

**NATIONAL FEDERATION
FOR
BIOLOGICAL RECORDING**

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***Revisions since the AGM. Please address website enquiries to Les Hill, the new Website Manager.**

NATIONAL FEDERATION FOR BIOLOGICAL RECORDING

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Editorial

Those of you who came to the AGM will already know that I have agreed to extend my term as Newsletter Editor to allow Adam Rowe to take up the challenge of Vice-Chairman. As usual I am indebted to everyone who has taken time to send in articles. I have tried to include as many as possible, sandwiched between the report from the conference and the AGM papers. It is particularly interesting to hear what is happening in Ireland, and to hear more about the Dragonfly Society's new project.

Articles for future newsletters are very welcome, particularly new projects and the results from ongoing recording. The deadline for the next newsletter will be **31st January 2009**.

Carolyn Steele

Cover photograph: **Banded Demoiselle (*Calopteryx splendens*)** ©Darren Bradley 2006

Recording and Data Networks: the NFBR Conference, Harrogate, 13-14 June 2008.

**Trevor James, Conference Convenor
Chairman: NFBR**

It seems a long time since the NFBR Conference and AGM at Harrogate.

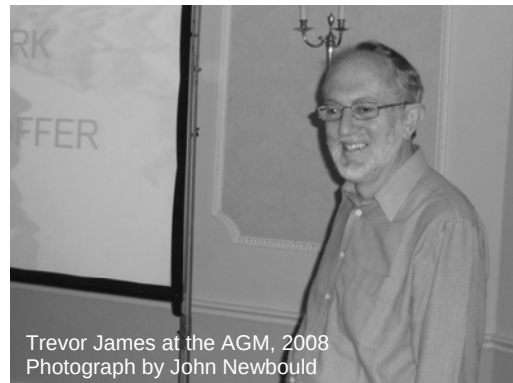
We had originally been planning this meeting as a two day affair to enable a wider picture of biological recording, taking in the European, if not a world-wide, view with the possibility of the second day seeing the establishment of an international organisation to further the operation of *Recorder*. But this was not to be. First, our European friends backed off the idea and, secondly, our own Chairman at the time, Charles Copp, was struck down with the latest of his many health problems, which meant he was not able to take the major role in the Conference that was originally intended. As a result, the advertised billing changed a bit!

Another issue had been the date. Slap in the middle of the field season, quite a few people, notably our Secretary, had to be elsewhere! Nevertheless, we eventually had a far better turn-out than was anticipated, and our loss on the event was nowhere near as bad as it might have been, partly thanks to John Newbould's excellent administration.

The revised programme had me as the Chairman on the first day, as well as leading with the initial contribution: *"Where next with biological recording?"*

I chose this topic partly because it was obvious for a "forward look", but also because I genuinely believe we are at a bit of a cross-roads with biological recording. Well, not so much a cross-roads as a multi-path junction! So my theme was, to start with, a (very) brief overview of where we had come from – cottage industry to big(ish) business; then a quick look at recent developments, such as the rapid improvements recently in databases, the advent of the NBN, and the development of electronic data capture etc. I then looked at some of the trends and issues. The trend, for example, for recording to "fragment" – as

organisations, through necessity, have focused ever more closely on narrower and narrower fields, using mammal recording as an example.



Trevor James at the AGM, 2008
Photograph by John Newbould

The key point of what I was trying to say, though, was that, now that "recording" has become a recognised "industry", it is beginning to get real, ongoing support from high places, but this support comes with strings attached. More is expected of us, and to a higher standard, than ever before. The result is that there are signs of severe strain in the volunteer networks which support it all. There are also the problems of different needs for different users; coupled with the fact that, with things like global climate change and pressures on financial resources, the future for recording is, to say the least, rather uncertain. The only thing we can be sure of, though, is that humankind has a great need for high quality, detailed and objective information on a grand scale about its environment on an ongoing basis.

The second contribution was by Simon Pickles of the Yorkshire & Humber Environmental Data Network, about which Simon gave a presentation on its conception and development. As Simon indicated, this was not so much a "plan" as a "development", based on pragmatism – or, the term he used – serendipity! Persuading all the potential sponsoring partners to take part has been just one of the "issues". Diverse ways of collecting and storing data across Yorkshire are a particular problem, and the will to co-operate across such a large area was also not always immediately apparent. However, after a lot of cajoling, some lucky chances with funding from Yorkshire Forward, and the arrival of someone with the computer know-how of Dan Jones, the system is beginning to

take shape. It is being designed as a “mini-NBN”, in the sense that individual data contributors feed remotely into the central “pot”, and the Internet is used as a mechanism of finding data and making information about them available in one place. As their development website says: “Data centres are key to meeting the needs of the various legislative frameworks which are being developed for environmental data collection and dissemination. The Humber environmental data centre should in time become part of a national framework of local data centres feeding into regional hubs which in turn feed into the national reporting mechanism.”

The third morning presentation was along somewhat similar lines, in that it was an update by Adam Rowe of SEWBRc (South-east Wales Biodiversity Records Centre) about the very recent inauguration of the Wales Environmental Information Forum. For a number of years, the Countryside Council for Wales has been promoting the development of an all-Wales network of local records centres. The network has recently been completed, and the formation of WEIF was the final stage. A seminar to explore next steps was held at Cardiff in March, and Adam reported on some of its discussions. Some of these included: the flow of data between and in collaboration with national recording schemes; the need to identify data gaps and work to fill them; sharing best practice; and the practical use of the NBN Gateway. From the final summing up, it would seem that everyone has slowly woken up to the issue of “data flow” – where do records go? – to the local level or to the national scheme – or both, and does it matter? The plans in Wales, though, are initially to consolidate the records centres, and to make use of the NBN Gateway as a means of both bringing together data, and to showcase their wares. However, at the local level, they have already developed sophisticated systems of information provision using ArcIMS software to provide web-based delivery of their own data to local authority sponsors.

After lunch on the Friday, we had originally intended there to be a presentation on development of web-recording by Charles Copp, but with his absence, we were very pleased to get Steve Wilkinson of JNCC to come and talk about *Improving biodiversity*

data collection across the UK, rather than the ‘New developments in Recorder 6’ that the revised programme had given him! He started by highlighting two core issues: data flows and the efficiency or otherwise of the recording system, and data quality. He then looked at what ‘tools’ were available, or could be, to deal with these. With data flows, the problem is the familiar ‘multiple route’ one for any particular observation. There is no quick and easy solution, but improved systems of handling data within e.g. Recorder 6 are ensuring that changes to records are tracked. The new release (version 6.13.2, in June 2008) has a range of features aimed at helping in this area, such as extra validation facilities, and enhanced reporting. He also mentioned plans for on-line data capture. While there are no plans to develop a full on-line version of Recorder, there are plans to develop an ‘Open Source’ data capture facility. As for data quality, this remains a major issue. A way forward is to document what checks have actually been carried out on a particular dataset. There are also opportunities to develop semi-automated systems, such as checking taxonomic identifications, and using spatial checks to validate data etc. He rounded up by asking for feedback from NFBR members on these issues, to which one response was that availability of standard data validation and verification tools was more immediately important than on-line recording facilities.

