hopefully be doing some beetle recording of my own this year. Already looking forward to next year’s event (16th Coleopterists’ Day – 09.02.2019), see you there :)

[Editor’s note: Links provided in @ format relate to Twitter accounts. This piece originally appeared on Siobhan Hillman’s blog: <https://aphidstoz.com/2018/02/18/oxford-coleopterists-day/>]



# 'Night flyers': Bioacoustic monitoring

Simon Gillings, BTO



*A hunched figure sits by a computer, listening to the hiss and crackle of the universe. On screen, the steadily scrolling snowstorm is interrupted by a series of bright blips, accelerating towards the end. Suddenly alert, the figure rewinds the recording to re-play the contact. It's what they've been waiting for. Proof of life. Proof that a Little Grebe flew over their garden in the small hours of last night.*

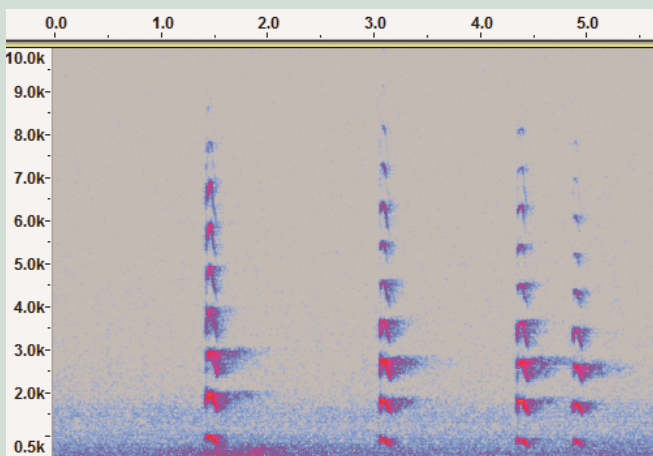
## Unexplored birdlife

It may not be as glamorous as the Search for Extra Terrestrial Intelligence, but a growing number of birders are setting up recording equipment to discover hitherto undetected birds passing overhead at night. And they're often surprised by the results. My journey into sound recording stemmed from my enthusiasm for working my

local patch. For me, like many birders, this involves keeping a garden list but I have quickly exhausted what suburban Cambridge can offer, or so I thought. Sitting by the back door having 'one last cuppa' before bed had given me Redshank and Coot, but what else was I missing? I knew some amazing species, such as Ortolan Bunting, had been detected flying over Portland Bill and Poole Harbour by leaving audio recorders running all night. But was it worth doing this in suburbia? After my colleague Nick Moran recorded impressive passages of Redwings, ducks and even a Bittern from

suburban Thetford, I figured I should give it a try. In late March I tried a low-tech, low-cost approach. I suspended a £10 USB microphone over a plastic mixing bowl (to act as a reflector) in my garden, connected the mic to my computer and left it recording overnight. Reassuringly, I got several Redwings that first night and subsequently a long overdue first Moorhen for the garden. Water Rail quickly followed and fly-over Coots and Moorhens were soon revealed to be an almost nightly occurrence.

Buoyed by this success I upgraded my microphone, got a bigger mixing bowl and added weather proofing (cling film) – now I was ready for spring wader passage. During April and May I recorded almost nightly and bagged nine species of wader. Oystercatcher and Redshank were unexpected, but inland rarities such as Spotted Redshank and Grey Plover were a real bonus. Add in a few Wigeon, Little Grebe, and a Reed Warbler singing from a neighbour's garden at midnight and it was definitely worth it. The website Xeno-Canto became my friend, its vast catalogue of sound re-



**Sonogram showing a 5-second recording of four 'kewk' calls of a flyover Coot (Cambridge, 2300hrs, 30/04/2017).**  
Listen to it here: [www.xeno-canto.org/381213](http://www.xeno-canto.org/381213).



cordings, including many of night migrants, helped confirm some of the less familiar sounds. Each morning I would await the regular email exchange with Nick: *What did you get last night? Is this recording just a weird Water Rail?*

### What to listen out for

As I write it's late summer and waders are already returning (I recorded Redshank and Oystercatcher in early July). BirdTrack indicates July to September are the peak months for Green Sandpiper in Cambridgeshire, so that and Whimbrel are my next targets. What the rest of the autumn will bring is anyone's guess – I certainly wouldn't have predicted many of the species I recorded in spring. Why not find out what birds are flying undetected over your garden?

### Give it a go

If you already have a computer, for as little as £10-£25 you can purchase a USB microphone and, optionally, an extension cable. If you want higher quality recordings, the ability to record remotely or a microphone that you can easily take with you into the field, go for one of the hand-held recorders and shotgun microphones (good advice at [www.wildlife-sound.org](http://www.wildlife-sound.org)). If you're using a computer you'll need one of the freely available programs such as Audacity ([www.audacityteam.org](http://www.audacityteam.org)) or Cornell's Raven Lite ([www.birds.cornell.edu/raven](http://www.birds.cornell.edu/raven)) to save the incoming audio.

