

CISFBR

CORNWALL AND ISLES OF SCILLY FEDERATION OF BIOLOGICAL RECORDERS

Chairman's 2004 AGM Report

One of my first and most pleasurable duties as Chairman of CISFBR was to write to Rosaline Murphy and Jean Paton to invite them to become Honorary Members of CISFBR in recognition of the immense contribution they both had made to biological recording in Cornwall. I was pleased to say they have both accepted.

The AGM last year was after the meeting on Wildlife in Cornwall's Mining Landscape, held at Fraddon on Saturday 8 March 2003. The speakers outlined the importance of former mining land for many different groups of species. Adrian Spalding gave a general introduction to the subject, and was followed by Vince Giavanini on the lichens associated with former mine sites. He was followed by Daniel Eva, who spoke about the importance of mine sites for bats. The meeting was to be the forerunner of the summer workshop to be held later in the year.

The summer Workshop was held on Saturday 14 June 2003 at Chacewater Village Hall. This continued the theme of Wildlife in a Mining Landscape and was introduced by Adrian Spalding. Phil Harris told us about the importance of mine sites for butterflies; some of the best colonies of skippers are on mine sites. Chris Haes introduced us to other groups that favour old mine sites, including aculeate Hymenoptera and Orthoptera. After lunch the members moved to a nearby area of former mine land to look at species in the field under the guidance of Chris Haes and other experts. This turned out to be a very interesting and informative day, very well attended and held in beautiful sunny weather.

These meetings were very encouraging as they showed us that people are interested in invertebrates! The Cornwall Invertebrate Group was loosely formed in 2002 in collaboration with ERCCIS. It was set up because there is the need to know about and encourage the recording of invertebrates in Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly. It is still at the 'larvae' stage but with the help of ERCCIS meetings are being arranged for 2004.

The Winter Workshop on 'Using photography for recording wildlife' was held at Allet on Friday 21 November 2003, led by David Holyoak, who illustrated the subject with his own photographs. Many people are now using digital cameras, David demonstrated the versatility of this new medium and also suggested ways to catalogue the photos. The evening was a great success and provoked many more questions than would be answered in one session. It may be possible to persuade David to run a follow-up workshop on the subject.

We are all delighted to congratulate Pamela Tompsett who has been awarded a PhD for her work on *Sabella* (peacock worms).

The members of CISFBR are active in the recording of many groups of fauna and flora in Cornwall. The links with BSBI and Botanical Cornwall Group have been actively pursued during the year – including as far as a weekend visit to the Isles of Scilly to record plants as part of the BSBI Local Change initiative. CISFBR has also continued to support ERCCIS and ERCCIS likewise with CISFBR. With continued

collaboration between the records centre and the federation high quality recording will continue to lead the way and be held up as an example for other areas nation-wide.

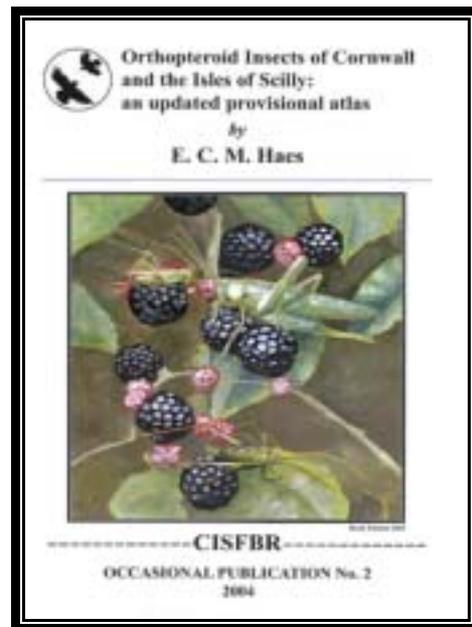
Early this year we were very sorry to hear of the death of a member, Barry Candy the well-known recorder for fungi, lichens and a brilliant photographer.

Rosemary Parslow

NEW CISFBR PUBLICATION

Orthopteroid Insects of Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly: an updated provisional atlas

by E. C. M. Haes



This new CISFBR publication will be available to members by the end of May. It is in full colour throughout, with photos of all native species, and virtually all the established, migrant, or casual aliens which have been recorded here. Also included are close up photos showing key identification features, as well as habitat shots for important species. Most usefully, the photos are within the accounts of the individual species, rather than the more usual separate section of plates.