The debate that followed Steve’s contribution showed that it and the earlier talks had touched on central issues of concern to many at the meeting. Data quality and the potential overload of the recording network were debated. It was emphasised that it is essential for the recording community to work closely with national societies to solve these issues. Expert systems could only go so far. Steve considered that local records centres, in many cases, could be a focus for data collation and validation, and direct liaison with relevant national societies. However, this does not currently fit well with recently developed projects, such as the national moth recording scheme. Therefore agreements need to be worked up, and synergies created between vice-county recorders working with societies and local records centres.

Our final session on the Friday afternoon was a bit different. Rebecca Ellis and Claire Waterton of Lancaster University, both social scientists rather than natural scientists, have been involved over the last year or so in a project to evaluate perceptions of different data management systems in the world of biological recording, and especially focusing on the conceptual foundations of the *Recorder* and the *MapMate* systems, as well as looking at the way these relate to the NBN idea. Their “talk”: *The social and political lives of biodiversity software* was a summary of this, and questions that arose from it. Much of this was probably a bit “foreign” to many of us at the Conference, as it was more to do with human expectations and reactions to “systems” than it was to the nuts and bolts of actual recording, which was what we had previously been engrossed with. As such, perhaps the discussions that Rebecca and Claire wanted to stimulate were not as forthcoming as they had hoped. Essentially, their thesis has been that whereas *MapMate* was developed as a “bottom-up” approach to recording, being apparently “led” by practitioners, *Recorder* and especially the NBN idea have come from a more “top down” approach, based on a concept that has been centrally driven. The result has been an ‘us and them’ problem, with people having ‘stubborn allegiances’ to one or other. Many of those present did not entirely agree with this, as it was pointed out that *Recorder* was built on experience derived from very much a grass-roots understanding of what biological records actually involve. Also, while the NBN Gateway may be a centrally-supported facility, its very “democracy” of operation has meant that much time and effort has had to be spent getting all potential participants to understand what it was about, and how it operates. Rebecca and Claire’s thesis for us all to discuss was: “Our ideas of nature shape databases and data structures, and these data technologies also shape our understanding of nature. What issues arise for the goal of protection of biodiversity? Or, for you, are other goals regarding nature important?” I am not sure we really addressed this effectively. Nevertheless, exposure of hard-nosed biological recorders to the soft underbelly of social science thinking was an interesting exercise, and got people talking, if nothing else!

After a night of socialising, at least a hard core of the delegates remained into Saturday morning to take a look at the two revised topics that remained on the table. There was a necessary change to the planned workshops and we were very thankful that Dan Jones and Simon Pickles took the lead. First, Dan gave us all a more technical overview of the Yorkshire & Humber use of on-line web-services.



Dan Jones talking on YHEDN
© John Newbould (2008)

He showed how their system was using NBN web-services to deliver site reports, alongside BAP listings and BARS site reporting. Outputs from queries are being tailored to users’ needs. For on-line recording, users enter data into a ‘quarantine’ My SQL database and use Google Maps to locate records or enter data through *Recorder* style ‘rucksack’ checklists. Photos can also be submitted. Incoming data are to be checked by local experts, under agreements being put in place. The Network will ultimately be making available to partners a ‘toolkit’ of web-services to enable them to participate in the system.



Delegates investigating web services
© John Newbould (2008)

For the rest of the morning, we split the discussions into two – hands-on practice with the nuts and bolts of the Yorkshire & Humber

system was led by Dan, demonstrating its use of web-technology to produce reports from different sources, and the prototype on-line recording system. The other session, led by Simon, was a broader discussion on the exchange of data between LRCs and the NBN, and what LRCs might expect from the NBN in future. It was perhaps a new concept to some that the NBN is in fact in part the LRCs anyway – and that all those that contribute data are collectively the NBN. Discussions were had concerning the expectations of local partners about the supply of data through the NBN, and the need for formal partnership agreements to be set up. Slowly these things are coming together through regional LRC networks, such as the Yorkshire system, although with many regions, there is no immediate likelihood of being able to follow suit just yet.

The final round-up session came away with a few essential points:

- The need to sort out regional LRC networks to enable them to make use of the sort of system that Yorkshire & Humber are pioneering, together with the opportunities offered by the NBN Gateway.
- The need to address the serious technical deficit, both in technology and staff know-how in LRCs generally.
- The need for greater support from those providing funding, and a recognition by them of what the real needs are.
- The provision of more guidance on technical implementation of much that had been demonstrated.

In all, it was a very lively and enlivening debate over two days, and although numbers attending were not great, those that did attend considered that the effort had been well worthwhile.

FIELD VISIT TO KETTLEWELL, NORTH YORKSHIRE

John Newbould

I was asked, as an experiment, to arrange a field visit on the Sunday after the conference. For a variety of reasons, the 2008 conference was difficult to arrange and the final blow was a tanker drivers' strike by the Shell distributor. Sally Rankin and I made the journey to show her some of the many delights of the National Trust's Wharfedale Valley property. That is until 1.00pm whereupon heavy rain flew down the valley and we returned to the car soaked.



We did see many of the delights with Common Butterwort and Lesser Marsh Club-moss on a tufa spring. Bird's-eye Primrose was flourishing in the CG9 *Sesleria albicans*-*Galium sternerii* grasslands, which are confined to the Yorkshire Dales and the adjacent Lake District National Park. The lower slopes were excellent Lowland hay-meadows with a number dominated by Pignut and Meadow Buttercup. Climbing south-westwards to Gate Close Scar, we found a small area of Limestone Pavement barely the size of a cricket pitch, but with all the features of the woodland plants hidden in the crevices. I was also able to find Brittle Bladder Fern and Mountain Fern on the upper rocks of the scar. Lastly as it started to rain, we discovered a patch of Melancholy Thistle behind a wall. A day in the Yorkshire Dales without the evocative call of Curlew and Oystercatchers would have been a disappointment. We were not let down.

Comment

Systematic and taxonomy: Follow-up.

Paul Harding

The House of Lords seems to make a habit of reviewing the state of systematics and taxonomy in the UK. The latest report of the HoL Science and Technology Committee, *Systematic and taxonomy: Follow-up*, was published on 13th August 2008. The same Committee published their reports *Systematic Biology Research* in 1992, and *What on Earth? The Threat to the Science Underpinning Conservation* in 2002. Among other initiatives, the 1992 report had led to the establishment of the UK Systematics Forum, but this was “wound down” in 2001.

As part of this latest review, oral and written evidence was received by the Committee from a wide range of organisations and individuals. Evidence came from the great and the good and from what one might call “others”. NFBR, BRISC, NatSCA, East Midlands LRCs, YNU and several local and national societies submitted independent written evidence, as did NFBR members Bill Ely and Adrian Norris. Sadly, only one local museum and one wildlife trust thought fit to respond to the Committee’s open invitation to provide evidence – shame on the rest!