### Scanning the recording

Even in midsummer you'll get five hours of usable recording between dusk and the dawn chorus, which is too long to listen to in real time. Enter the sonogram: a simple visualisation of the soundscape through time. Open the sound recording in Audacity and it displays the sonogram, which can be visually scanned relatively quickly. You'll soon get to know what the sounds of car horns, the neighbour's cat and the resident nocturnal wildlife look like so you only have to listen to the migrant birds.

### Identification

Xeno-Canto ([www.xeno-canto.org](http://www.xeno-canto.org)) is a must, with a large collection of recordings and associated sonograms. Search for species then filter on remarks or call types (e.g. "rmk: nocturnal", "type: flight"). The Sound Approach to Birding book offers a very accessible introduction to understanding sonograms and the different components of bird calls, and their website offers more tips ([www.soundapproach.co.uk](http://www.soundapproach.co.uk)). BTO is working with other scientists to develop algorithms for automated identification of birds (as we already do for bats, see [www.batsurvey.org](http://www.batsurvey.org)) but this is still some way off and for many people the visual identification is part of the journey of discovery.

**Simon Gillings and Nick Moran have started a new website to provide information on how to get started in "nocmig" at <https://nocmig.wordpress.com/>.**

*Originally published in Bird Table, the magazine for BTO Garden BirdWatchers. The BTO Garden BirdWatch is a year-round survey collecting regular weekly garden lists of birds and other wildlife. [www.bto.org/volunteer-surveys/gbw](http://www.bto.org/volunteer-surveys/gbw).*



**A Bittern, one of the species recorded by Nick Moran** Photo © Jo Garbutt, view the original at [www.flickr.com/photos/jo\\_garbutt/17526239011](http://www.flickr.com/photos/jo_garbutt/17526239011).



# Jersey's forgotten wildlife: Millipedes, Centipedes and Woodlice

Sarah Maguire – Jersey Biodiversity Centre



In a small corner of the UK, the Jersey Biodiversity Centre has expanded the island's records by enlisting the help of the Myriapod and Isopod group.

For those of you who don't know our lovely island, its nine by five miles and located off the coast of France in the English Channel. Neighboring us are Guernsey, Sark and Herm, and slightly further North is the last Channel Island, Alderney. Together these islands make up the Channel Islands, and our wildlife is diverse as the island themselves. Being located only 14 miles from France, we have a mix of UK and European species. For example, for years it was thought our toads (known locally as Crapauds) were slightly different from the *Bufo bufo* species you might find on mainland UK. DNA testing showed that Jersey is home to a European species called *Bufo spinosus*. Jersey really does have a special mix of wildlife.

However, being on an island can have its limitations. Although we have many resident nature experts, we are still missing records for some of the more bizarre and less studied groups - Myriapod and Isopods, for example! It's not surprising that Jersey's records are thin on the ground for these creatures. Being small, they are under-recorded so very little is known about what species we have in Jersey. We planned to change that by training up locals to survey and identify these species.

At the end of 2017, we invited Paul Lee from the Myriapod and Isopod group to teach locals how to identify millipedes, centipedes and woodlice. Training locals to identify these species is important if we want our database to have a diverse species list. Over the two-day course, we surveyed a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), St Catherine's Woods, and the grounds around the training centre at Howard Davis Farm. This SSSI site was surveyed along the main path with the group digging and lifting logs and moss to capture as many animals as possible. It became a slight competition for the first person to find a centipede – Neil lost his footing in his excitement at finding the



first one and ended up sliding down the Beech bank! Using microscopes, we were able to get a close-up view of the creatures we had captured to identify species. The Jersey Biodiversity Centre created a voucher specimen collection, which is the first for the island. This entails putting specimens in alcohol, which enabled the specimens to be dissected if required for identification.

At the end of the weekend, we were able to identify 19 species and two were sent away for identification. 38 records were collected over two days.

We now have 10 people trained to survey Myriapod and Isopods and we plan to use our new knowledge at events to inspire more people to take notice of these creepy crawlies in their back gardens.

We would like to thank Paul Lee for making the trip and teaching the course and Eco Active for providing funds that made this course possible.



# Biological Records Centre Update

Jodey Peyton



We are gearing up for a full survey season this year for the Pollinator Monitoring Scheme (PoMS) and we would like to spread the word about the public Flower-Insect Timed Count (FIT Count) – for more information see the article on PoMS on page 28.

