

# CiSFBR

CORNWALL AND ISLES OF SCILLY FEDERATION OF BIOLOGICAL RECORDERS

## Interesting Find (1)

Possibly from our own painful memories, most of us would leave the Lesser Weaver fish well alone. Treve Opie is clearly made of sterner stuff, and took this picture of the parasitic isopod *Ceratothoa steindachneri* living inside the mouth of a Lesser Weaver caught at Hayle. This isopod is a recent Lusitanian arrival to SW waters, and is an economic pest in Bass and Bream fish farms. Treve would like to hear if you come across it in the mouths of other fish like Bass or Mullet.



Two *Ceratothoa steindachneri* inside the mouth of a Lesser Weaver

## Chairman's AGM Report 12<sup>th</sup> March 2005

At last year's AGM the theme was 'Recording Wildlife of the Seashore'. We heard from speakers on subjects as diverse as recording eelgrass (*Zostera*) on the Helford, identifying and surveying the seashore, to the difficulties of recording plankton. The theme was continued at the follow-up meeting we held in October. This was a field meeting at Prisk Cove on the Helford, where members were able to get out on the shore and look at the species living there under guidance of local experts.

2004 was a busy year for many of the botanical recorders in CiSFBR. Many of us were involved in recording tetrads for the BSBI Local Change Surveys. The Cornish recorders are also going to be starting work on a Cornwall Rare Plants Register, probably following the model of the Dorset RP Register as we are able to get expert advice from David Pearman, one of the authors.

Joint projects with ERCCIS include the revisions to the Recorders' Handbook - due imminently. We also held a joint Recorder's meeting in January to encourage more recording and recorders in Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly. This was a very successful day with a good numbers of recorders, both local and from outside the county attending.

Our interest in Cornish hedges has continued with a visit to one of the Committee meetings by Andy Goodman, an ecologist working at the County Council and Jacqui Davey of the Guild of Cornish Hedgers, who have been promoting good hedging practice, with training courses, codes of good practice and a database on hedges. Following the meeting today we will be having another field day later in the year where we will be looking at hedges and gaining practical experience on recording hedge features.

Following the successful publication of the Orthopteroid Atlas during 2004, work on the Fern Atlas for Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly has continued and has involved several CiSFBR members, besides the authors, in practical aspects of the production. The Fern Atlas is planned to be published jointly by CiSFBR And ERCCIS, hopefully in a few months time.

Rosemary Parslow

## CiSFBR Spring Meeting and AGM Recording Wildlife In Hedges

The CiSFBR spring meeting and AGM was held on Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> March 2005 at Fraddon Village Hall, and returned to the subject of recording wildlife in hedges, a habitat that formed the basis of a CiSFBR workshop and meeting in 2002. Due to recent developments in the 'hedge and wall' world in Cornwall, it seemed an ideal habitat for CiSFBR to tackle again. The meeting concentrated on the importance of hedges for wildlife and the Hedge Importance Test (HIT). It should be stated here that the term 'hedge' in Cornwall usually means a stone-faced earth bank with or without shrubs or trees on top, usually known as a Cornish Hedge. However as one of the speakers pointed out later, as many 'Cornish hedges' have been constructed using various materials in different styles in different parts of Cornwall, one person's idea of a Cornish hedge may not agree with another's! What was made clear was that this linear feature in our countryside contributed much to wildlife and defines our cultural history in the landscape - so much so that they are as important as the Pyramids of Egypt.

Due to car trouble Rosemary Parslow was not able to chair the meeting so Colin French ably stepped in to do the introduction and keep the speakers on time! Colin also mentioned that the new version of ERICA for windows was available for people to see on the day.

Dr. Keith Alexander, an expert on invertebrates, kicked off the talks by explaining the importance of hedges for invertebrates. Although Keith could find no species particularly restricted to hedges, the range of niches and conditions that are found in and on hedges, along with the microclimates associated with the aspects and structure of a hedge contribute to an overall diversity of invertebrates. He emphasised that in a farming landscape, much as we see in Cornwall today, a hedge may be the last refuge for species associated with habitats once present, either lost to agricultural intensification and arable and green rye-grass deserts between the network of hedges we see in our countryside today. These habitats, such as unimproved grassland and heath may only be found in very small areas of hedges in some areas. Keith also highlighted that many invertebrates are not fussy when it comes to feeding and a

good selection of common plant species in a hedge, bramble in particular, and ones not always appreciated for botanical value, can be extremely valuable for invertebrates, and should be valued. Another often undervalued feature of hedges that proves to be wonderful for invertebrates is rotten wood and where trees are found on hedges, the tidying away of stumps and dead trees removes that habitat for associated species.