In the Committee’s report all forms of evidence are included in full, with a record of the dialogues between those giving oral evidence and the members of the Committee. Clearly, the impact on the Committee of those giving oral evidence will have been greater than those who submitted written evidence. However, it was interesting to see that a key issue raised in the NFBR’s evidence was put by the Committee to representatives of NBN, BRC and JNCC. Baroness Walmsley and Lord Krebs tried to get a meaningful response from these representatives regarding the sectoral separation of professional taxonomists and amateurs in the field. Most of the organisational representatives that gave oral evidence showed more interest in demonstrating how good their respective organisations were, rather than addressing the

inherent and increasing weaknesses of systematics and taxonomy in the UK.

The House of Lords Science and Technology Committee seems to have seen through much of the organisational hyperbole. The headline of their press release captures the central message from the Committee – “Absence of government leadership is damaging the health of systematics and taxonomy in the UK”. NERC, DEFRA, DIUS and DCMS were all singled-out for criticism – NERC for sending out mixed messages about funding and the three Departments for lack of awareness of concerns about the future of the science (and its relevance to their responsibilities).

What happens next? Good question! The timing of the publication of the Report (mid August, with Parliament on its hols for the next 2 months, and at the height of Olympics fever) may be coincidental, but perhaps a good time to bury bad news. The Committee recommended that DIUS should take on the lead role in ensuring that systematics biology is adequately funded and promoted in the future. That might address the funding for research, but other Departments needs to take action to ensure that local taxonomic resources, especially in local museums, are safeguarded and even promoted, and that engagement with systematics and taxonomy is restored in our educational systems at all levels, from primary schools to universities.

House of Lords Science and Technology Committee. 2008. *Systematic and taxonomy: Follow-up*. 5th Report of Session 2007-08. (HL Paper 162). August 2008. London: HMSO. ISBN 978 0 10 401349 6. Also online at www.parliament.uk/hlscience.

The National Biodiversity Data Centre – a new component of Ireland’s biodiversity infrastructure

Dr. Liam Lysaght, Director

Ireland, along with its EU partners, agreed in 2001 to halt the decline in biodiversity by 2010. Yet at the time Ireland had not the capacity to describe the biodiversity resources of the country as it had no centralised body for the collation of biodiversity information. The publication of the first National Biodiversity Plan in 2002 recognised this need, and included an action ‘*to put in place a national biological data management system to be coordinated by a National Biological Recording Centre*’ (Action 42). In implementation of this action, the National Biodiversity Data Centre was established under the auspices of the independent statutory body, the Heritage Council, in January 2006. The Data Centre’s remit includes the terrestrial, freshwater and marine environment out to the EEZ.

The Data Centre is established as an independent entity, governed by a Management Board that reports to the Heritage Council. The Board is Chaired by Prof Liam Downey and comprises Dr. Ciaran O’Keeffe, Mr. Michael Starrett, Dr. Peter Wyse Jackson, Dr. Venie Martin, Dr. Simon Berrow, Dr. Howard Platt, Mr. Nigel Monaghan and Mr. Larry Stapleton. The Data Centre currently has a core staff of five, the Director Dr. Liam Lysaght, two Ecologists Dr. Úna Fitzpatrick and Dr. Eugenie Regan, the Office Manager Maria Walsh and the Data Manager Barry O’Neill. The core staff are supported by 4 Research Officers, employed on shorter term contracts.

From very early on there was a realisation that if the Data Centre was to be successful, it needed to move beyond serving merely as a repository for biodiversity information to influencing the full cycle of biodiversity data capture, management and presentation; from improving training and raising standards through to developing tools to make data more widely available and in an appropriate

format for data users. As a consequence the Data Centre has identified six strategic objectives to guide its work over the first five years of operation.

These are:

- To serve as a national repository for biological data, and make good quality and reliable data on Ireland’s biological diversity freely and universally available via the internet;
- To implement a programme of biological recording initiatives and biodiversity research, supported by a network of recorders and researchers, to improve our knowledge of Ireland biological diversity;
- To assist the establishment of a series of biological baselines and monitoring programmes to measure change to Ireland’s biological diversity;
- To facilitate and promote the use of biodiversity data to inform policy and decision-making in Ireland and the European Union;
- To promote training and professional development of the biological recording community in Ireland, and raise standards of data collection, management and presentation;
- To highlight the importance of conservation of Ireland’s biological diversity for the benefit of society.

The objectives are very wide ranging, and ambitious, but they clearly set out the strategic direction the Data Centre hopes to take. Central to these objectives is the understanding that the collection of biodiversity data is not an end in itself, but rather is the solid foundation upon which to assess and influence how society impacts on the natural environment.

The Data Centre has been working hard in the establishment phase over the last 18 months or so. We are now beginning to see the fruits of our efforts as the Data Centre’s website was launched at the end of August

<http://www.biodiversityireland.ie/>. The

website also includes three project specific sub-sites dealing with the national invasive species database <http://invasivespecies.biodiversityireland.ie/>, the national vegetation database <http://nationalvegetationdatabase.biodiversityireland.ie/> and the flora of County Waterford <http://floraofcountywaterford.biodiversityireland.ie/>. Other sub-sites on Water Beetles of Ireland, the National Butterfly Monitoring Scheme and Freshwater Fish of Lakes are due to go live over the coming months.



The priority for the Data Centre in the short term is the establishment of consolidated national databases for different groups, managed by the recognised experts, and making the data available through the Data Centre's web site and mapping system. It means the Data Centre may not have a huge range of data in the short and medium term, but that the data sets that will be available through the Data Centre should be comprehensive for the particular groups. This approach brings added value to the work as it facilitates Red

List assessments for the different groups, a process the Data Centre is promoting in collaboration with National Parks and Wildlife Service and the key relevant experts.



One of the key elements of the work programme of the Data Centre is the development of a National Biodiversity Mapping System for the display of biodiversity data. The first version of this mapping system is demonstrated in the Flora of County Waterford website, a site developed in collaboration with Paul Green, County Recorder for the BSBI. The web flora, which enables dynamic maps to be generated of the county flora at different levels of resolution, is the first of its kind in Britain or Ireland. The Data Centre has also undertaken some analysis of the dataset and has produced a County Rare Plant Register and identified Important Plant Areas, two firsts for Ireland, but done by the Data Centre just to demonstrate the value of making data available for display on the mapping system.

The establishment of the National Biodiversity Data Centre was long overdue, and now provides a focus for biological recording in the Republic of Ireland. Its establishment also has implications for British recorders and recording initiatives, as there is a long tradition of presenting data at a Britain and Ireland scale. The Data Centre recognises the very significant contribution that British-based recorders have made, and continue to make, in documenting Irish biodiversity. The Data Centre looks forward to building and strengthening the links that exist between Britain and Ireland and will work to ensure that its existence complements rather than complicates the current situation in relation to biological recording in Britain and Ireland. The Data Centre already has a close working

relationship with CEDaR in Northern Ireland, and there is agreement that data would be presented on an All-Ireland basis. Similarly the Data Centre has already benefitted significantly from the support of the National Biodiversity Network, the Biological Records Centre and the Natural History Museum, London, in the development of its data management and mapping systems. We look forward to work with, and establishing meaningful working relations with, National Federation for Biological Recording and its members in working toward a common purpose.