The UK Biodiversity Indicator “Status of pollinating insects” (<http://jncc.defra.gov.uk/page-6851>) was quoted by the prime minister at a launch of the 25 Year Environment Plan, and species trends from the BRC were discussed in House of Lords. We would like to thank the amazing efforts of all the biological recorders and schemes for their work that enabled Gary Powney, Charlie Outhwaite, Tom August, Nick Isaac and others at BRC to present this.

There have been a number of recent bug fixes and enhancements within iRecord ([www.brc.ac.uk/irecord](http://www.brc.ac.uk/irecord)), and more are on the way, including the ability to export data in NBN’s Darwin Core format. Work is ongoing with Natural England to encourage data flow from their National Nature Reserves in particular. New verifiers continue to be recruited.

BRC welcomes several people who have stepped up to assist with some of the existing national recording schemes, including Steph Skipp (Soldier beetles scheme), Phil Brighton (Anthomyiid flies scheme), Matt Harrow (Snail-killing flies scheme), Alex Dye (Soldierflies scheme) and Keith Fowler (Psocoptera scheme). The Soldierflies scheme has recently produced a draft atlas and new ID resources. Longhorn beetles produced an updated draft atlas in January. Datasets are also being prepared for NBN Atlas include substantial updates to craneflies, ground beetles, and mosses. BRC is supporting the development of a new website for Dipterists Forum.

Finally, Hannah Dean and John van Breda are just about to complete a round of bug fixes and enhancements for the Pantheon invertebrate habitat analysis tool ([www.brc.ac.uk/pantheon](http://www.brc.ac.uk/pantheon)).

If you would like to know more about any of the schemes or societies the BRC supports, or would like help in developing your own recording scheme, please contact the BRC at [brc@ceh.ac.uk](mailto:brc@ceh.ac.uk). You can see a full list of the recording schemes BRC supports here: [www.brc.ac.uk/recording-schemes](http://www.brc.ac.uk/recording-schemes).

## New Resources from National Schemes & Societies

Provisional Atlas of Shieldbugs and Allies: [www.britishbugs.org.uk/Provisional\\_atlas\\_of\\_shieldbugs\\_and\\_allies\\_2018.pdf](http://www.britishbugs.org.uk/Provisional_atlas_of_shieldbugs_and_allies_2018.pdf)

Provisional Atlas of Longhorn Beetles: [www.dropbox.com/s/0trkx44w81ojobe/draft%20longhorn%20beetle%20atlas%20v3.pdf?dl=0](https://www.dropbox.com/s/0trkx44w81ojobe/draft%20longhorn%20beetle%20atlas%20v3.pdf?dl=0)

Provisional Atlas of Soldierflies and Allies: [www.brc.ac.uk/soldierflies-and-allies/atlas](http://www.brc.ac.uk/soldierflies-and-allies/atlas)

New resources from Dipterists Forum: [www.brc.ac.uk/soldierflies-and-allies/node/67](http://www.brc.ac.uk/soldierflies-and-allies/node/67)

Updated list of Dipterist Forum Recording Schemes and Study Groups: <https://drive.google.com/file/d/13f64tmMtj36ER9jE1tAqPoD4oeIPGZHW/view>

## Newcomers on Twitter:

UK Pollinator Monitoring Scheme [@PoMScheme](#) UK Soldier Beetles [@UKCantharidae](#)

UK Butterfly Monitoring Scheme [@UKBMSLive](#) Cranefly Recording Scheme [@CRStipula](#)



# Recording Scheme Spotlight

*Each edition the NFBR newsletter celebrates one of the many and varied National Recording Schemes in the UK. These schemes help to ensure accurate species identification, help with dataflow and are an essential part of the British wildlife recording community. Answers provided by David Hepper, Records Officer.*



## ***Tell us a bit about the scheme***

The British Dragonfly Society (BDS) Recording Scheme was set up as the Odonata Recording Scheme, not quite in the Carboniferous but back when BRC ruled the earth. Later it was taken 'in house' as the Dragonfly Recording Network (DRN) and produced its first Atlas in 1996 led by Bob Merritt. Using customised BioBase software 'Darter', Recorder 3, Recorder 6 and DMAP, my predecessor, Stephen Prentice and other BDS luminaries published the huge 2014 Atlas. With the expected demise of Recorder 6 support we were tempted back to BRC and now use iRecord for data entry and verification.

## ***How is the scheme run?***

The BDS is a membership organisation with a basic annual subscription of £20. Our Verifiers are known as County Dragonfly Recorders (CDRs) and are organised by Vice-county, with most looking after one or two VCs. The largest empire is that of Pat Batty, CDR for the whole of Scotland! My role as Records Officer is to support CDRs in any way I can. Some prefer to collect and tend their records in spreadsheets, others in systems such as Living Record and MapMate. So far I have documented the export format of ten other systems used by CDRs and other field recorders.

