



Welcome to newsletter 17. Thankyou to everyone who has contributed.



Merry Christmas!

Interesting stuff

Pembrokeshire Fungus Recording Network (PFRN)

A relatively frost-free autumn contributed a long tail to the fungus fruiting season in Pembrokeshire with many species still fruiting in early December. Records are continuing to come in, including this rather fine example of Cobalt Crust (*Terana caerulea*) photographed and recorded on dead Willow on Goodwick Moor by Nathan Walton.

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Thank you

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© Nathan Walton

© David Harries Photo: Eef Arnolds (centre) and Rob Chrispijn discussing waxcaps with CCW's Paul Culyer.

A highlight of year came in October when we hosted a visit by the eminent Dutch mycologists: Eef Arnolds, Europe's leading authority on the conservation of grassland fungi, and Rob Chrispijn, President of the Dutch Mycological Society. During their stay in the County they visited the Stackpole NNR where they added several species to the site list including an attractive pink species, *Entoloma roseum* [second County record] and the curiously green-tinged brown pinkgill, *Entoloma querquedula* [first County record].

For more information on exciting discoveries from the autumn fungus season look out for the next PFRN newsletter (due in January) on

www.pembsfungi.org.uk

David Harries

Water voles at Cors Fochno

Following on from the discovery in 2010 that water vole were present on a ditch at Cors fochno, Dyfi NNR, a more extensive survey has been carried out with the aid of small rafts sited along many more ditches. All 30 rafts were deployed last winter and by May this year ten had been visited. By November however, 22 of the rafts had water vole droppings and a number had become well used latrines. All this activity and a first day-time sighting in 20 years at the site suggests a healthy recovery.

Mike Bailey

**New UK wide telephone number for reporting marine strandings
0800 6520333**

More than 3400 whales, dolphins and porpoises have stranded on UK beaches over the past six years, reveals a new report published recently. The report by the UK Cetacean Strandings Investigation Programme (CSIP) [http://randd.defra.gov.uk/Document.aspx?Document=FinalCSIPReport2005-2010_finalversion061211released\[1\].pdf](http://randd.defra.gov.uk/Document.aspx?Document=FinalCSIPReport2005-2010_finalversion061211released[1].pdf) details the investigation of whales, dolphins and porpoises (cetaceans), marine turtles and basking sharks found stranded around the UK coast between 2005 and 2010.



© Rod Penrose Common dolphin at Dale

The CSIP has investigated some of the UK's most high-profile strandings during this time, from the northern bottlenose whale that swam up the Thames in 2006, to the mass stranding of 26 common dolphins in Cornwall in 2008. [read](#)

[more](#)

Rod Penrose

iSpot

WWBIC recently met with Clare Flynn who up until the end of October was the Biodiversity Mentor for Wales for the iSpot project run by the Open University. During Clare's visit she demonstrated how simple it was to upload a photo on to the iSpot website for identification and demonstrated how the website works. We were impressed by the number of experts that contribute to iSpot. On Clare's recommendation WWBIC contacted Martin Harvey at iSpot, Martin has offered to pass on all their records from Wales to the Local Records Centres in the new year. [read more about iSpot](#)

Data

There are 701,293 species records in our Recorder 6 database. Since implementing a system of determination types or verification levels to the records we hold we no longer feel this number is an accurate representation. This is because it includes a number of records outside our region and records that have been marked as 'incorrect' or 'duplicate' during the verification process. These records get filtered out and do not show in the species layer on the GIS that is used in our reporting process. From now on the newsletter will show the number of records in this layer and not the number of records in the Recorder 6 database. I felt that this was worth explaining in case the more vigilant amongst you wondered why the number of records we hold had fallen. The number of records in the GIS species layer is: **666,724** Since the last newsletter we have had datasets from Sturgess Ecology, Wales BAP invertebrate records 2009 from Adrian Fowles and c.10,000 records from Cheshire Local Records Centre, Pembrokeshire 2010 bird records from Jon Green, dormouse tube survey results from Mott Macdonald. Also records from Dave Bannister, Emily Foot, Bethan Cox and Barney Gill.