British Dragonfly Society - Dragonflies in Focus Project

Steve Prentice, Dragonflies in Focus Officer, British Dragonfly Society

Dragonflies are the acrobats of the insect world and with their stunning colours are a true sign of summer. They are skilful hunters with multifaceted eyes and the powerful wings of the larger species enable them to fly at up to 36km/h. The species we see today are almost identical to their ancestors which flew over 300 million years ago. These beautiful beasts are threatened by habitat destruction and climate change, which is why the British Dragonfly Society has recently launched the Dragonflies in Focus Project. The launch was held at the Natural History Museum and was fronted by TV wildlife expert Chris Packham.



Black-tailed Skimmer © Darren Bradley 2006

The five-year project includes the production of a new atlas which will give a snapshot of the current locations of Britain's dragonflies and also to produce a sustainable system of volunteer dragonfly recording. Recorders are needed this year, next year, through the lifetime of the atlas project and beyond. To achieve this the BDS needs to use its close links with the biological recording community and as a major contributor to the National Biodiversity Network is committed to making data available for all. The recording side of the BDS is the Dragonfly Recording Network (DRN) which has data exchange agreements with many Local Record Centres. This data exchange is a

two way street with records received directly from the DRN's group of Vice-County Recorders being given to the LRC and the DRN benefiting from records collected on behalf of the LRC. A fine example of a win-win situation with the LRCs being able to provide better quality data to their local customers and the BDS able to produce a national picture for the atlas.

Habitat destruction and the effects of climate change are threatening the survival of a third of Britain's dragonfly species. Data collected recently shows 36 per cent of the 39 dragonfly species are in decline. The Dragonflies in Focus nationwide survey is planned to find out exactly where our dragonflies are living and how well they are coping with the threats they face. Changes in agriculture mean there are fewer ponds which were used to water livestock. It's not all doom and gloom as when the last atlas was published in 1996, the Small Red-eyed Damselfly *Erythromma viridulum* had never been seen in the UK. It now has breeding colonies from Devon to Norfolk and has been seen as far away as Yorkshire. The new atlas will document how the distribution of species is expanding or contracting. Many of the endangered species are found in Scotland and it appears the majority of species are on the move. Norman Moore former Chief Advisory Officer, Nature Conservancy Council (NCC) and well known dragonfly expert said: "They have survived the extinction of the dinosaurs and several ice ages...but can dragonflies survive the increasing pressures imposed by mankind?"

Understanding where and how quickly our dragonflies are moving will help plan for the future, with particular regard to the way in which conservation is carried out – it will be very important to make sure wildlife is provided with the best opportunities to react to change. Dragonflies are temperature-sensitive, making them useful for climate change impact studies. The information collected will be used to make conservation decisions, to monitor endangered species and to help them recover. Records of breeding

activity are of particular importance for identifying key sites for dragonflies. Already experts know dragonflies are increasingly heading to Britain from Europe and even North America but new species of fish introduced into ponds and lakes are threatening the future of Britain's dragonflies. The non-native fish feed on the dragonfly larvae, which spend up to a year or more developing under water.



Migrant Hawker © Darren Bradley 2006

Interested nature-lovers can get involved and help by recording the activity of dragonflies in their neighbourhoods. Biological recorders will know that there are five key pieces of information to make a good dragonfly record. These are the species observed, the site location, Ordnance Survey grid reference, the date and the recorder's name/contact details. Additionally the stage (adult, larvae, exuvia etc) and abundance are extremely useful. Other information includes the type of habitat, the weather, the altitude of the site and breeding behavior. Details of how to send in records are on the BDS website. All the data collected will be used as a baseline to monitor changes, which may be due to pollution, climate change, habitat loss or competition. Records should be sent to the local Vice-County Recorder whose details are on the BDS website at www.dragonflysoc.org.uk.

The British Dragonfly Society was founded in 1983, celebrating its 25th anniversary this year and is a Registered Charity (number 800196). Its aim is to encourage and support the study and conservation of dragonflies in the UK and further afield. The BDS hold field meetings with

experienced leaders all over the country, and other training events to introduce dragonflies to the general public. Details of meetings and events can be found on the BDS website.

The completion of a new national atlas over a period of five years is an enormous undertaking; even recording 10km squares means there are 4229 to cover in Great Britain alone. There must be an untapped source of records in LRCs around the country therefore the BDS would like to make contact with all records centres who do not have a data exchange agreement and look forward to sharing and using the records of this stunning insect.

PUBLICATIONS REVIEW

British Lonchaeidae (Diptera, Cyclorrhapha, Acalyptratae)

Iain MacGowan & Graham Rotheray, 2008. Handbooks for the Identification of British Insects. Volume 10. Part 15. 142pp. Published for the Royal Entomological Society by the Field Studies Council, Shrewsbury. Softback. £21.00. ISBN 978 090154 688 3.

Lance-flies constitute a remarkably compact group. They are easily recognised by their shiny black or blue-black colour, shape of head, single pair of orbital bristles placed high up towards the vertex, strong thoracic bristles and trypetid-like ovipositor. The authors describe 46 species from the British Isles, a significant increase over the 28 listed by J E Collin in his revision of the family published in 1953 (price 6s.0d) and a measure of the resurgence of interest in Diptera today.

The introductory section covers morphology of the larvae, puparia and adults, adult and larval ecology, parasitism, a checklist of species and relationships with the European and world fauna. There is an informative section on collecting techniques and a section devoted to lonchaeids as indicator species. Although the group has diverse ecological requirements, *Lonchaea* species can help in ecological assessments of woodland quality and

characterising differing woodland types. Many are saproxylic with larvae found in fallen timber of a range of tree species. Some species are more demanding and restricted by host and geographical range. For example, two *Lonchaea* species are associated with fungi infecting decaying birch in woodlands of the Scottish Highlands, together with a species primarily associated with Scots pine and another with aspen trees. A study of the lonchaeid species for a given site should provide evidence for the amount and variety of 'timber' present in its decaying and dead wood phases. More species should be expected in woods where there is a healthy turn-over of trees.

The main section (88pp) consists of taxonomic keys. There is an accompanying glossary of technical terms and 12 line drawings showing the important diagnostic features of adult, puparial and larval morphology. The first key, to genera of European Lonchaeidae, is 7 couplets long. For each genus the authors list how many species are known from Europe and whether the genus is known to occur in Britain, thereby allowing users to identify potentially new species to the British Isles. The inclusion of these extra genera at this stage is very helpful and obviates the need for users to consult mainland European texts which may be difficult to locate. Each couplet of the key is accompanied by at least two figures in the now familiar Handbook style, so making the key easy to use.

Keys to individual genera follow, the longest, by far, being to *Lonchaea*. Species can be checked further by reference to individual species accounts and additional figures. Distributional records are given by county. The last section of the Handbook consists largely of colour plates illustrating typical breeding sites and habitats, adult flies and close-ups of larval posterior spiracles. The Handbook concludes with a set of distribution maps.

The RES Handbook contains considerably more information on lonchaeids, particularly on their biology, than was presented in the previous reference work and the authors are to be congratulated. The publication should act as a catalyst to entomologists to study this group in more detail. By the time this review is

printed, the list of British Diptera should have passed the 7000 species mark, thereby establishing this Order as the most biodiverse in our islands. The good news is that there are more Handbooks in the pipeline.