Additionally, organisations that record other groups have kindly extended (at our suggestion) their recording systems to include dragonflies. While Butterfly Conservation (UKBMS) imports its own records to iRecord, others such as BTO (BirdTrack) send spreadsheets for import. Either way, the records are verified by our own CDRs. I'm trying to ensure that original record IDs are not lost in this process, so that ultimately a user of NBN Atlas or GBIF can track a record back to its original source.

While all the above are valid ways for us to receive records, the best of all is directly into iRecord ([www.brc.ac.uk/irecord/](http://www.brc.ac.uk/irecord/)).

## ***Do you run field events or training courses?***

The BDS has a packed programme of field meetings, often run by our own CDRs, advertised in the upcoming events listing on our website (<https://british-dragonflies.org.uk/content/upcoming-events>). We also run ID courses, especially at the Dragonfly Centre, Wicken Fen, near Ely but since these are somewhat local we try to provide enhanced ID resources on our website.

## ***Do you publish a newsletter or journal?***

We publish our BDS magazine Dragonfly News each spring and autumn. Additionally, we publish a Journal of scientific papers and an annual newsletter for recorders called Darter that includes round-ups from our CDRs of the highs and lows of the last season. All these are included in the Society's subscription and back-issues are available on our website (<https://british-dragonflies.org.uk/content/dragonfly-news-0>).



### ***Do you have specific projects or species of interest?***

This year we have several projects in preparation, including the Dragonfly Challenge where we provide ID resources to help increase public engagement in 'citizen science', along the lines of the BTO's Garden Bird-Watch. For those already into recording (of anything) we are particularly wanting records for our White-legged Damselfly Investigation. This is a species that seems to be in decline, for which we will be handing out specific monads and asking people to visit several times in the year.

This should increase the survey's geographical coverage while avoiding unnecessary duplication of effort. For the seasoned dragonfly recorder we have sites that we would particularly like monitored, with our upcoming State of Dragonflies 2020 publication in mind [see page 17 for more details].

In summary, our website explains the levels of recording as a ladder, where the bottom rung is the one-off challenge and adoption of a site is the top rung. Part of the CDR's job, and mine, is to encourage climbing!

### ***Any highlights or achievements you would like to share from the past year?***

One issue that caused heated debate some years ago is that of collecting specimens. Although voucher specimens are occasionally necessary, with camera technology improving and, arguably, becoming less expensive every year it has become increasingly practical to identify from photographs, so most of our sweep nets can be passed on to those collecting the insect equivalent of LBJs.

We don't foresee problems with finding enough recorders and I hope the BDS's long-term dataset will continue to grow and, importantly, be used by academics and professionals. To this end, our dataset is proudly marked 'Creative Commons - By Attribution', as recommended by NBN. Our records are available to all at full resolution for any legal purpose.

Dragonflies may be less cuddly and less obviously useful to mankind than bees but we have the great advantage of monitoring one of the most charismatic and photo-genic groups on earth and the imminent arrival of up to ten new species from the continent makes for an exciting field of study. Who wouldn't want to be the first to find proof of breeding of the spectacular Scarlet Darter *Crocothemis erythraea*, a vagrant of which was found last year near Bournemouth?

### ***How should readers get in touch if they wish to know more about your scheme?***

We welcome new recorders from other societies and those coming straight into dragonfly recording. Additional help is available from our Conservation Officers and we've just employed an Outreach Officer to encourage wider interest, especially among the young. Please visit our website at [www.british-dragonflies.org.uk](http://www.british-dragonflies.org.uk). Offers of help are always welcome. Do join us!



**White-legged Damselfly** Photo © Christophe Quintin, view the original at <https://www.flickr.com/photos/34878947@N04/6082647213/>



# A new UK Pollinator Monitoring Scheme (PoMS)

*Martin Harvey*



Concerns over declines in pollinating insects are widespread and often in the news. Yet we still have limited evidence on how their populations are faring, especially when it comes to the many wild bee and hoverfly species that are key pollinators of crops and wild flowers. In order to build a better evidence base for pollinator trends, a new UK Pollinator Monitoring Scheme (PoMS) has been launched. With the help of volunteers, PoMS aims to collect robust long-term data on the distribution and numbers of pollinating insects across the UK and their role in supporting farming and wildlife.



**Carrying out a FIT count**  
*Claire Carvell*



**Pan traps in crop field**  
*Claire Carvell*

PoMS is a large partnership project, including research institutions, conservation NGOs and recording schemes. There are two survey projects under the PoMS umbrella that provide opportunities for volunteer recorders to get involved. One of these is the Flower-Insect Timed Count (FIT Count). Anyone can take part between April and September, at any location where there are flowers and insects, by spending ten minutes counting all the insects that visit a patch of target flowers, with insects being identified to group level. Repeating your counts weekly or monthly will provide a useful measure of change over time. A full survey pack and identification guide are available from the PoMS website, with links to the online form for submitting your results.

