

NATIONAL FEDERATION FOR BIOLOGICAL RECORDING

NEWSLETTER NUMBER 2

January 1986

Inaugural Conference

The 1986 Federation conference is to be held from the evening of Monday 14 April to Wednesday 16 April at Fitzwilliam College, Cambridge. The format of a half day seminar (Biological Recording in a Changing Landscape), followed by nine workshops in three sessions, is designed for maximum participation, exchange of experience and problem solving. Ratification of a constitution for the Federation, plus council/committee elections, will take place during the conference.

Detailed programme and booking form enclosed. Please return booking form to Mrs Llywela Hopkins, Museum Documentation Association, Duxford Airfield, Duxford, Cambridgeshire CB2 4QR. Tel 0223 833288.

BRISCLy onward

The Biological Recording in Scotland Campaign (BRISC) hopes that the success of its activities as a regional co-ordinating organization will stimulate other regions to co-ordinate. BRISC was set up after the Scottish biological recording conference 'BIOREC 75' and in 1985 gained new momentum with a 'BIOREC 85' conference. In September 1986 there will be a conference to establish a constitution to replace BRISC's currently ad hoc nature.

BRISC services the demand for mutual aid, exchange of ideas and enthusiasm between neighbouring records centres in Scotland. Currently BRISC is reviewing publicity, looking at ways of increasing young people's involvement in recording, training courses and links with national recording schemes. By exploiting the resources of the records centres and museums of the central urban belt of Scotland, biological recording coverage, in the form of a network of information sources, will be extended to the remoter, sparsely populated areas.

Visiting naturalists are a major, though frustratingly elusive, source of Scottish biological records. Copies of records, please, to: BRISC, 25 Johnston Terrace, Edinburgh, or direct to the established Scottish records centres.

BRISC Newsletter No 1 (January 1986) is available from BRISC, c/o Scottish Wildlife Trust, 25 Johnston Terrace, Edinburgh.

A survey of surveyors

To gather real news for this newsletter, an information request letter was sent to 96 biological recording organizations and to date 40 have replied. Thank you, but please can we have the rest? We hope the following selection of information received proves stimulating. The details of MSC scheme use in biological recording, compiled from our survey, will appear in the next newsletter. In the meantime, we have an indication that biological recorders may be biennial, employed every other year as they become eligible for MSC schemes.

Talent

People are our primary resource of biological knowledge. Since the Biological Recording Forum in 1985, at least two records centres have adopted "talent" cards to ensure that details of all contributors of records are known, as an essential qualification to the records themselves. Equally important is the record of who knows what about where and who your local experts are.

To the basic surname, forenames, title, address, the Norfolk BRC cards provides for 'born, died, biography, collections, interests, biographies, obituaries, publications'. The Bristol (BRERC) card offers three keyword fields for indexing; Job/soc/organization (eg NCC ARO, President of local Nat His Soc, National Recorder for Maggots)
Localities (areas regularly visited/have special knowledge of)
Group/habitat (details of natural history expertise eg Odonata, freshwater invertebrates)
plus boxes for notes, date, cross-reference to daybook/correspondence, where a brief record of the individual's recording history is kept. Details of both cards are available from the NFBR Newsletter Editor.

Help Please

As biological recording increasingly penetrates urban areas with a number of local Nature Conservation Trusts progressing with surveys of urban sites, the need for a "satisfactory" urban habitat classification system has been highlighted. Gwent Trust for Nature Conservation have adopted their own system and request an exchange of information with others facing the same problem. Any offers?

Contact: Gwent Trust for Nature Conservation, Shire Hall, Monmouth, Gwent NP5 3DY.

Money and People

In August 1985, Wiltshire Biological Records Centre caught up with the handful of local records centres boasting full time staff dedicated (who isn't?) to records centre work by appointing Claire Appleby on a five year contract. Claire is funded by the County Council, County Trust and Wiltshire Arch. & Nat. Hist. Soc., and is charged with producing a fully computerized centre. She has just prepared a detailed package to tempt industrial sponsorship for the necessary equipment. Wish her luck!

August was the month for change with Denise Palmer starting as Keeper of Records at Dorset BRC after Myra Scott had headed north-east to Suffolk. Denise reports that DERC receives some income from desk studies, while West Yorkshire Ecological Advisory and Information Service has negotiated a contract to survey West Yorkshire open-water habitats for the NCC. West Yorkshire and Dorset have got money surveying for others; can we follow their example?

Welcome to the Somerset Trust for Nature Conservation who have just this month initiated an MSC backed records centre for the county. Send all those Somerset records you've been saving to John Wilkins, STNC BRC c/o NCC, Roughton, Bishops Hull, Taunton, Somerset.

A Graphic Revolution

50% of MSC schemes reported to the newsletter contain artworkers/designers who are beaver away producing inspirational guides, educational material and recording booklets. From just the limited samples of booklets received there seems great scope for sharing the achievements so far to avoid duplicated effort. The following list is not comprehensive and should stimulate you into submitting your own publications for glorification in the next newsletter.

SAE to relevant organizations with any request for copies, acknowledgement of ideas, copies and permission sought for use of artwork.

How about a butterfly survey?

City Butterfly Survey 1985

A4 folding, 21-species guide and recording slip. Available from City Wildlife Project, 31 London Road, Leicester.

Putting Shropshire's Butterflies on the Map

A gatefolding A4 leaflet details a five-species survey. Available from SBRC, c/o The Museum, Old Street, Ludlow.

From BRERC are

The Common Butterfly Survey

A folding A4 leaflet and recording slip for seven species. Available from BRERC, City of Bristol Museum, Queens Road, Bristol BS8 1RL.

Day-flying Moths

A4 gatefolder, identification guide.

Guide to the Identification of the Commonest Ferns of Avon - A4 booklet.

Flora identification guides for Calystegia sepium (L.) R. Br subspecies. Agrostis canina and Agrostis vinealis. Subspecies of Arenaria serpyllifolia agg and Arctium minus Bernh.

From DERC c/o Dorset County Museum, High West Street, Dorchester.

Deer of Dorset

A4 gatefolding identification guide to 5 species.

Small Mammals

A4 gatefolding identification guide to 11 species.

Oak leaf Galls

A3 folding identification guide to 16 gall types.

Soon to follow are Ladybirds and Bats.

From Hampshire & Isle of Wight Naturalists' Trust 8 Market Place, Romsey,
Hants SO5 8NB.

Reptiles and Amphibians of Hampshire and the Isle of Wight

A5 booklet, beautiful illustrations. Price not available.

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