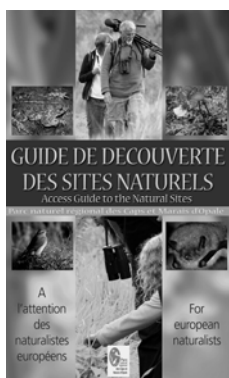
Coleopterists will be glad to learn that Mike Morris's eagerly-awaited True Weevils Part 2 has gone to press.

John Badmin

Guide de decouverte des Sites Naturels (Access guide to the Natural Sites). Parc Naturel Regional des Caps et Marais d'Opale.

Edited by Thierry Mougey *et al.* translated by G. Marchais, B. Bullen & D. Tuson. (PNR Caps et Marais d'Opale, 2006). 80pp.

This recently translated booklet is a guide to the main wildlife conservation areas in the Calais – Boulogne region of France just 20 miles east of Kent. The new Parc was created in March 2000 by merging the Parc de



Boulonnais and Parc d'Audomarois covering an area of more than 130,000 ha and a population of 186,000 inhabitants.

The Conservatory ('Wildlife Trust') for the region was formed about 15 years ago with the aim of protecting local biodiversity by (i) improving awareness in the environment of the region by undertaking biological and ecological surveys, (ii) protecting valuable natural sites by purchase or cooperation with site owners, (iii) developing and implementing appropriate management plans and (iv) raising the public's awareness of their natural heritage (as most sites are freely open to the public). The location of each of the 42 wildlife sites in the region is shown on an introductory map; the site number corresponding to the page number describing the site in more detail. Site order is by general habitat type: shoreline environments (sands, dunes, shingle, saltmarsh, cliffs); forests, chalk downland, wetlands and a single heathland site, the Plateau d'Helfaut.

For each site, there is at least one detailed habitat and footpath map and several colour photographs showing the lie of the land. These are particularly well chosen and depict the areas realistically (based on my somewhat limited knowledge of the region). Biological data are summarised in a neat way. The number of taxa for each major grouping is shown pictorially as a banner headline across the page: there are symbols for flowering plants, fungi, mammals, birds, amphibians, reptiles and insects and others that includes minor groups such as spiders, fish and molluscs. Underneath the species number for each taxa grouping, there is a dial indicating how well the site has been studied. For example, at the Dunes et forêt d'Ecault, 458 flowering plant species have been recorded and the dial indicates that this probably represents ca. 90% of the likely flora. The full list for insects is not given (though Lepidoptera - 208, Coleoptera - 109 species are listed) and the dial optimistically points to ca. 50% coverage of the expected total. More details of the important features of each site are described in the accompanying text. This includes useful information such as times when hunting and shooting are likely to take place.

This main section of the book finishes with a couple of pages headed 'What to do with your records?' Visitors are encouraged to submit their field records to a number of local and national recording societies so that the data are not lost and in some cases to submit them via downloadable recording forms. This seems an eminently sensible approach and should ensure that site records are kept up to date and highlight those sites that are under-recorded. I note that two sites apparently have no insect records despite comprehensive lists of flowering plants; so these should be visited by entomologists.

The booklet concludes with a pull-out section of colour photographs of notable animal and plant species found in the region and a key to the maps and taxa groups. It was here that I finally discovered what I thought was the symbol for evergreen trees was in fact the symbol for mosses and lichens, though I had an inkling this might be the case, simply by omission.

Members of the Kent Field Club and other local recording organisations in conjunction with the Kent & Medway Biological Records Centre have made very productive visits to this region to assist our French counterparts in biological recording, as part of an EU-funded Project. The booklet is available free from the Parc Naturel Regional des Caps et Marais d'Opale (e-mail: info@parc-opale.fr, web: www.parc-opale.fr) and the Kent & Medway Biological Records Centre (e-mail: info@kmbrc.org.uk, web: www.kmbrc.org.uk). Both Thierry Mougey and Guillaume Marchais (among many) are to be congratulated on producing a very informative booklet about the region's wildlife sites. It is amazing to realise that former Kent rarities such as the Glanville Fritillary butterfly, last recorded in the county in 1863, occur in numbers just a few miles away over in France.

John Badmin

The moths of Hertfordshire: the history, status, distribution and phenology of the micro and macro-lepidoptera of a south-eastern English county

by Colin W. Plant. Hertfordshire Natural History Society, 2008. Large Hardback (A4). 542pp. £45 (postage extra) (from 29 Mandeville Rise, Welwyn Garden City, Herts., AL8 7JU).

This is a significant tome. It covers all 1548 species of Lepidoptera (other than the butterflies) recorded from vice-county 20: Herts since 1710. More specifically, it reports on an intensive survey of the moths carried out by the Hertfordshire Moth Group, under Colin Plant's leadership, between 1995 and 2006.

The book's core is a set of species accounts, with maps of most species alongside them. The species accounts give summary data on: period of records; distribution and status in Herts.; conservation status (with a rather complex set of criteria integrating local and national status); caterpillar food-plants, where known, both within the County and elsewhere; the recorded flight period in Herts.; and the number of records in the database maintained by the author (who is County Recorder for the Hertfordshire Natural History Society). In all, the book summarises 208,846 records (although nowhere in the book is this figure

actually quoted – it has to be calculated from other figures given!), of which 19,519 were made before 1995, giving some idea of the massive recent effort made by the Moth Group.

No such book is complete without its customary introductory chapters. As we might expect, these include sections on Hertfordshire's geography, soils, geology, and a summary of historic and present survey activities. A bit different from the norm are sections specifically on moth habitats, as such, and "introducing moths" for the beginner – although this sort of book might be considered an unlikely starting point for most beginners. The book also enlarges on the Joint Committee for the Conservation of British Insects' "Code of Conduct for Insect Collecting" (although the source of this is not actually quoted). This subject is dealt with robustly by Colin, who makes no bones about the need to collect vouchers for certain species, not relying just on picture books!

One of the most interesting of the introductory chapters is a lengthy and fairly detailed account of the Rothamsted Light Trap surveys over many years, written by Ian Woiwod and Philip Gould of Rothamsted Research. This is a valuable account. It not only gives the history of the Rothamsted studies, including some revealing photos of the trap sites on the Estate over time, but it also summarises the results over the long period of survey, which clearly show the massive decline in many species over quite a long time-scale, not just recently. In fact, despite an annoying gap in the Rothamsted trap records, it is quite clear that we have never got back to the levels of species occurrence which were the norm before the early 1950s.

One of the introductory chapters is a section entitled "How well are Herts moths recorded?" This is an important question in any Atlas, and this brief review is supplemented in an appendix at the end of the book with a section on "An overview of the Herts moth fauna", which analyses in some depth the most and least recorded species, and which moths are of 'conservation significance'. There is also a section which identifies proposed Hertfordshire Biodiversity Action Plan species.

