



## WWBIC Bulletin No. 18

Sep 2012

Welcome to WWBIC newsletter number 18. Thank you to everyone that has contributed.



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### Interesting stuff

#### ***Onygena equina*** (Horn Stalkball)

*Onygena equina* is a fungus which is usually found on discarded horns and hooves of cattle and sheep. It produces fruiting bodies which can grow to about 15 mm. in height with a fertile head 2-4 mm. in diameter. This rarely recorded fungus, which is classified as “near threatened” on the UK red data list for fungi, has been found at two west Wales locations in 2012.

The first report came from Ceredigion where Jon Turner (CCW) reported finding a ram's skull with the horn surfaces covered in small fungal fruiting bodies. These were subsequently identified as *Onygena equina* by Alan Hale (CCW Lower Plant Ecologist).

Shortly after the Ceredigion discovery, the same species was recorded in Pembrokeshire when Holly Harries found a collection of fruiting bodies on a discarded cattle horn on her farm near Hundleton. A voucher specimen from the Pembrokeshire collection has been deposited at the Kew Gardens fungarium.



*Onygena equina* © David Harries

Records held on the national fungus records database indicate that the species was known from just two Welsh sites prior to these discoveries: Merionethshire in 1897 and 2002. Additionally, Philip Jones advises that during the summer of 2005 the species was found on a portion of hoof in a cattle shed near Pontyates in Carmarthenshire. Anyone finding discarded horns should keep an eye out for this fascinating and rarely recorded fungus. Bird enthusiasts should look out for a very similar fungus (*Onygena corvina*) which occurs on small mammal remains in owl pellets and occasionally on decaying feathers. County fungus recorders will be very pleased to hear of any new finds for either of these species.

**David Harries**

### **Pembrokeshire moths in 2011**

Two new moth records for Wales were recorded in Pembrokeshire in 2011

*Cosmopterix pulchrimella*, recorded on 25/09/2011 in Tenby (SN1300) where tenanted leaf mines were found on *Parietaria judaica* and larva reared by David Slade.

*Hymenia recurvalis*, recorded on 30/09/2011 at Skomer Island (SM735094), 2 adults were caught in a mercury vapour trap by Dave Boyle. A further single adult was also caught on the 03/10/2011 on Skomer Island by Dave Boyle and another on 13/10/2011 from Orlandon Kilns (SM8108) attracted to a mercury vapour trap by Rosemary Royle.

Also in 2011 there were several new moth records for the County. .

*Eriocrania sangii*, recorded on 20/04/2011 from Little Milford Wood (SM965119) where 2 tenanted mines were found on *Betula pendula* by Robin Taylor.

*Ectoedemia occultella*, 25/10/2011 from Pengelli NNR (SN125395) where 5 blotch mines on *Betula pendula* were found by Tony Lewis. [Read more...](#)

**Paul Warren**

### **Dormouse found at Bryndias farm**

Bryndias Farm is situated on a hillside above Pembrey in Carmarthenshire. The farm was previously monitored for dormice about twenty years ago and old dilapidated nest boxes were still attached to trees.

The present owners found a live dormouse on their doorstep that their cat had brought in from the woods. They alerted Carmarthenshire Biodiversity Partnership and a nut hunt was organised in Winter 2010 and was attended by Isabel Macho, Jacqueline and Paul Hartley and myself. Isabel found a hazel nut that had been characteristically nibbled by a dormouse and this led to a nest box survey being set up. 50 boxes were installed in March 2011 for the National Dormouse Monitoring Programme with me readily agreeing to volunteer to monitor on a monthly basis from April through to October. The nest boxes were made and supplied by HMP Dartmoor prison.

[read more](#)

**Richard Pond**



*Muscardinus avellanarius* © Richard Pond

### **Moth Recording at Dyfi NNR**

Reasonable numbers of moths have been coming to a 15W UV trap set intermittently on Cors fochno over the 'summer'. These have included individuals of the nationally scarce Purple-bordered Gold and Marsh Oblique-barred, as well as reasonable numbers of Rosy Marsh moth. Another unexpected capture was the



Five-spot burnet form minoides

© Mike Bailey

notable Hoary Footman, a species of coastal cliffs and shingle which was presumably blown inland a couple of kilometers by the strong winds on 14th August. Other uncommon species caught on the bog included: Barred Rivulet, Round-winged Muslin and Pinion-streaked Snout, while a short distance away at Ynyslas Alan Cole caught a Rosy Wave a notable saltmarsh species not recorded in Ceredigion for decades. Not surprisingly few day flyers recorded this year though good numbers of Five-spot Burnet were seen on the fringes of the bog including the form minoides with the red spots coalesced.