Following on from Keith's talk, Alex Howie, the officer for the Records Centre's Mammals Project - 'Celebrating Cornwall's Mammals from Dormice to Dolphins', told of the importance of hedges for mammals. Maybe not fully appreciated as being important, Alex spoke of what hedges, in all their forms, offer mammals: food and shelter. If good supplies of food (including invertebrates) are present then mammals will be too. The substantial construction of a hedge, with 'earth and rab' filling surrounded or with stones, provides safe crevices and tunnelling opportunities for smaller mammals. Again the presence of hedges in the farming landscape may be the only good opportunities for mammals to find food and shelter and without them the diversity would be a great deal less. Of the mammals known in Cornwall the vast majority use hedges.

After a short break Sonia Thurley of the Environment Agency, explained the reasons why the 'Hedge Importance Test' was formulated. First demonstrated at the workshop in the field in 2002 by Robin Menneer of the Cornish Hedge Group, the test evaluates the landscape, historical and wildlife aspects of any stretch of hedge (which could be used anywhere in Britain), and gives a score out of ten. In 2004 the test has been fine-tuned and expanded to accommodate the surveyor's needs in either a more wildlife, landscape or historical perspective. The process of getting the test right, so that it could be used more widely had taken time. Sonia also broadened her talk to link in with two massive opportunities for recorders to feed back to those that make decisions about hedges. The first is the changes in the immediate future in the planning process where rather than having a 'big book of rules' of what can and cannot be done, the planning officer has to involve all those interested in developments. With the exciting formation of the Guild of Cornish Hedgers (see details below) and a resurgence of interest in hedges, Sonia spoke of how the actions of surveyors using the Hedge Importance Test collecting data in the short-term could help in the protection and conservation of hedges in the long-term. The other opportunity was the Common Agricultural Policy reforms and the adoption of various environmental schemes that all farmers would now have to comply with. Again Sonia highlighted the opportunities for recorders and surveyors to influence via various agencies and organisations in the management and regulations that the farmers would have to comply with. An example was that if recorders are noting that birds are nesting earlier than before then those observations could be used to change the times when hedges should be trimmed.

Following on from Sonia, Jacqui Davey of the Guild of Cornish Hedgers explained in more detail about using the Hedge Importance Test, and the ways in which the scoring had been decided upon to make the test usable for hedges and walls. The guild had also secured funding for training people to build and repair hedges and the setting up of a hedge database which Hedge Importance Test data collected in the field could be added to via an online form on the Guild of Cornish Hedgers website. The scoring of the hedge would be done automatically and a standard comment for each permutation of a question's response can be incorporated into a summary sheet of the hedge that the surveyor can print off. The ease of entering data should encourage more surveyors to use the test.

A short discussion and question and answer session and the CISFBR AGM followed a short break for lunch.

Ian Bennallick

## **CORNWALL INVERTEBRATE GROUP FIELD TRIP – Nare Head (SW9137) & Kiberick Cove (SW9237 & SW9238) 14<sup>th</sup> July 2004**

Having had the first field trip of three organised for the year completely rained off, it was with some trepidation that we met at Nare Head on the Roseland Peninsula for our second meeting. The day's weather was eventually moderately good for invertebrates, having started damp and cold it warmed up a good deal towards the end. A good variety of habitat was covered, starting in the field leading to Kiberick cove and then moved on to the cove itself finding among other species Speckled bush cricket *Leptophyes punctatissima*, on the strandline the centipede *Strigamia maritima*. We then walked through a small wood that had been extensively replanted with mixed native trees to Tregagle's Hole. This wooded habitat provided a wealth of leaf mine records and kept John Gregory and Peter Floyd-Spong busy (thanks to both of you for sending in your records).

We then followed the cliff path up to Nare Head being careful not to step on the Bloody Nose beetles *Timarcha tenebricosa* that were out on the path. By this time the weather had picked up and there was much more activity and we had an interesting if precipitous walk around the head. We were joined at the very end by Keith Alexander who then walked on by himself finding the Tawny Cockroach *Ectobius pallidus* and two Red Data Book species, Thyme Lace Bug *Lasiacantha capucina* and new for the locality, a weevil *Cathormiocerus maritimus*.

