

# Recording and conservation

## BBS travelogue

Contributions to the Society's travelogue covering the Isle of Wight (v.-c. 10), Milton Keynes (v.-c. 24), Monmouthshire (v.-c. 35), Herefordshire (v.-c. 36), Shropshire (v.-c. 40), Lincolnshire (v.-c. 53 and 54), Leicestershire (v.-c. 55), Cheshire (v.-c. 58) and South Lancashire (v.-c. 59) have now been published on the BBS website. You may find it worthwhile taking the relevant account with you when visiting these districts.

A number of members who pledged contributions from other areas (see *Bulletin* 80: 50) have yet to send in their accounts. The

travelogue will therefore continue to expand its coverage as further contributions are received. Furthermore, existing accounts can be updated to incorporate new discoveries, keep abreast of changes regarding access to sites, etc.

Members who have not indicated that they wish to contribute to the travelogue remain welcome to do so; please correspond with me in the first instance.

*Mark Lawley, 12A Castleview Terrace, Ludlow, SY8 2NG; e-mail: m.lawley@virgin.net.*

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### Regional Recorders

There are a few amendments to the list of Regional Recorders:

- 36: Jonathan Sleath, The Villa, Kingstone, Hereford, HR2 9ET
- 37: Ann Hill, 114 Battenhall Road, Worcester, WR5 2BT
- 75: Paul King, 13 Meadowside Gardens, Rushmere St Andrew, nr Ipswich, Suffolk, IP4 5RD

Lorna Fraser (v.-c. 37) and John Port (v.-c. 36) have retired, and I would like to thank them both sincerely for their services. However, the gaps have quickly been filled, such is the enthusiasm of BBS members, and I welcome the new incumbents.

Paul King, Recorder for v.-c. 75 and 100, would like to bring a matter to the attention of other members concerning local authority boundaries and their relationship with botanical recording

districts. He notes that local authority biological recording centres are organised by local authority areas, which may not coincide with Watsonian vice-counties. For example, Arran, Great Cumbrae and Little Cumbrae are in v.-c. 100 (Clyde Isles) but are administered by North Ayrshire local authority, with offices in v.-c. 75 (Ayrshire).

### A new Recording Secretary for the new year

This is my final contribution as Recording Secretary, as I have stepped aside, and Mark Hill (address inside front cover) has taken over the reins with effect from 1 January 2004. I hope I have made a positive contribution to BBS recording activities during the eight years I've held the post, and I am greatly indebted to all the busy members who have sent in their records and supported the various projects. The Survey of Bryophytes of Arable Land is in full swing, and I hope many of you will become involved, even if it is to do just one field in your patch! When the arable field survey is done and dusted,

I'd like to see a national survey of churchyards, and a national survey of gardens would be very interesting ... However, Mark will be Recording Secretary then, and I'm sure he'd like to hear your views and thoughts. He is well known to most of you, and brings a wealth of experience

and enthusiasm to bryophyte recording. I wish him all the best.

Ron Porley, *English Nature, Foxbold House, Crookham Common, Thatcham, RG19 8EL; e-mail: ron.porley@english-nature.gov.uk.*

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## The Threatened Bryophyte Database

The Threatened Bryophyte Database project was introduced in the *Bulletin* last year (*Bulletin* 80: 52-59), since when I have had a good response from BBS members. In summary, the aims of the project are a) to develop a database that contains information on populations of threatened bryophytes throughout Great Britain, b) to ensure that it is regularly updated, and c) to use the data to inform conservation action.

Recorder 2002 is being used for the database. Although complicated, it is a very powerful piece of software and I am gaining confidence with it every day. An update has just been released (December 2003), which incorporates the bryophyte *Check-list* (Blockeel & Long, 1998) – this is a great improvement. It also addresses some of the minor technical problems of the earlier versions.

Other work that has taken place this year includes:

- old Red Data Book database imported to Recorder 2002 (thanks to Alan Hale);
- ongoing editing of data;
- localities dictionary cleaned up;
- recorders dictionary cleaned up;
- all localities given a vice-county and a country;
- reporting template constructed;
- vice-county recorders contacted and some data received;
- draft reports/dossiers produced for 13 species, prioritising Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) species;

- database cleaned and updated for 13 species, with links to reports, maps and photographs, where available;
- routine requests for data answered;
- all outstanding data available (to me!) added to database;
- OS rasters now used in mapping.

There are, of course, many tasks still to do. For example:

- complete cleaning of data for all species, prioritising BAP species;
- produce reports/dossiers for all BAP species, and other species as required;
- continue to add data as they become available;
- sort out data transfer to the Biological Records Centre and the National Biodiversity Network Gateway;
- report relevant information to BAP lead partners and contacts;
- build up bibliography;
- identify data gaps and attempt to fill them;
- build closer links with 'moss minders' and vice-county recorders;
- report to local conservationists;
- distribute database to funding partners;
- undertake more Recorder 2002 training.

My heartfelt thanks to all of you who have contributed data so far. Be assured that the data are being used, and will continue to be used. I hope those recorders who have not yet contributed will not mind me taking this

opportunity to point out that their data are still more than welcome! In the coming year I hope to put more time into producing reports, both for conservation bodies and individual vice-county recorders. I also hope to run features in the *Bulletin*, starting next issue, on individual

threatened species, using information on the database.

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## Website news

### BBS website haiku and limerick competition

Thank you all for your submissions to this competition. We had four haiku, 12 limericks (including a wonderful compound limerick with five verses from Chris Preston) and several 'miscellaneous' submissions that didn't quite fit either category. Although it was a hard choice, the judges (editor and manager of the website) were unanimous in selecting the following haiku

by Carol Jenner and limerick by Nick Hodgetts as the winners, with an 'honourable mention' to Mark Pool. Congratulations! You are now published poets.

*Angela Newton, Department of Botany, The Natural History Museum, Cromwell Road, London, SW7 5BD.*

#### *In perpetuum*

Lost in endless bog,  
Yet not in isolation:  
*Sphagnum* embraces.

*Carol Jenner*

There was a young man from Siberia  
Who lapsed into manic hysteria  
When, just for a caper,  
He took pen and paper  
And tried to spell *Mielichhoferia*.

*Nick Hodgetts*

Bryological beginners  
Don't know *Entodon concinnus*;  
Those who *Seligeria* seek  
Suffer migraines for a week!

*Mark Pool*