The other major survey project for PoMS is based on systematic sampling of pollinators and measurements of floral resources on a network of 75 sites (1km squares) across England, Scotland and Wales. Volunteers for this project 'adopt' a square near to them, initially meeting on site with a PoMS team member and then visiting the square on three further occasions during the summer to collect insect samples from water-filled pan traps, and return the samples to PoMS for analysis.



Data from the PoMS surveys is being collated via iRecord and resulting species records will be disseminated via the NBN Atlas. PoMS is also working with the existing recording schemes for pollinating insects to build on the work already being done to develop reliable trend estimates from ongoing biological recording, which remains essential for monitoring changes in these insect groups.

If you would like to help PoMS collect evidence on pollinators you can join in the FIT Count by downloading the materials and identification guides from our website. If you'd like to adopt a PoMS 1 km square near you, please email us on [poms@ceh.ac.uk](mailto:poms@ceh.ac.uk). Full information and video guides are on our website at [www.ceh.ac.uk/pollinator-monitoring](http://www.ceh.ac.uk/pollinator-monitoring) and we're [@PoMScheme](https://twitter.com/PoMScheme) on Twitter.

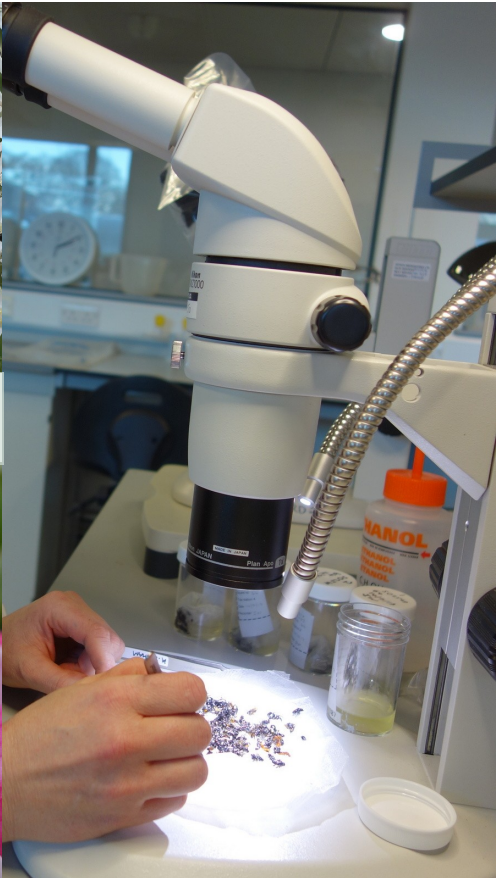
PoMS is part of the UK Pollinator Monitoring and Research Partnership, comprising the Centre for Ecology & Hydrology (CEH), the Bumblebee Conservation Trust, Butterfly Conservation, British Trust for Ornithology, Hymettus, the University of Reading and University of Leeds. It is jointly funded by Defra, the Welsh and Scottish Governments, JNCC and project partners.



Hoverfly *Epistrophe grossulariae* and pollen beetles *Meligethes* sp. on Hogweed flowers  
Martin Harvey



Solitary bee *Andrena haemorrhoa* visiting orchard flowers  
Nadine Mitschunas



from pan-trap samples being sorted in the CEH lab



# Five Years of Square of the Month

Elaine Wright, SEWBRcC



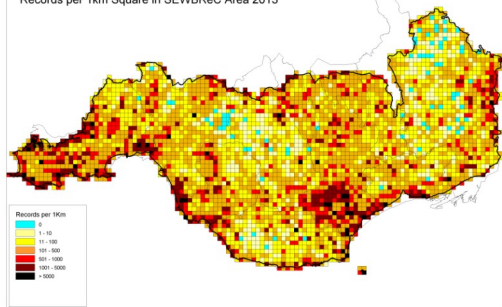
SEWBRcC

SOUTH EAST WALES BIODIVERSITY RECORDS CENTRE  
CANOLFAN COFNODI FIOAMRYWIAETH DE DWYRAIN CYMRU

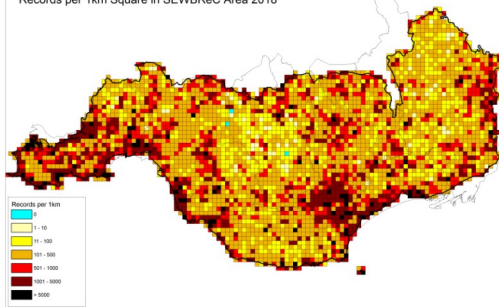
In 2013, after pondering on the issue of the under-recorded areas in our patch, the South East Wales Biodiversity Records Centre (SEWBRcC) launched Square of the Month. This initiative provides local wildlife recorders with maps and details of under-recorded 1km squares in Gwent and Glamorgan, in hopes that the information will encourage recording in these seldom visited spots.