We have recently reviewed the datasets on the NBN Gateway that fall within WWBIC's region. We spent some time prioritising them for download by comparing them with what we do and don't hold and the species concerned. Potentially there is a lot of duplication between what we hold and what is on the NBN Gateway.

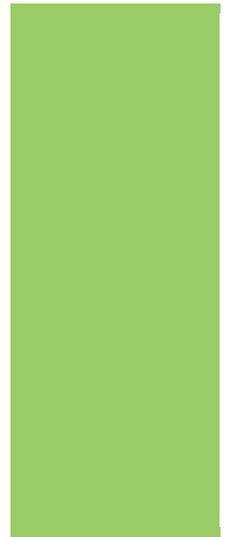
Data Enquiries

The data enquiries side of WWBIC has remained busy this year. Planning application lists from Carmarthenshire and Ceredigion County Councils have been arriving in steady numbers throughout the year. With the number of species records on WWBIC's database increasing in each county we're confident that we're providing a valuable service to the Local Authorities. When comparing the number of enquiries that we received from consultants last year and this year, numbers have doubled. This could be a possible knock-on effect of the race to get planning permission for Feed In Tariff schemes before the solar tariff changed in December and the wind tariff changes in April. There are now also recommendations for consultants to use the services provided by LRCs when working on developments. We look forward to another busy year next year!

Projects

Establishment of landscape context of the well studied population of dormouse (*Muscardinas avellanarius*) in the landscape surrounding Rhos Cefn Bryn Nature Reserve, Llannon, Carmarthenshire

Richard Pond, until a few months ago a regular volunteer at WWBIC, has recently completed a four month project with the Wildlife Trust of South and West Wales (WTSWW). The project was funded by the People's Trust for Endangered Species (PTES) and its aim was to establish the landscape context for a well-studied viable population of dormouse within a WTSWW Nature Reserve at Rhos Cefn Bryn, Carmarthenshire. The Reserve is currently monitored for dormice as part of the National Dormouse Monitoring Programme but the habitable woodland area of the reserve only covers 0.03ha. [read more](#)





© Richard Pond

Feedback

WWBIC Recording days

On the 23rd of August a WWBIC Recording Day was held in Carmarthenshire on Burns Pet Nutrition land, North West of Kidwelly. The day was spent on an area of arable land consisting of barley and vegetable fields over looking Kidwelly. A lot of time was spent studying the plant life of the sown field margins and Richard and Kath Pryce were on the look out for arable weeds rare to the County. Plant species recorded included Corn Marigold (*Chrysanthemum*

segetum) and Poppy (*Papaver rhoeas*). The colourful field margins attracted numerous species of invertebrates including several butterfly and bumblebee species and Dark Bush-crickets (*Pholidoptera griseoptera*).





Dark Bush-cricket

Corn Marigold

On the 24th of August a WWBIC Recording Day was held in Ceredigion at Broniwan, Rhydlew. Broniwan is a small holding of c.30 acres largely made up of improved and semi-improved pasture. There is a herb-rich fenced off stream corridor to the South of the farm. The lichen *Punctelia reddenda* was recorded on a large, old oak to the West of the farm. Fairy Flax (*Linum catharticum*) was seen on a calcareous slope to the East of the farm, Common blue butterflies (*Polyommatus icarus*) were also present here in abundance. A white slime mould (*Mucilago crustacean*) was also recorded on this slope. Arthur Chater, Steve Chambers and Lin Gander attended the day.