Fully updated accounts of every Orthopteroid species recorded in Cornwall are included, together with tetrad distribution maps, kindly provided by ERCCIS, showing the records up to the end of 2003. The modernity of our records is highlighted by the use of just three date classes – 1994 to date, 1984 to 1993, and pre 1984. Almost 90% of records have been made in the last 20 years, and 2/3rds of those within the last 10. To show where future recording effort needs to be concentrated, there is a coincident map giving the number of species so far recorded in every one of our tetrads.

There are four detailed appendices:- (a) A list of prime Cornish sites for Orthopteroid insects, including the species found at each one. (b) Four fascinating historical papers, reproduced in their entirety, from the delightful 1858 period piece by William Pennington Cocks, with its poems and ancient biblical references, through C. W. Dale's short 1890 paper on the Orthoptera of West Cornwall, James Clark's important and comprehensive 1907 review, to C. W. Bracken's brief, but detailed, report on his visit to Bude in 1912. The old Latin names used in these papers will be unfamiliar to most, so current common names have been added to confirm which species is being referred to. (c) A beginner's guide to the use of bat detectors for recording Orthoptera, now recognised as an important tool in recording bush-crickets and some grasshoppers. (d) A full analysis of the 5,400 records held on the ERCCIS database, by species, date classes, and number of recorded tetrads. A table ranking all our species by the number of recorded tetrads shows, at a glance, the most commonly seen to the least commonly seen species within each Orthopteroid group.

For CISFBR members, this atlas will be available at the discounted price of £13. Please send your order to Sarah Myles, ERCCIS, Five Acres, Allet, Truro, Cornwall TR4 9DJ. e-mail; Sarah@cornwt.demon.co.uk

For those with internet access, the full atlas will also be available later this year as a downloadable Adobe Acrobat file at a lower cost (taking 7-10 minutes to download over a 56k modem). This can be viewed directly on the computer, or printed out in whole or in part. When viewed full screen, the colour images show considerable detail. Please e-mail Sarah Myles if you would like to order a copy of the file.

Malcolm Lee

First Honorary Members for CISFBR

The CISFBR committee decided they would like to recognise two of the most respected biological recorders in Cornwall by inviting them to become Honorary Members.

Rosaline Murphy FLS has long been well known as BSBI vice-county recorder for East Cornwall, a post she has held from 1984. Although Rose recently decided to retire as recorder (the post has now been filled by Ian Bennallick who has been working with Rose for over 20 years) she is not retiring from active botanical work. Now she has taken on the specialist post as referee for *Oenothera* (evening primrose), as well as continuing her work on other specialist groups including ferns and *Fumaria* in Cornwall.

Rose has maintained a herbarium since she started collecting flowers as a girl; now her expertise on botanical matters is often reinforced by her immaculately pressed specimens. Among the important work carried out by Rose in the county has been work on the BSBI Monitoring schemes, contributing and validating records for ERICA and joint authorship (with Colin French and Mary Atkinson) of the monumental Flora of Cornwall. Meanwhile Rose continues her editorship of Botanical Cornwall and is currently working on a Fern Atlas for Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly.

For many years I have known Rose as a fellow BSBI recorder, a mentor and a friend. So I am sure we are all delighted she is embarking on new avenues of botanical interest, and we will still benefit from her meticulous studies and expertise.

One of the first books on Cornish plants I bought was Jean Paton's *Wild Flowers in Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly*. In the 2003 New Year's Honours Jean Paton was made an MBE for her services to nature conservation in Cornwall. She is perhaps best known as an expert on bryophytes, having written a bryophyte flora of South Hampshire when working

at the University of Southampton, followed by an exemplary county bryophyte flora covering Cornwall and Scilly in 1969 after a decade of work in Cornwall with her husband V.S. (Pat) Paton. Her bryophyte work through the 1970s and 1980s included long service as Recorder of Hepatics nationally for the BBS, a paper describing the endemic moss *Ditrichum cornubicum* new to science from near Minions, and commencement of work on a new national liverwort flora (which was eventually published to international acclaim in 1999). Jean and Pat were also involved in the early formative years of Cornwall Wildlife Trust and active in the MOD Conservation Group for Penhale Camp (where they discovered the ostracod crustacean *Cypris bispinosa* at its only British site). Apart from Jean's outstanding work on bryophytes, their biological recording in Cornwall has covered other groups such as mammals, birds, butterflies, dragonflies, flowering plants and even the rare semi-slug *Phenacolimax major* (at Luckett) among their more remarkable finds.

Rosemary Parslow

Who will be the first person to spot this Sea Squirt on Cornish shores?