**Mike Bailey**

## Fungi in Carmarthenshire

In mid August, I looked for a tiny fungus growing on alder cones in a patch of woodland along the Millenium Coast Park, near Burry Port. I first found this in August 2010 but it took some time to name as few books have much information about these small species. I made it to be *Mycena rhenana*, a species with just 7 records on the FRDBI and these from four localities in England. First GB record in June 2000 from north Wiltshire. I looked for it last year (2011) but it was so dry that it probably did not 'fruit', or I did not see it. I had a good look in the area after it had rained for a few days and found it on 17th Aug and again since then. Quite distinctive on alder cones. (I find *Mycenas* not easy as many of them and small, also often needing microscopy so helps to find something on an easily recognised substrate).



*Mycena rhenana* © Philip Jones

Another find just this week (28-30th Aug) in Pembrey Country Park, an 'Earthstar' *Geastrum lageniforme*, Flask-shaped Earthstar, on sandy soil under alder. This is a RDL species (Near Threatened) with 38 records of the BMS fungus database, FRDBI. David had this last year from Pembs, Somerton I think. I am sure I have seen it at this spot before and just thought it was a more common species found elsewhere in the forest, *Geastrum fimbriatum* --Sessile earthstar. Teach me to look with greater care!

**Philip Jones**



*Geastrum fimbriatum* © Philip Jones



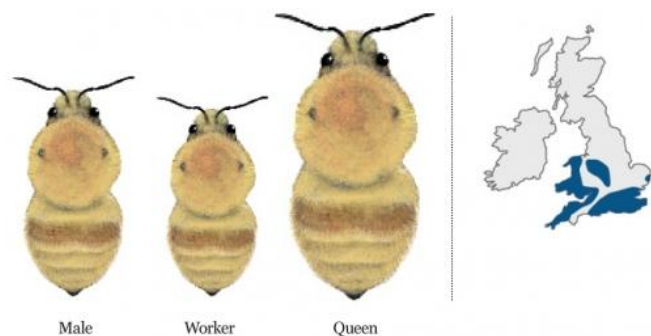
*Geastrum lageniforme* © Philip Jones

## Rare bumblebee at Carmel NNR

The rare Brown-banded carder bee (*Bombus humilis*), a UK Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) Priority Species, has been found for the first time at Carmel National Nature Reserve, Carmarthenshire. The "Beeline" Project (Working with Nature" funded by GrantScape) is a partnership between The Grasslands Trust (TGT) and the Bumblebee Conservation Trust (BBCT). TGT has been working at Carmel to increase the populations of bumblebees by restoring and extending species-rich grasslands. Volunteers have enjoyed three Bumblebee Identification courses over the summer. Despite the poor season, most of the common bumblebees, along with Cuckoo-bees such as the Forest cuckoo bumblebee *Bombus sylvestris*, have been found at Carmel. The highlight was the identification by Sinead Lynch (BBCT Conservation Officer Wales) of the Brown-banded carder bee, which requires close examination and confidence to distinguish it from the plentiful Common carder bee by its few black hairs close to the wing bases. Miles King, The Grasslands Trust Director of Conservation said: "Finding such a threatened bumblebee at Carmel is great news for The Grasslands Trust and it is a strong endorsement of all the work we have been doing restoring the meadows at Carmel. It shows how important it is to focus conservation effort in the right places, forge partnerships between communities, landowners and conservation charities, and the need to carry out detailed surveys of key species."

**Deborah Sazer**

(Image from Bumblebee Conservation Trust website)



### ***A Mobile Application and Integrated Web Interface for Recording Dragonflies***

WWBIC received financial support from the Sustainable Development Fund to develop a mobile application for recording dragonflies. This is the first terrestrial application of the ArcGIS Server software following the success of the cetacean recording development with Sea Trust. As with that project, the application has been developed by Rob Davies and his team at Habitat INFO based in Solva. We also received help from Stephen Coker and Bob and Annie Haycock in the content and design of the features we want to capture. The application provides a number of fields to enter the information and a drop down list of species which we would expect to occur in our area. These can then be entered as a point over a base map or by using the GPS locator of the device. The project aim is to increase the amount and involvement in biological recording in Pembrokeshire by creating an integrated mobile recording application and website interface. We are working with the Pembroke Millponds Action Group (PMAG) to trial its development. The web interface will allow records to be viewed and verified by the experts and viewed only by volunteers. The application has been developed for Android, iOS (iPhone) and Windows operating platforms and will run on a wide range of mobile devices, 3G phones and tablets, to send dragonfly records captured by field recorders to the database of WWBIC using the cellular network or a wireless broadband connection. The application uses ArcGIS Online to provide the base mapping and obtains the record features from the Server at WWBIC. This is a recent development by ESRI, the software originators, and as yet we require a network connection to send and receive the data on Android and iPhone. We are awaiting further development of a capability to work offline however the project will also run on the Windows operating platform using ArcGIS Mobile which allows records to be stored and uploaded when a connection is available.