Five years on, and the excellent recorders of south Wales have managed to add over 11,500 records to the 91 squares highlighted by the scheme thus far. The majority of squares are located in farmland or woodland plantations, yet over 1,500 species from 27 taxa groups have been discovered, showing how diverse the areas beyond the “honeypot” sites truly are.

Records per 1km Square in SEWBRcC Area 2013



Records per 1km Square in SEWBRcC Area 2018



There have been some interesting /rare species found, for example the second Welsh record of the shieldbug *Eurydema oleracea* was found by SEWBRcC staff visiting a square on a road verge in Newport.



SEWBRcC Staff Day Out to a SqOTM in Newport

The scheme has been whole heartedly adopted by some expert recorders, who make a huge effort to visit the squares each month. A couple of heroes are Rob & Linda Nottage and Colin Titcombe, who have each collected over 3,000 records. SEWBRcC is extremely grateful to everyone who makes the effort to help fill in the gaps in our maps!

Square of the Month has in fact gone so well that we are running out of squares to visit, and have hence changed the goalposts a



little, starting to concentrate on squares unvisited for 10 or more years. Further details about the scheme, including the option to sign up for our email list, can be found on our website:

[www.sewbrec.org.uk/biological-recording-folder/sewbrec-square-of-the-month.page](http://www.sewbrec.org.uk/biological-recording-folder/sewbrec-square-of-the-month.page)

*Our sister Welsh LERC BIS is starting a similar scheme this month, which you can read about below.*



*Eurydema oleracea*

## Survey A Square

*Ben Mullen, BIS*

To inspire biological recording, make it more fun and to give a focus for recording effort the Biological Information Service for Powys and the Brecon Beacons National Park (BIS) are launching their Survey a Square (SASq) campaign.

SASq will focus recording effort on lesser recorded squares, initially those with at most 1 record in the BIS Wildlife Recording Database (WiReD). As these lesser recorded squares become better recorded the parameters can be shifted, possibly to focus on squares with few recent records. To search for the lesser recorded squares with 1 or zero records in BIS WiReD the LERC Data Merge tool was used. This discovered over 400 1km squares within the BIS recording area for which we hold minimal records.



**BIODIVERSITY INFORMATION SERVICE**  
FOR POWYS AND BRECON BEACONS NATIONAL PARK  
**GWASANAETH GWYBODAETH FIOAMRYWIAETH**  
POWYS A PHARC CENEDLAETHOL BANNAU BRYCHEINIOG

Vice County	Lesser Recorded Squares <2 records
42 Brecknockshire	123
43 Radnorshire	66
47 Montgomeryshire	200



**A snowy BIS staff outing**

Following a Staff SASq outing in February, BIS are launching their Survey a Square campaign in April in VC42 Brecknockshire, where two 1km grid squares will be surveyed by the local wildlife trust and local recorders. It is hoped that the local public will be inspired to start recording too. From May 2018 three SASq monads will be announced every month, one for each vice county, 42 Brecknock, 43 Radnorshire and 47 Montgomeryshire.

Interestingly BIS covers small areas of a further four vice counties: VC35, VC41 and VC44 in south Wales, and VC50 in north Wales. It is hoped to run joint events with the other Welsh LERCs in the future as there are many lesser recorded squares overlapping these four vice counties, plus VC46 & VC48.

To find out which squares are the SASq and for our other events and training days visit our website ([www.bis.org.uk](http://www.bis.org.uk)) or our Facebook page ([www.facebook.com/BISBrecon/](https://www.facebook.com/BISBrecon/)). The field recording days will enable you to join others to learn about wildlife recording. You can join us on Saturday 14th April in SN8111 and Monday 23rd April in SN8009.



# NBN Update

*Mandy Henshall, National Biodiversity Network*



## NBN Atlas Documentation and Help Portal

We are pleased to announce that a new Documentation and Help Portal for the NBN Atlas has been developed and launched. The new site (<https://docs.nbnatlas.org/>) brings together information and guidance for users of the NBN Atlas, NBN Atlas Scotland, NBN Atlas Wales and all subsequent NBN Atlases, in a clear way, with straightforward navigation to each of the subject areas. It is organised to reflect why you might be using the NBN Atlas, with links to further information. The NBN Atlas Documentation and Help Portal can be found by clicking on the “Help” link on the top right-hand side of each of the NBN Atlases.