Dr John Bishop explains what to look for - "The Far-Eastern ascidian *Perophora japonica* (no common name as yet) was reported from NW France in the 1980s and was found in a marina in Plymouth Sound in 1999. Since this occurrence was publicised, it has been recorded from The Fleet, Dorset, Guemsey and Milford Haven. *P. japonica* therefore seems to be an addition to the list of species from Japan and Korea that have become established in the UK. The Marine Biological Association, the University of Plymouth, and the Station Biologique de Roscoff are undertaking a study of *P. japonica*. To date we are unaware of records from Cornwall, and would appreciate hearing from anyone who finds it.



Perophora japonica (photo John Bishop)

P. japonica is a colonial ascidian with small spheroidal zooids (the individual members of the colony) c. 4 mm high, arising from creeping stolons. Its most distinctive feature is the presence in summer of clusters of bright yellow terminal buds, which are angular and commonly star-shaped. These buds have not been reported in the native species *P. listeri*, or any other *Perophora* species. The Plymouth specimens of *P. japonica*, when alive, have a marked yellow or greenish-yellow coloration in younger parts of the colony; the zooids may be densely packed or spread out along the growing stolon. Colonies grow on a wide range of substrates. More colour images of live specimens are on the MarLIN web site (<http://www.marlin.ac.uk>)."

If you find something similar please try to take a photograph or make a sketch and log the place, date, time and tide. John will be happy to help make the identification so contact me

leaving your name, address and telephone number – Dr Pamela E Tompsett, Awelon Colborne Ave, Illogan, Redruth, Cornwall TR16 4EB 01209 842316. e-mail petomp@bioscope.demon.co.uk or Dr John Bishop, Marine Biological Association of the UK, Citadel Hill Laboratory, Plymouth PL1 2PB, UK, E-mail: jbis@mba.ac.uk

Pamela Tompsett

Field Trips for the Diary

There is no charge for these field trips, but booking is essential. Please contact Ian Bennallick on 01872 240777 to book, or obtain further details.

Wednesday 23rd June: Millook area, Nr Bude (SX1899). A Cornwall Invertebrate Group (CIG) field meeting led by Sue Scott & Ian Bennallick to this secluded wooded coastal valley.

Wednesday 14th July: Nare Head area, Nr Veryan (SW9238). A CIG meeting led by Sue Scott & Ian Bennallick to this south facing coastal habitat, much of it owned by the NT.

Wednesday 29th September: Clitters Wood area, Gunnislake (SX4272). A woodland habitat alongside the Tamar. Meeting organised by CIG and led by Sue Scott & Ian Bennallick.

Saturday 16th October: Recording Wildlife on the Seashore Prisk Cove, Helford River (SW7927): A CISFBR field meeting led by Pamela Tompsett and Ian Bennallick. Experts in identifying seaweeds, molluscs and fish, plus other groups, will be present.

Marine Recording and Seashore Surveys

In Cornwall, the sea is all around us and plays a part in all our lives, whether it's through work, or play. It is also home to a wealth of wildlife and as such needs protecting and looking after as much as any terrestrial habitat. However, we still have huge gaps in our knowledge of the marine environment. Unlike the terrestrial environment, we haven't got the same survey information available or dedicated recorders. So very little is known about the sea and distribution of many species and habitats, which is where our marine recording projects come in.

We have 3 main recording areas at present, Seasearch (underwater), Seaquest (megafauna) and Seashore.

Seasearch is a volunteer underwater seabed surveying project for recreational divers. Divers are trained in a one day session to identify and record what they see on their dives so we can start to build up a picture of what marine habitats and sealife exist in which places.

Seaquest South West is a joint project between Cornwall and Devon Wildlife Trusts, NMA, independent researchers and volunteers with the aim of expanding our knowledge of marine animals, particularly the megafauna (bigger things!) like the whales, dolphins, seals, sharks, sunfish etc. although we are happy to hear about anything you see or find.

Intertidal or seashore recording and is only carried out in a very ad hoc way at present in the county, something we'd like to rectify. This area, between the high and low tides, is where most people start to get a taster of what marine life is around, it's easy to access and fun!

If anyone wants to know more about any of these projects please call Ruth Williams, Marine Conservation Officer, Cornwall Wildlife Trust on 01872 240777 or email on Ruth@cornwt.demon.co.uk

Ruth Williams

Stella Turk M.B.E.



Congratulations to Stella Turk on her well deserved honour for services to conservation. On behalf of the Queen, the Lord Lieutenant of Cornwall, Lady Mary Holborow, presented the MBE at the Cornwall Wildlife Trust Open Day on 21st August 2003, where Stella was joined by her many friends.