We were very fortunate to have the company of John Gregory whose expertise in leaf mines brought our list of Lepidoptera found to almost 30 species and Paul Gainey whose vast experience as a naturalist is always a great encouragement to novice recorders such as me. Also Walter Eyre the area warden for the National Trust who answered questions on land management including the cutting regime for the scrub and grazing issues.

Sue Scott

## **ERCCIS/CISFBR Recordors Forum 2005: Wildlife Recording in Cornwall – where do we go from here?**

For those of you reading this that were not in the Lanhydrock Memorial Hall on Saturday 29<sup>th</sup> January 2005, you missed an interesting day of discussion concerning the future approach of species recording in Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly. This formed the theme of the 2005 Annual Recordors Forum in the County, organised by the Environmental Records Centre for Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly (ERCCIS), in conjunction with the Cornwall and Isles of Scilly Federation of Biological Recordors (CISFBR).

The day was introduced and chaired by Rosemary Parslow, the current CISFBR chairman. Sarah Board, Manager of ERCCIS, set the scene for the day in the first presentation, by considering the current approaches to recording in the County from 'ad-hoc' recording to surveys being undertaken for specific purposes to standard recognised methodologies. The aim was to get participants thinking, in preparation for the discussion workshops set for the afternoon! Sarah also introduced the need to consider the use to which data is to be put; the precision and accuracy of the data being collected; the time requirements of the survey and who is undertaking the recording. She also gave some examples of different recording methods and making use of the resulting data from each. She finished by posing the question ..... **so what information should we be collecting for species and habitats in Cornwall and Scilly?**

Before lunch the remaining presentations were given by representatives from various national and local recording

schemes, introducing the audience to their particular survey methodology and/or recording scheme.

Plants were the focus of both Ian Bennallick's and David Pearman's presentations (both of the Botanical Society of the British Isles). Ian spoke about BSBI's Local Change Survey (national survey), carried out in 2003/2004 as a repeat of a survey carried out in 1987/1988. Presence and abundance of species were recorded in three tetrads in selected 10km grid squares in Cornwall (one in Scilly). David Pearman introduced the audience to County Rare Plant Registers, and his involvement in producing one for Dorset. National criteria have been produced for selecting the rare plants to include in a register, focusing on nationally rare and scarce species, as well as locally rare and scarce species. Special aliens and hybrids can also be included.

Paul McCartney, of Cornwall Bird-watching and Preservation Society, spoke about the planning and decisions made in the setting up of the Cornwall Bird Atlas. The idea of undertaking the production of a bird atlas for Cornwall arose from a need; there was no consensus about the bird species found in Cornwall, let alone species population sizes, distribution and their status. Firstly you need to consider why you want to undertake a survey, then devise the methodology and be open to reviewing this as you go along.

Carrying out butterfly transects was the topic of David Atwell's talk (Butterfly Conservation and North Cornwall District Council). He focused on the use of butterflies as indicator species for site management regimes and used the butterfly transect surveys being carried out at Bodmin Beacon Local Nature Reserve to explain the national methodology. David pointed out that it was useful to feed his results from Bodmin Beacon into the national butterfly monitoring scheme and get to see how his local results fit into the national results.

After a break for lunch, Sonia Thurley of the Environment Agency spoke about the use of records and data. She explained how various pieces of recent legislation have given the statutory agencies a clearer role for them to take biodiversity into consideration. She provided key examples of how records made in the County by recorders, and provided to the Agency through ERCCIS, have been used as the basis for decision-making. Using charismatic species such as the Marsh Fritillary *Eurodryas aurinia* and the Blue Ground Beetle *Carabus intricatus*, road workings have been amended (Glynn Valley) and road routes changed (Goss Moor). Habitat data provided by the Records Centre was also used to influence the siting of potential Foot-and-Mouth disposal sites. Agency staff had the habitat information on laptop computers so that potential locations could be assessed from a biodiversity point of view 24 hours a day.

For the rest of the afternoon we separated into three workshop groups, each group spending 45 minutes considering the future of wildlife recording in Cornwall. The main points arising from the workshops are presented in Box 1. Each workshop group then reporting back and an open discussion followed.

I found the whole day extremely interesting and was struck by the enthusiasm of those present. There seemed to be a very positive feeling concerning wildlife recording in the County, with people ready to take on the opportunities and challenges that the future holds for species and habitats.