## The SBIF Review – the next stage

The four workshops that were held in the last quarter of 2017 marked the completion of the evidence-gathering stage of the Review. The SBIF Working Group has now moved on to the next stage, the drafting of two papers: “Detailed business case for change” and “Recommended options for change”. At the same time, it is also completing outputs on the questionnaire and interview findings.

The content of the business case and recommendations will reflect the evidence gathered. Options for change will include details of those options that have been discussed and rejected, and those that are recommended. Both papers need careful crafting in order to present the information in a manner that is concise, accessible, and grounded in the wider context of Scottish strategy for biodiversity, but also detailed enough for the audience of decision-makers to understand what is proposed and to believe that the recommendations are achievable. One key message that was heard consistently through the Review is that the status quo is not an option as it is neither sustainable nor delivering biodiversity data across the whole of Scotland, and this message will also be clearly articulated in both papers.

The SBIF Working Group believes it is important to devote adequate time to writing the papers as they will be the key documents to inform decision-makers and funders of the SBIF vision for a future infrastructure, and as such their importance cannot be over-stated. The current schedule is for approved final versions of the papers to be ready by the end of April or early May. Once the papers have been approved by the SBIF Advisory Group, they will be submitted to the Scottish Government for consideration, and the Review itself will be closed down. The post-Review future for SBIF will subsequently be guided by the response received to the business case and its recommendations.

All completed documents and papers associated with the Review, including the monthly Highlight Reports, and the workshop outputs, are available on the Scotland pages of the NBN website (<https://nbn.org.uk/about-us/where-we-are/in-scotland/the-sbif-review/>). The interview findings, questionnaire findings, and business case and recommendations will be published once complete.



## NBN Honorary Membership 2018

It was great to see two dedicated individuals, Professor Helen Roy and Dr Mark Hill, receive Honorary Membership of the National Biodiversity Network at the NBN Conference in November 2017. Further to these awards, we are sure that there are many other dedicated people working in the sector that you would like to be recognised in this way. We are therefore, once again, seeking your nominations for Honorary Membership of the NBN for 2018. So, do you know someone who you think should receive this accolade?

Honorary Membership is usually awarded to one person each year and is agreed upon by the Board of Trustees. They do not have to be a member or part of a member organisation to be nominated. The person being proposed must meet at least one of the criteria listed below:

- An outstanding personal contribution to biological recording including the mentoring of others
- A long-established contribution as a scheme organiser involving, for example, significant advancement of recording methodologies, extension of recording at a national scale to a wider range of taxa, development and application of taxonomy for biological recording
- A significant technical contribution to development of the NBN leading to new opportunities for accessing or using biological records
- A major motivational leadership role in biological recording contributing to the NBN
- Innovative use of the data collected by biological recorders that significantly advances understanding or influences policy and practice.

If you wish to nominate someone please note the following points, which are just a selection from the list of criteria that must be met:

- Nominators must be a Member of the NBN Trust. This can be as an individual member or as an employee / member of an organisation that is a member. Please check with the NBN Secretariat if you are unsure if you are a member or not.
- Nominations must be in writing and demonstrate how the individual meets at least one of the criteria listed above
- Nominations must be received by Friday 1 June 2018.

The full criteria for nominators and further information can be found on the NBN website: <https://nbn.org.uk/news/nbn-honorary-membership-2018/>

## NBN Conference 2018 – save the date!

We are pleased to announce the date of this year's event, which will be held on Wednesday 21 and Thursday 22 November 2018.

For the first time it will be held in Nottingham, the home of the NBN Secretariat, with the venue being the Albert Hall, NG1 5AA. The theme and speakers will be announced in due course, but for now – *save the date!*



# Local Environmental Records Centre Spotlight

*Each edition the NFBR newsletter celebrates one of the Local Environmental Records Centres [LERCs] in the UK. These organisations are centres for the collation, management and dissemination of biodiversity data on a local scale, making biodiversity information available to decision makers throughout the UK, alongside supporting Biological Recorders in a myriad of ways. Answers provided by Ian Egerton, Manager.*



**Devon Biodiversity Records Centre [DBRC]** is based in Exeter, and covers all of Devon, including most of vice counties 3 and 4. The area covered includes five AONBs, two National Parks and two coastlines. The DBRC database contains 4.5 million species records, and provide a range of services through which this information, plus sites and habitat data, can flow into the decision making processes locally and nationally. They support the biodiversity evidence needs of 17 organisations, including 95% of their Local Authorities and protected landscapes.

## ***Tell us a bit about the LERC***

**Getting things started:** DBRC was formed over a period of time 'organically', and whilst it is a bit grey as to when it was officially named as a LERC, somewhere around 25 years ago seems about right. Records show it was performing the basic functions we associate with environmental records centres at that time, and this included running a very active Local Wildlife Sites program within a large partnership of the Wildlife Trust, Devon County Council and Local Planning Authorities.