There are also a series of other appendices, covering "How to catch moths", "Moths in folklore and literature", a list of food-plants (which has one or two errors, such as *Chamaenerion* for *Chamerion*), a very comprehensive list of references, and a section on "Some Hertfordshire moth-ers", with brief biographical pieces on key people, past and present. This last section is a very welcome addition to the book, with photos of many of the people listed, giving a welcome human focus in addition to the science. Finally, the book has an index of species, in two separate lists, taxonomic names and vernacular names. This makes using the indices a bit annoying, as these could have been run together alphabetically. It also means there is no index to localities or people mentioned.

The text of the book is also augmented by numerous photographs of species. It is good to see that a fair proportion of these are of species of micro-moths, many of which are not usually found in field guides (although there are now superb websites where images can also be found). As they are photos of living insects, they also show their natural postures, rather than of pinned specimens. While this means that some features are not visible, it does give a very useful idea of their appearance in the field. A number of the pictures have reproduced a bit 'muddy', but in general these are good.

The biggest drawbacks to the book I think are its enormous weight (3.6 kg – more than 8 pounds!), caused by use throughout of heavy duty gloss paper; and the fact that the proof-reading is rather patchy, with numerous typographical errors in places. The content is generally first class, although the section on habitats could have done with use of the 1997 Hertfordshire Habitat Survey data, rather than relying on old, sample assessments of the County's habitats published in 1989. The publication of high quality geological maps is useful, but we have to wonder what the map of soils actually tells us about Hertfordshire's moths.

All these are minor quibbles though. This has to rank as one of the most detailed and exhaustive studies of a County's moths anywhere, and includes much information on

their ecology etc. that makes the book a valuable resource further afield. If you have room for it, and can afford the postage, buy it!

Trevor James

Literature Review: Atlas of the Fleas (Siphonaptera) of Britain and Ireland

by R.S.George (2008) 98pp published by the Biological Records Centre

This is a serious labour of love! Fleas are not the most popular of insect groups, most people assiduously avoid them. However, Bob George has made them his life's work. Ian McLean in his Foreword describes the book as a 'truly inspiring achievement'. As a minor contributor to the scheme, I can appreciate the amount of work Bob has put into this book. This atlas builds on the first edition published in 1974 which only included a series of 10km dot maps - this is much more, including a comprehensive species list, analysis of host preferences, how to collect fleas, concise species accounts and a bibliography of further reading. The book covers 62 species/subspecies of flea and over 200 host species with bank vole (*Clethrionomys glareolus*) host to 27 species of flea. We should really pity one hedgehog (*Erinaceus europaeus*) which was host to over 7,000 fleas, I personally pity the person who counted the 7,000 fleas!

It does have its shortcomings - one person (with a few other helpers) cannot possibly cover the whole of the UK even in 56 years. There is, therefore, an obvious under recording, clearly shown on some of the commoner species where John Mason's work in Shropshire fills almost every square, but the rest of the country is somewhat more sparse. The inference here is that the true distribution is probably much denser and Bob makes comment on this stating the "most important factor in using distribution maps is to understand their limitations".

In association with the new Royal Entomological Society Key by A.P.Whitacker (2007) this makes an ideal pairing for continuing Bob's work and you don't need to be an expert to help the Flea Recording Scheme - specimens can be sent to Bob, together with collection details and this will add to the next edition.

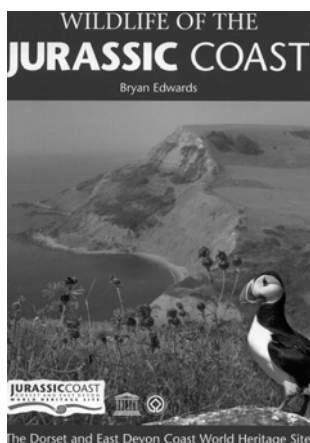
All in all, a fantastic achievement, possibly not a popular coffee table book, but a very interesting and useful reference tome.

Craig Slawson

The Wildlife of the Jurassic Coast

by Bryan Edwards, Dorset Environmental Records Centre, £4.95 – available Coastal Publishing (www.coastalpublishing.co.uk)

If you are visiting the Jurassic Coast World Heritage Site between Exmouth in East Devon and Studland in Dorset then get a copy of this attractive and very reasonably priced little book. I know parts of this coastline quite well and thoroughly enjoyed the 'armchair visit' the book provided.



The book describes the habitats that make up this stretch of coast and makes the link between geology and biodiversity very clear. I was drawn into the habitat

descriptions partly because of the beautiful and plentiful photographs and partly because the pictures and text include small weevils, scaly crickets and seafans as well as the birds and flowers that you expect to see described.

The second half of the book is a practical guide to help people to explore the Jurassic Coast. Details of public transport and where to get tourist information are given and sections of the coastline are described and Ordnance Survey maps reproduced. Last year I went on a boat trip from Exmouth along the Jurassic Coast and I wish I had had this book in my hand!

Philippa Burrell

The Wild Flowers of the Isle of Purbeck, Brownsea and Sandbanks

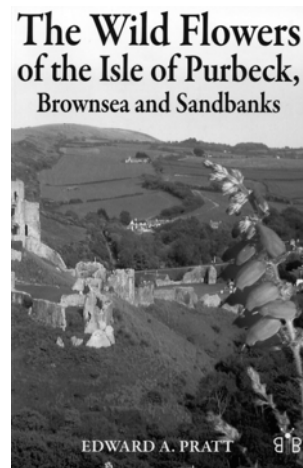
by Edward A Pratt

£18 from Brambleby Books, Luton

(www.bramblebybooks.co.uk)

ISBN-13:978 0 9553928 4 9

Those of our readers who are BSBI members will be familiar with the writings of "Ted" Pratt often outlining unusual morphological differences in plants of Purbeck. Dorset botanists also benefit from his unfailing



patience and courtesy explaining the different taxonomic characters of species and hybrids. This book as well as describing the many varied plants of the area, illustrates the key morphological differences in many. Unusually, for a plant guide, there are many precise directions and even precise grid references e.g. for *Drosera x belezeana* (*D. rotundifolia* x *intermedia*) named by Ted as the Godlingston Sundew as the experts now consider this to be the only location for the true hybrid between round-leaved and intermediate Sundews anywhere in the world. Whilst other Purbeck specialities e.g. Lesser Spider Orchid, are given good directions for locations, more sensitive species such as Bog Orchid are treated with discretion. There is a section on places to visit, which is essential for a visitor, who may wish to investigate the remaining Dorset heathland together with hand drawn maps. There is also a chapter outlining good wildflower walks and the best times to visit.

John Newbould

EVENTS, WORKSHOPS and CONFERENCES

Making Records Count: exploring the many uses of wildlife data 8th NBN Conference

The conference will be held on 21st November at the Natural History Museum. Keynote speaker will be Professor Aubrey Manning, who will be giving the second John Burnett Memorial Lecture (following the inaugural lecture earlier this year).

We are also delighted that Syngenta has kindly offered to provide sponsorship of this year's event. Syngenta is a world-leading agribusiness committed to sustainable agriculture through innovative research and technology.

A booking form can be downloaded www.nbn.org.uk

The closing date for receipt of bookings is **17 October 2008**. Completed booking forms should be sent to the NBN Trust, 3-5 High Pavement, Lace Market, Nottingham, NG1 1HF; c./o. Mrs Mandy Henshall. Tel.: 0115 959 6435.