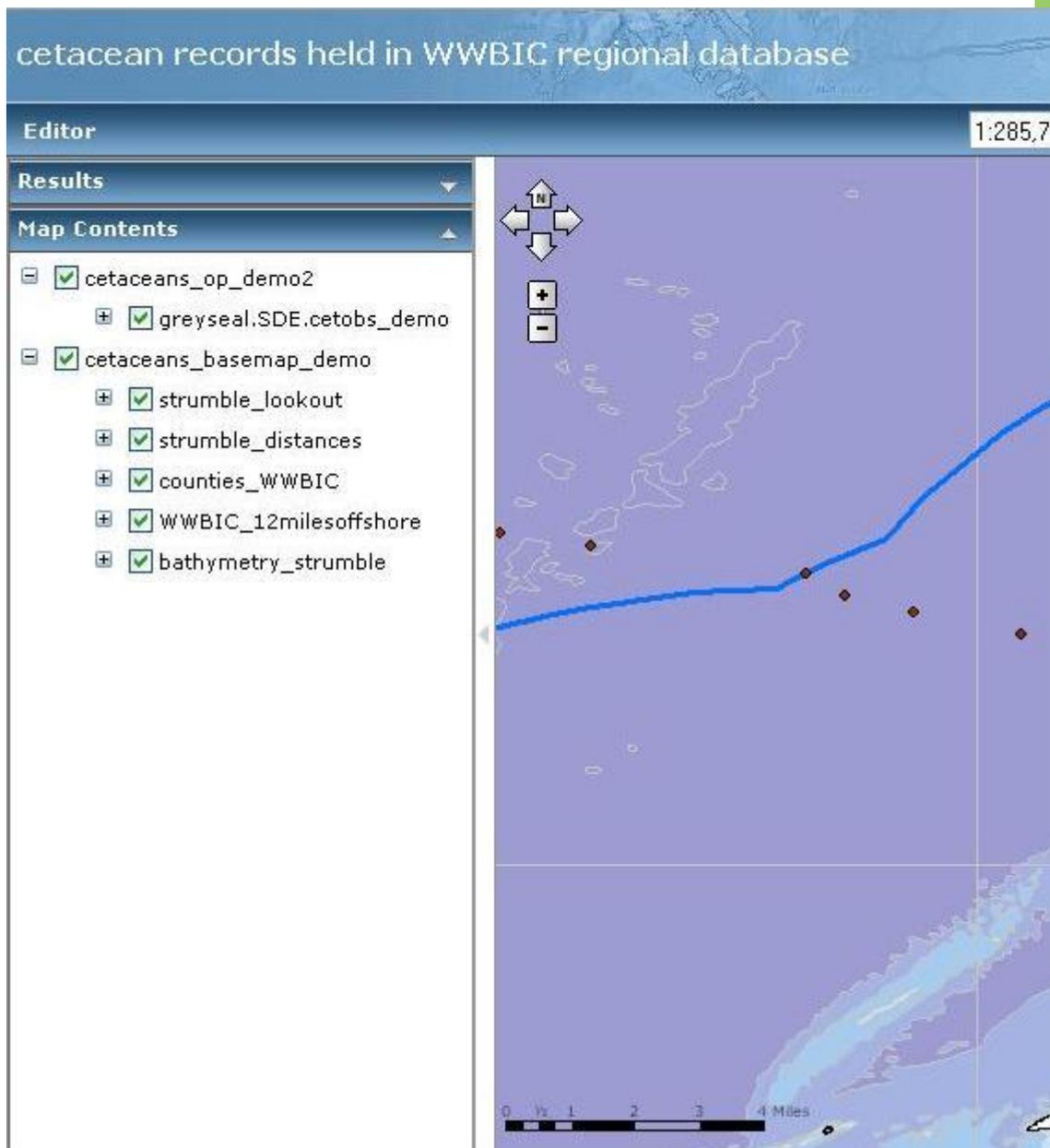
Pond, Broniwan

Slime mould, *Mucilago crustacean*

WBP Conference

The two day conference was held this year at the Halliwell Centre on the University of Wales, Trinity St Davids Campus in Carmarthen. The emphasis

this year was on examples of project work and we were pleased at WWBIC to get the opportunity to talk about how our data has contributed to several projects in the region. The highlight of the presentation was a live demonstration from the stage of data capture using the mobile application developed for Sea Trust. Rob Davies, was able to place a test sighting directly on to the touch screen on the mobile device, populate the attributes, and upload this to the database in our office in Whitland. Delegates could then see this record appear added to other data on the website map (below) on the big screen in only a matter of seconds. Delegates who could see that the focus of this application was to capture data once to one location and incorporated in to the LRC database. This and the ease of use and speed with which the data was uploaded generated interest amongst several attendees.