**Organisation type:** DBRC is a not-for-profit organisation hosted by Devon Wildlife Trust. They work as a partnership, with guidance from the DBRC Forum and an Executive Group.



**The DBRC team hard at work**  
*Ian Egerton*

**The office:** DBRC is situated on the first floor of a small Victorian building a few yards away from Devon Wildlife Trust's headquarters in Exeter. Formerly an art gallery, it is close to the quay, and river Exe, which means we are reminded daily of the power of nature, as the river bursts its banks regularly, and the resident wildlife seems to cope far better than the EA flood teams. Whilst situated in the city centre, we have seen Otters, Little Egrets, Kingfishers and Dippers in the leat next door, and on odd occasions Peregrines overhead.

## ***Tell us about your team***

For many years DBRC was able to resource a comparatively large team of 6.5FTE, but with changes in the funding environment, including the withdrawal of support by Natural England, a recently reshaped team of 4.5FTE now drive our work, alongside the invaluable contribution of volun-



teers and friendly contractors. Our team includes technical expertise as you would imagine, but also a wealth of ecological knowledge. Because DBRC has always been a very outward facing centre, delivering up to 25 field based projects a year, its been important for me [Ian Egerton] as manager that Ellie [Knott] can manage our data-bases, or lead on the delivery of herpetile surveys in the field. And for our survey team, Alex [Worsely] or Phil [Sansum], to be conducting high resolution habitat monitoring one week, or be training ecological consultants or local communities in plant ID skills the next. In April, our team welcomes its newest member, Marcus, whose coding and programming background will help DBRC automate some of processes, and expand on our ability to analyse our data holdings, increasing what they can tell us about the state of Devon's environment.

### ***Tell us about the local recording scene***

There are a wide range of species recording groups in Devon, although our comparatively low population does mean there are gaps in these formalised organisations, certainly in comparison with some of the other LERCs that I meet with nationally. However, we also have a number of highly skilled individual recorders residing in the county, covering some of the more specialized taxonomic groups. DBRC hosts the databases for some of these recording groups, and provides equipment, storage, and even a secretariat at times. It is quite common for us to print newsletters for the Devon Moth Group or Butterfly Conservation, or keep a stuffed badger in our cupboards for the Devon Mammal Group. DBRC has strong relationships with a wide range of species recording groups in the county, including Devon Birds, Devon Moth Group, Devon Mammal Group, Devon Reptile & Amphibian Group, Devon Bat Group, Devon Fly Group & county recorders from Butterfly Conservation, British Dragonfly Society amongst others, and some are far better resourced than others so our role varies in supporting them.

### ***What are the top three sites you would recommend to visiting wildlife recorders?***

Personally I'd recommend getting a glimpse of the variation we have as a county: Atlantic Woodland in the Dart Valley ([www.devonwildlifetrust.org/reserves/dart-valley](http://www.devonwildlifetrust.org/reserves/dart-valley)); Braunton Burrows for some lovely sand dunes and grassland habitats ([www.northdevonbiosphere.org.uk/braunton-burrows.html](http://www.northdevonbiosphere.org.uk/braunton-burrows.html)); and Seaton Wetlands for a wetland walk with birds galore (<http://seatonbay.com/marshes/>).

### ***Any highlights or achievements you would like to share from the past year?***

DBRC gained ALERC accreditation at the start of 2017, which was a great achievement by the team. However, it's sometimes the little things that matter most, 20 years ago DBRC started a small public participation survey looking at otters and their distribution, and since then 'Operation Otter' has had highs and lows, especially in terms of funding, which has now ceased. However, we still have dedicated volunteers going out three times a year recording, and some have been with us from the start. That's dedication!

### ***How can we find out more about Devon Biodiversity Records Centre?***

Visit the website [www.dbrc.org.uk](http://www.dbrc.org.uk), call 01392 274128, or follow us on Twitter [@DBRCnews](https://twitter.com/DBRCnews).





# NATIONAL FORUM FOR BIOLOGICAL RECORDING

The National Forum for Biological Recording is the premier UK organisation for practitioners engaged with biological recording across the UK. Membership includes individual naturalists, national organisations and recording societies, local records centres and their staff. This gives it a unique perspective and an important role.

Whether you are an experienced naturalist or taking your first steps in biological recording, we want to hear from you.

To offer an article for a newsletter, please contact our Newsletter Editor: Elaine Wright on [editor@nfbr.org.uk](mailto:editor@nfbr.org.uk)

To join the NFBR, please contact our Membership Officer and Treasurer: Clare Langrick on [membership@nfbr.org.uk](mailto:membership@nfbr.org.uk)

For all other enquiries about NFBR please contact our Chairman: Graham Walley on [chairman@nfbr.org.uk](mailto:chairman@nfbr.org.uk)

Join the discussion on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).