Royal Entomological Society

Scottish Regional Meeting: Insects in a changing landscape

21st October at Macaulay Institute, Aberdeen. 10 am to 4 pm

Keynote addresses: Dave Goulson (Bumblebee Conservation Trust)

The meeting will be preceded by a wine reception on Monday 20 October 16:00 to 18:00 to which all attendees are invited

Convenors: Craig Macadam (RES Regional Secretary) Email: craig.macadam@bradan-aquasurveys.co.uk

Jenni Stockan (Macaulay Institute). Email: j.stockan@macaulay.ac.uk

Orthopterists' Special Interest Group meeting and supper

19th November at Natural History Museum, London.

2.00pm to 5.30pm followed by Orthopterists' Supper: 5.30 to 8 pm

Main Speaker: Peter Sutton (UK Orthoptera Recording Scheme organiser) – "British Orthoptera, the current state of affairs".

Convenor: Dr. David Robinson (The Open University). Email: D.J.Robinson@open.ac.uk

Northern Ireland Regional Meeting

Viral infections of insects: hosts, vectors and implications for Irish agriculture/public health

19th November at Agri-food and Biosciences Institute, Belfast. 10.30 am to 4pm

Keynote address: Alison Blackwell (University of Edinburgh)

Convenor: Dr. Archie Murchie (Agri-food and Biosciences Institute, Belfast). Tel: 01289 025 5480. Email: archie.murchie@afbini.gov.uk

Insect Pollination Special Interest Group Meeting

3rd December at Rothamsted Research, Harpenden.

Convenor: Professor Jane Memmott (University of Bristol).

Tel: 0117 928 9813. Email: jane.memmott@bris.ac.uk

Find out more about the **Royal Entomological Society** at www.royensoc.co.uk

ALERC Launch
– all Local Records Centre staff and volunteers are invited
to attend this historic event!

The new national Association of Local Environmental Records Centres will hold its inaugural meeting and conference on Friday **28th November** 2008 in Bristol (at the Council House). The conference speakers and workshops will focus on issues that have been identified by LRC practitioners as priorities for action for the Association – training, sharing good practice, working in partnership, setting standards and secure funding for LRCs are some of the topics. You can help to shape the future of ALERC by coming along and taking part. Visit www.tverc.org for further details and a booking form.

NATIONAL FEDERATION FOR BIOLOGICAL RECORDING

Report of Acting Vice-Chairman to AGM, June 2008

This report is being given by me, in place of our Chairman, Charles Copp, who has not been able to attend the AGM owing to recent health problems.

The NFBR has maintained its “watching brief” over ongoing activities related to biological recording across the UK during 2007-8. The NFBR Council has a broad representation from local records centres, the UK BRC, some of the national societies and recording schemes and the National Biodiversity Network Trust, among others, and as such, is in a good position to understand and to contribute to developing thinking and to present an informed, independent opinion where necessary.

The Council has met 4 times since the last AGM.

- It has been involved with submitting evidence to the House of Lords Select Committee on Taxonomy and Systematics, where it emphasised in particular the role of local museums and collections in supporting biological recording, and that these supporting institutions have declined substantially. The submission also emphasised the importance of sustaining recording networks through local records centres and that insufficient support for taxonomic training was being undertaken through formal academic bodies.
- We have attempted to support the continued development of the Association of Local Environmental Records Centres, although the apparent slow progress towards its being formally established has caused us some concern. In relation to this, we were also broadly involved with contributions made to the Natural England sponsored study into the status and capabilities of LRCs, the final report of which appeared in 2007.
- We have contributed, and will continue to contribute, to the ongoing debate about the future development of Recorder 6 database in particular. Charles Copp has been heavily involved with the further implementation of Recorder in Europe in particular, although lack of resources at the UK level have been a concern, as well as lack of progress towards solving some of the data exchange issues which remain with other systems.
- We have continued to maintain our input to development of the NBN through involvement with relevant committees etc. Darwyn Sumner has presented issues concerning the need for further implementation of data standards, especially relating to GIS data. I have contributed

especially to the recently established Data Access Group, which has produced a broad NBN strategy for increasing access to data across the country.

- Various members of Council have been involved in discussions with NBN partners in the forthcoming OPAL Project (Open Air Laboratories) – a Big Lottery funded programme being led by Imperial College, and involving the NBN Trust. Part of this has concerned development of generic on-line recording facilities.
- Finally, several Council members attended the NBN Memorial Lecture and Reception at Oxford in memory of Sir John Burnett, who died shortly after the last NFBR AGM, which he attended. Sir John was the key driving force behind establishing the NBN, and had been a long-standing NFBR member.

Apart from these activities, the NFBR has produced two very well-received Newsletters since the last AGM, thanks to our quietly efficient new Editor, Carolyn Steele, supported by John Newbould.

Our web presence, however, has suffered some problems, owing to Nick Moyes not having been able to carry on his long-standing role as webmaster. We must thank Nick for all he has done to set this website up over the years. We are currently endeavouring to sort the problems out, although Craig Slawson, who has taken this on, is already heavily committed with other websites. If anyone else is willing to help, please let us know.

The future

The NFBR is a think tank, a ginger group, and a meeting place. Its focus is, and always has been, what is needed to enhance and sustain the broad processes of biological recording and the effective use of the resulting data. As such, its interests have always had to be broader than the narrow interests of any one sector. This means we need those who are involved to be able to “think outside the box”, to use the familiar cliché.

NFBR has been pivotal in instigating new operations, such as the NBN. Most recently, ideas for the foundation of ALERC have come from within its ranks. This is its role – sowing seeds that will, we hope, grow into something useful and sustainable.

NFBR could, ultimately, be redundant if it succeeds in getting everything done that needs to be done. But that time has not come yet. ALERC is still not really up and running. The NBN is a fledgling that needs to be watched and supported with ideas (and encouraged to be independent). Local records centre networks across the country are by no means secure. Local museums and natural history collections, never so potentially important as now, need real input and support if they are not to be squandered on the back of current fashion. Climate change and demands for more and more data mean that someone has to think how we are going to do this, and what exactly these recorders are going to need to do with their data. High quality, sustainable recording systems need more thought and investment.

The list is pretty long, and we are the people who need to make sure that the real needs are not forgotten.

But, in order for NFBR to promote these things (usually through more or less willing partners!), it needs concerned people to take part.

Over to you, the membership.

Trevor James Acting Vice-chairman, June 2008

National Federation for Biological Recording

21st Annual General Meeting

Minutes

Held at St George Hotel, Harrogate on Friday 13th June 2008 at 13.15

Present: Acting Vice-Chairman – Trevor James; Treasurer – John Newbould; NFBR Council members – Margaret Haggerty, Paul Harding, Simon Pickles, Adam Rowe, Carolyn Steele; NFBR members – Michael Archer (BWARS, YNU, LNU), Bill Ely (Rotherham BRC), Naomi Hewitt, Monica Jones (CCW), Steve Lowe (Northumberland WT), Adrian Norris (Conch Soc GBI, YNU), Sally Rankin, Steve Roe (Herefordshire BRC), Rich Snelson (LBP), Alison Stewart (DERC).