#### Main points arising from the workshops.

- Continue with both ad-hoc and targeted/more formal surveys – need ad-hoc records to put targeted records into perspective
- Continue to record both the common and rare species
- Collect quantitative data – species population counts
- Consider ecology of species

- Could focus on recording in particular habitats, geographical areas (fill in distribution gaps, ask recorders to adopt a 10km grid square)
- Negative records are useful
- Make better use of national recording schemes
- Make better use of local recorders knowledge and skills
- Guide recorders – explain what to record
- Need to encourage next generation of recorders
- Continue to run species identification workshops; run more habitat-based workshops
- Useful to hold site-based field meetings, encouraging recorders from different species groups and with different knowledge to record 'together', as the Cornwall Invertebrate Group has started to do
- Encourage the greater sharing of records and information
- Need to investigate who is sending records where – to county recording groups, to county recorders, to ERCCIS and other local records centres, to national schemes
- Forge greater links with academic community
- Publish results – good for encouraging more records to be sent in

Sarah Board

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## 2005 FIELD MEETINGS

*Contacts for further information -*

(BCG): Botanical Cornwall Group: Ian Bennallick (01726 890384)

(CIG): Cornwall Invertebrate Group: Ian Bennallick or Sue Scott at ERCCIS (01872 240777)

(CISFBR): Ian Bennallick (01726 890384)

(CMG): Cornwall Moth Group: Phil Boggis (01726 66124)

### APRIL

**Saturday 23rd April** (BCG): Bryophyte Recording At Seaton  
Leader: David Holyoak and Mark Pool

Where: Meet at the car-park in Seaton (SX302545)

For further information please contact Nicholas De Sausmarez on 01872 862773.

**Sunday 24th April** (BCG): Bryophyte Recording At Seaton

Leader: David Holyoak and Mark Pool

Where: outside the Inn at Hessenford (SX305575)

For further information please contact Nicholas De Sausmarez on 01872 862773.

### MAY

**Saturday 7th May** (BCG): Windmill Farm & Ruan Pool, Kynance Cove and Lizard Point Area

*BOOKING ESSENTIAL (Organised by BCG for Plantlife).*

Target species: *Pilularia globulifera*, *Isoetes histrix*, *Juncus capitatus* and *Ranunculus tripartitus*

Leader: Tim Wilkins, Ian Bennallick and local botanists

Where: *Morning* - Windmill Farm (SW693152) at 10am. *Afternoon* - Kynance Cove Car Park (SW688131) at 2pm. *Evening* - Lizard Green (SW703125) at 6pm.

**Sunday 8th May** (BCG): Helford VMC Area

Leader: Keith Spurgin

Where: Meet at the head of Carne Creek (SW770249) at 2.15.

Booking Preferred: Contact Pamela 01209 842316 or David 01326 341181 for further details.

**Wednesday 25th May** (BCG): Pendennis Castle & Pannance Point, Falmouth

Target species: *Vicia lathyroides* and *Melittis melissophyllum*

Leader: Ian Bennallick

Where: Meet at Swanpool car park, SW801312.

**Sunday 29th May** (BCG): Kennack Sands & Poldowrian, East part of the Lizard

Target species: *Juncus capitatus*, *Trifolium bocconeii*, *T. suffocatum* and maybe *Isoetes histrix*

Leader: Ian Bennallick.

Where: Meet at the car-park at Carn Kennack (SW733165) at 10am.

## JUNE

**Wednesday 1st June** (BCG): Trevalgan Cliff & Pen Enys Point, West Of St. Ives.

Target species: *Juncus capitatus*

Leader: Ian Bennallick.

Where: Meet Rosewall Hill (SW487394) at 10am.

**Saturday 4th June** (CIG): Lower Red River valley, Gwithian and Nanterrow, north of Hayle (Wellies recommended!)

Leader: Ian Bennallick and Sue Scott

Where: Gwithian Green (SW586431) at 10am.

**Saturday 4th June** (CMG): Greenscombe Wood, Lucket

Target species: day-flying Argent & Sable

Leader Phil Boggis

Where: Greenscombe Wood, Lucket Reserve (SX 392732) at 2pm

**Sunday 5th June** (CISFBR): New Hall Farm, Advent

Surveying Hedges For Wildlife

**BOOKING PREFERRED**

Leader: Ian Bennallick

Where: New Hall Farm, Advent (SX109804) at 10am.

**Sunday 12th June** (BCG): Coombe Valley

Target species: *Aconitum napellus*

Leader: Ian Bennallick.