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Editor R. J. Murphy

If you have not already obtained your copy, the twelfth issue of Botanical Cornwall is now available.

It is priced at £6.50 (includes post and packing), and is obtainable from **Environmental Records Centre for Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly, Five Acres, Allet, Truro, TR4 9DJ.**

Back issues are also available – Please contact Ian Bennallick on 01872 240777 or e-mail at ian@cornwt.demon.co.uk for more details.

Early Invertebrates at Upton and Gwithian Towans

At the Botanical Cornwall Group field meeting led by Ian Bennallick at Upton and Gwithian Towans on 28th April 2004, there were some interesting early invertebrates around. Several species of true bugs were present on the Towans, including common species like Sloe Bug *Dolycoris baccarum*, Common Green Shield Bug *Palomena prasina*, Gorse Shield Bug *Piezodorus lituratus*, and the Dock Bug *Coreus marginatus*. The distinctive, but more local, red and black *Corizus hyoscyami* was seen on a Knapweed shoot. Three very fresh adults of the pretty black and white pyralid moth *Pyrausta cingulata* were seen over Thyme (probably its foodplant). This is quite a local moth in Cornwall. A single Cinnabar moth *Tyria jacobae* was flying, and many black and yellow larvae were noted on ragwort.



Nephrotoma submaculata in cop.

A speciality of dry dunes is the Dune crane-fly *Nephrotoma submaculata*, of which several were seen flying. There were various species of our commoner Hover-flies, but just a single Soldier-fly *Chloromyia formosa* was seen near the car park.



The distinctive sand heaps of a *Lasius alienus* nest complex

A very conspicuous feature of stabilised dunes are the nest complexes of the Dune Ant *Lasius alienus* (*sensu lato*) a key species here. Two female Tawny Mining Bees *Andrena fulva* were seen alongside the path, as were queens of five of our commonest bumble bees *Bombus terrestris*, *B. lucorum*, *B. lapidarius*, *B. pratorum* and *B. pascuorum*. Three of the nationally notable (Nb) beetle *Chrysolina haemoptera* were seen flying (specimen confirmed by Chris Hinks). Its more common relative the much larger *Chrysolina banksii* was also recorded.

Malcolm Lee
(from data and photos supplied by Chris Haes)

Useful Cornish Websites

Comwall Wildlife Trust has a lot of information, including details of marine sightings and strandings at - <http://www.comwallwildlifetrust.org.uk/>

Environmental Records Centre for Comwall and Isles of Scilly: Useful information on general recording, as well as publications. All the ERCCIS newsletters can be downloaded from here - click on <http://www.ercis.co.uk/>

Botanical Comwall Group website is up and running. Copies of all the newsletters are available - click on <http://www.floracam.co.uk/bcg/>

Comwall Moth Group has an excellent website, where you can download newsletters <http://cornwallmothgroup.org.uk/>

Helford Voluntary Marine Conservation Area: Comprehensive information on this marine conservation area, including details of the Interactive CD-Rom *Secrets of the Sea - exploring Helford's Marine Life*, <http://www.helfordmarineconservation.co.uk/index.htm>

ERCCIS Recorder Workshops

ERCCIS are running a range of workshops this summer and autumn. They are free, but you will need to book. Further information can be obtained from Nic Harrison-White at the ERCCIS Wildlife Information Service on 01872 240777 x213.

Thursday 17th June Managing Churches for Wildlife: St Clement Church, St Clement. Led by Robert Moore and Ian Bernallick. For those who would like to manage churchyards for wildlife.

Wednesday 7th July Bumblebees: Duchy College, Rosewarne. Led by Sarah Corbet. For beginners, including those who were not able to get on last year's bumblebee workshop.

Wednesday 18th August Pond Surveys: West Comwall region. Led by Wealth of Wildlife Project Officer.

Saturday 25th September Shield Bug Identification: Duchy College, Rosewame. Led by Keith Alexander.

Wednesday 6th October Conifer Identification: Cardinham Woods, nr. Bodmin. Led by David Blake and Botanical Cornwall Group.

Wednesday 20th October Fern Identification: Helman Tor and Breney Common. Led by Ian Bernallick and Botanical Cornwall Group.

CISFBR Officers for 2004/05

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Committee: All the above plus Tony Atkinson, Tim Dingle (*corresponding member*), Chris Hinks, David Holyoak, Loveday Jenkin, Rose Murphy, Catriona Neil, Dr Chris Page, Adrian Spalding, and Pamela Tompsett

Articles For Future Newsletters

If you have news, articles or photos of interest to CISFBR members, please send them to the newsletter editor at the address or e-mail above.