1. Apologies for absence

Received from: Charles Copp (Chairman) and Philippa Burrell, Cornwall BRC, Richard Fox, Martin Hicks, Colin Howe, Damian McFerran, Patrick Milne-Home, Helen Roy, Mandy Rudd, Craig Slawson, Darywn Sumner, Graham Walley, Geoffrey Wilmore, Steve Whitbread, Simon Wood.

2. Minutes of the 20th Annual General Meeting held on 11th May 2007

The meeting approved the Minutes of the 20th AGM as published in *NFBR Newsletter* 35, without correction *nem. con.* (Proposed John Newbould, Seconded Paul Harding).

3. Revision of the Constitution

The following revision to clause 4 a) of the Constitution was proposed by Council, as explained with the Agenda and at the meeting by the Acting Vice-Chairman:

At the annual general meeting hereinafter mentioned the Federation shall elect a Chairman, a Vice-Chairman, a Secretary, a Treasurer and Membership Secretary, a Newsletter Editor and a Website Manager.

The revision was accepted *nem.con.* (Proposed John Newbould, Seconded Paul Harding).

4. Acting Vice-Chairman's Report for 2007/2008

The Acting Vice-Chairman explained that the Chairman was unwell and deeply regretted that he was unable to attend the AGM for the first time in 21 years. Charles' paper *Thinking aloud* was distributed at the meeting and will be published with the Minutes of the AGM. Trevor James gave a brief verbal summary of his Acting Vice-Chairman's Report, which was distributed at the meeting and will be published with the Minutes of the AGM. The Report was accepted *nem.con.* (Proposed John Newbould, Seconded Paul Harding).

5. Annual Accounts and Treasurer's Report

The Treasurer presented the Annual Accounts for the year ending 31 December 2007 (attached), which had been approved by the Independent Examiner.

The Annual Accounts were proposed from the Chair and were accepted by the meeting *nem. con.* (Proposed Paul Harding, Seconded Adam Rowe). The meeting passed a special vote of thanks to Shirley Bell for continuing to act as the Independent Examiner for many years.

6. Election of Honorary Officers and Council for 2008/2009

The following were nominated by Council to serve as Honorary Officers for the year 2008/2009:

Chairman	Trevor James
Vice-Chairman	Adam Rowe
Secretary	Darwyn Sumner
Treasurer & Membership Secretary	John Newbould
Newsletter Editor	Carolyn Steele
Website Manager	Craig Slawson

There being no other nominations for Honorary Officers their election *en bloc* was proposed by Bill Ely, seconded by Michael Archer, and approved by the meeting *nem. con.*

The following were nominated by Council to serve as Members of Council for the year 2008/2009:

John Badmin
Philippa Burrell
Richard Fox
Margaret Haggerty
Martin Hicks
Simon Pickles
Helen Roy
Mandy Rudd
Steve Whitbread
Simon Wood

There being no other nominations for Members of Council, their election *en bloc* was proposed by Adam Rowe, seconded by Adrian Norris, and approved by the meeting *nem. con.*

Council gave notice that it intended to invite Charles Copp and Paul Harding to be co-opted onto Council, and to continue to invite named representatives of BRISC (Patrick Milne-Home), Ulster Museum/CEDaR (Damian McFerran) and NatSCA (Graham Walley) to be co-opted onto Council. The new Chairman invited any other NFBR members to consider putting themselves forward for co-option to help increase the representation on Council.

7. Any other business

Rich Snelson thanked the outgoing Council for their work on behalf of NFBR during the past year.

The meeting closed at 13.45.

Minutes prepared by **Paul Harding** (16th June 2008)

**NFBR Annual Accounts: Income and Expenditure
for the year ending 31 December 2007**

	Note	2007	2006
Income		£	£
Subscriptions		1,597	1,971
Conference & AGM	1	1,312	7,553
LRC Forum	2	-	55
LRC Database		-	-
Miscellaneous Income		-	-
Bank Interest		176	100
Total Income		3,085	9,679
Expenditure			
Conference	1	791	6,190
LRC Forum	2	-	-
LRC Database		-	-
Administration		-	73
Website Costs		-	141
Newsletter Costs		371	622
Council Meeting Travel Costs		757	386
Contribution to NBN		495	-
Wildlife Link		-	-
Total Expenditure		2,413	7,412
Surplus (loss) of Income over Expenditure		£ 671.39	£ 2,267.00

Balance Sheet at 31 December 2007

Assets			
High Interest Bank a/c		6,818	6,642
Current a/c		2,381	1,886
Sundry Debtors		-	-
		9,199	8,528
Current Liabilities			
Creditors		-	-
Subscriptions in advance		-	-
		-	-
Net Current Assets		9,199	8,528
Represented by			
Capital brought forward		8,528	
Surplus (loss) for the year		671	
		£ 9,199.39	£8,528

Notes:

Conference surplus(loss)	1	521
LRC Forum Surplus	2	-

John Newbould (Treasurer)
S. A. Bell (Independent Examiner)

Approved by Council 15th January 2008

Notes from Local Record Centres and National Schemes and Societies

Gloucestershire Centre for Environmental Records

The Gloucestershire Centre for Environmental Records is located in Church House, a Cotswold stone mediaeval almonry at Standish, just a few miles south of Gloucester. Whilst we don't give out alms any more, we do have over 800,000 biological records and a lot of supporting archive material! The Centre's previous manager, Ian Carle, moved onto fresh woods & pastures new (the Scottish Borders in this case!) last year. In March I took on the role of Development Manager. Biodiversity Information Officer Holly York is still here, and the office remains in the same place, but we are developing the Centre both with an internal redecoration and a major data storage upgrade. For starters, we have a new logo:



... and a new Development Plan that has just been agreed by GCER's Management Committee. Our aim is to improve the database so that we can offer more to centre - with a new website - is the longer term goal. Watch this space - and drop if you are in the area.records themselves as well as to data users. The development of a state-of-the-art record

Linda Moore
Development Manager
Tel. & Fax. +44 117 230 9040
E. gcer@gloucestershirowildlifetrust.co.uk
Website is currently under development.

LINCOLNSHIRE BIODIVERSITY PARTNERSHIP



Lincolnshire Biodiversity Partnership came into existence, taking over from the Biodiversity Action Plan Partnership, when organisations started signing up to the new Partnership Agreement in May 2007. The Partnership was formally launched at the first Annual Conference and Forum meeting on 11th October 2007.

The total number of partner organisations currently stands at 40, including statutory agencies, local authorities, public bodies, local voluntary groups and landowners. The Partnership covers the whole of the historic county of Lincolnshire, from the Humber to the Wash.

We believe that we are the first independent partnership to combine the Biodiversity Action Plan, Local Records Centre and Local Wildlife Sites system into a single resource.

Margaret Haggerty
Biodiversity Services Manager
info@lincsbiodiversity.org.uk

Buglife HQ has moved.

Our new address is:-

First Floor
90 Bridge Street
Peterborough
PE1 1DY