Where: Meet at parking area Stowe Woods (SS220114) 10am.

**Friday 24th June** (CMG): Lower Kilminorth Woods

Target species: Scarce Merveille du Jour

Leader: Phil Boggis

Where: Lower Kilminorth Woods (SX248538) at 9.30pm

**Saturday 25th June** (BCG): Stara Woods & Bearah Tor

Leader: Jenny Bousfield and Ian Bennallick

Where: North Hill Village Hall car-park, SX270767 at 10am

## JULY

**Friday 1st July** (CMG): Poltescoe

Target species: Clouded Magpie

Leader: Phil Boggis

Where: NT car park Poltescoe (SW725157) at 9.30pm

**Saturday 9th July** (CMG): Lower Cabilla Wood

Target species: Double Line

Leader: Phil Boggis

Where: Lower Cabilla Wood (SX129653) at 9.30pm

**Tuesday 19th July** (BCG): North of Marazion

Leader: Graham Blow and Ian Bennallick at 10am

Where: Meet near Truthwall (SW529325)

**Wednesday 20th July** (CIG): Churchtown Farm, Saltash (SX45)

Leader: Ian Bennallick and Sue Scott

Where: End of lane south of St. Stephen's Church (SX417581) at 10am.

**Saturday 23rd July** (BCG): Millbrook & Cremyll

Target species: *Lotus glaber*, *Puccinellia rupestris* and *Trifolium squamosum*

Leader: Ian Bennallick

Where: Meet in Millbrook car-park, SX421519 at 10am.

**Friday 29th July** (CMG): Trenance

Target species: White-spotted Pinion.

Leader: Phil Boggis

Where: T junction at Trenance cottages (SW844569) at 9.30pm

**Sunday 31st July** (BCG): Crowdy Reservoir & Davidstow Woods

Target species: *Hammarbya paludosa*

Leader: Ian Bennallick & Nicholas De Sausmarez

Where: Meet at Crowdy car-park, near dam (SX138833) at 10am

## AUGUST

**Friday 5th August** (CMG): Trenance

Target species: White-spotted Pinion.

Leader: Phil Boggis

Where: T junction at Trenance cottages (SW844569) at 9.30pm

**Sunday 7th August** (CISFBR): Mudgeon Farm, St.Martin-in-Meneage

Surveying Hedges For Wildlife

**BOOKING PREFERRED**

Leader: Ian Bennallick

Where: Mudgeon Farm, St.Martin-in-Meneage (SW738249) at 10am.

**Saturday 13th August** (BCG): West Of St. Keyne

Leader: Ian Bennallick.

Where: Meet near phone box, in St. Keyne SX240611 at 10am

**Saturday 20th August** (CIG): Greena Moor (Creddacott), and Lower Lewdon (Wellies recommended!)

Leader: Ian Bennallick and Sue Scott

Where: Meet at Greena Moor (SX234963) at 10am in the morning and Lower Lewdon (SS256096) around 2pm.

**Saturday 27th August** (BCG): Yeolmbridge and Beales Meadows CWT Reserve

Leader: Ian Bennallick

Where: Meet at Langdon Cross in pub car park, SX303899.

## SEPTEMBER

**Saturday 24th September** (BCG): Between Seaton and Looe

Target species: *Pyrus cordata*

Leader: Ian Bennallick.

Where: Meet at Seaton car-park (SX302545) at 10am

## Interesting Find (2)

Joan Carr came across this specimen of the Southern Shieldbug *Nezara viridula* in a punnet of strawberries – a first for Cornwall. It is a cosmopolitan pest occasionally shipped to the UK with fruit, but in the hot August 2003 nymphs were collected outdoors in London, possibly having been bred here.



Southern Shieldbug *Nezara viridula* found in Cornwall

### CISFBR Officers for 2005/06

**Chair:** Rosemary Parslow, 17 St Michael's Road, Ponsanooth, Truro, TR3 7ED. Tel: 01872 865013

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**Minutes Secretary:** Matt Stribley, 20 Green Close, Truro, TRI 2DD. Tel: 01872 272900

**Committee:** All the above plus Tony Atkinson, Sarah Board, Joan Carr, Tim Dingle (*corresp. member*), Chris Hinks, David Holyoak, Loveday Jenkin, Rose Murphy, Catriona Neil, Treve Opie, Dr Chris Page, Adrian Spalding, and Pamela Tompssett

### 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.