WWBIC free training events

WWBIC have held three free training events this year, this was made possible through funding from Wales Biodiversity Partnership. Two were in partnership with the Grasslands Trust and were held at Carmel National Nature Reserve in Carmarthenshire. The first of these in August was a plant identification course led by Richard Pryce and the second was a mammal identification training day led by Neil Matthew in October. The third event was a bumblebee identification training day held in August at Spittal Common, Pembrokeshire in partnership with Hayscastle Environment Group.

Each event was successful and enjoyed by all who attended.

Proposals to change access controls on the NBN Gateway

An on-line survey closed last month on proposed changes to access controls for data on the NBN Gateway, the reasoning for this being that the changes are in response to demand and to fit with their 2010-2020 strategy. Without repeating every element of the consultation, the main change would result in a shift from the current situation where data is viewed and download requests by dataset are passed to the data provider, to download being accessible to everyone from the Gateway at two levels, a public level for everyone, and a higher access level for registered users. Included in the proposals are access to data across multiple datasets and filtering by, e.g. date, taxonomic group, geographical area.

Opinions were sought from data users and providers on how the proposals might affect their use of the Gateway, what benefits the changes might bring, and on the information required from users downloading data. There were also opportunities to comment on the changes and in our response, amongst many other comments. We expressed a number of concerns including how this would affect the number of data requests Local Records Centres receive, and how use of the data would be controlled once downloaded. We have no further information at this stage on the outcome and what may be implemented in the future.

NBN Conference

The theme of this year's conference at The Royal Society was "Evolution or Revolution: The impact of technologies on biological recording." This stimulated a strong attendance from the LRC's managers in Wales as we explore new ways of capturing data and disseminating data. Picking out a couple of presentations, David Roy from the Biological Records Centre spoke about a number of on line projects such as Project Noah from The Smithsonian Institute, Observado.org, a project based in the Netherlands and closer to home, the success of Birdtrack, which has more than 15,000 registered users. He spoke about the variety of functions within the range of on line schemes, not all having recording as their primary function. For example iSpot functions as a social network, where experts and novices share knowledge and is a good example of the way the technology can enable multiple experts to comment and support is given by providing on line keys. David quoted an interesting statistic, the use of on-line schemes had increased by 630% in the previous 17 months and suggested that it will be key to tapping in to the next generation of recorders.

An entertaining presentation came from Charles Hussey of the Natural History Museum who began with some of the history of nomenclature as an introduction to his current work on the species dictionary. He gave us some examples of how globally, the number of synonyms are legion with some species running well in to double figures. The new on line species dictionary can be found at <http://www.nhm.ac.uk/research-curation/research/projects/species-dictionary/species/index.html> with around half the taxonomic groups entered

into the database to date.
Colin Russell

Forthcoming events

WWBIC Recorders Forum

Saturday 25th February 2011, Welsh Wildlife Centre, Cilgerran
Information will be sent out to recorders in the new year!

WWBIC free training events

We hope to hold two training events in Ceredigion before March, details to follow.

Sea Trust New Year's Day porpoise & dolphin watch

Strumble Head, 2.30pm - 4pm

Sea Trust/Pembrokeshire College

OCN accredited 'Wildlife Observer Wales' Courses

Thankyou

A big thankyou to all Vice County recorders that have supported us this year, whether it has been by sending us records, verifying records for us or leading a training day, we appreciate all the time and effort you put in and wouldn't be here with out you.

Thanks to everyone else who has sent in records, assisted or supported us in any capacity.

Thanks also to our funding partners.

Thanks to Carole and Allen Jacobs and Burns Pet Nutrition for hosting the August Recording Days.

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