At a Dragonfly Identification session with PMAG in August, we were successful in sending sightings of several dragonflies and damselflies to the database in WWBIC from Pembroke Common and the Millponds. Some technical difficulties have hindered us during September but we plan to get out with PMAG again before the season ends to run further trials.

### ***PlantTracker***

This is a new mobile application for recording invasive plants developed by The Environment Agency, the Nature Locator team at the University of Bristol and the Centre for Ecology and Hydrology.

<http://plantracker.naturelocator.org/>

The idea here is that you would send a close-up photograph of the plant and this is sent to PlantTracker where the records are stored in the Indicia data warehouse. A minimum amount of data and attributes are captured but as with our developments the location and date/time are captured by the device using the inbuilt GPS. Sending a photograph allows verification so the app can be used without any expert knowledge.

Records captured by this app do not come directly to the Local Record Centre and we would encourage records of invasives to be sent to us in the first instance. The app is still a useful tool particularly for novice recorders. We are in contact with Dave Kilbey, project manager at PlantTracker to look at accessing the PlantTracker data for LRC use.

### ***Facebook and Twitter***

WWBIC is now on Facebook and Twitter. This is all fairly new to us here, and we have not yet got in to a routine of posting but we hope to build up our "likes" and numbers of people looking in to see what we are doing, putting up records and letting us know of events that are happening. If you use Facebook, see something interesting and you would like to tell others, please let us know.

**Colin Russell**

## Data

There are **912,791** species records in our Recorder 6 database.

The number of records in the GIS reporting species layer is: **863,200**

Since the last newsletter we have had BTO WeBS data from Annie Haycock, invertebrate records from Kevin McGee, diptera records from Robin Taylor, 2011 PFRN records from David Harries and 2011 bryophyte records from Sam Bosanquet amongst other datasets from a variety of sources.

## Feedback

### Recording Days

On July 23rd a WWBIC Ceredigion recording day was held on National Trust land at Henllan. Gwen Potter, NT Head Ranger, met us and showed us the location of a couple of fields the Trust own in the village. After lunch we explored Henllan woods and river banks of the Teifi. The day was attended by Arthur Chater, Steve Chambers and Lin Gander. Members of Ceredigion Moth Group set moth traps over night and checked them early that morning. The fields in the village consisted of a nice mix of species and a couple of large oaks played host to some notable lichen species, *Arthonia anomorphila* and *Bactrospora corticola*. A mirco-moth I photographed on hogweed in one of the hedgerows was later identified by Kevin McGee as *Cydia aurana*, a species described by Kevin as localised in the County but not common. Some of the 'nicer' finds from the moth traps included *Mesoleuca albicillata* (Beautiful carpet) and *Plemyria rubiginata* (Blue bordered carpet). The combination of the beech woods and river Teifi near the bridge at Henllan made for a lovely setting on a sunny afternoon and the day was enjoyed by all.



On August 9th a WWBIC Carmarthenshire recording day was held at Cwmduhén near Carmarthen. Cwmduhén is one of four farms owned by Dr Nick Fox. Richard and Kath Pryce attended the day and Richard Smith with a couple of his volunteers. *Festuca gigantea* was seen along the verge of a shaded old green lane. Many of the fields were improved but there was a steep slope that had small populations of *Pedicularis sylvatica* (Lousewort) and *Hieracium umbellatum* (Narrow-leaf hawkweed) in the acid grassland. *Libellula depressa* (Broad-bodied chaser) and *Sympetrum striolatum* (Common darter) were seen around the pond by the river which had lots of potential but had been somewhat degraded by cattle poaching.

A WWBIC Pembrokeshire recording day took place at Southwood Farm near Newgale on September 11<sup>th</sup>. Southwood farm, approximately 200 acres, is owned by the National Trust and we were met at the site by Andrew Tuddenham who gave us an introduction and a bit of history about the farm. The day was attended by Annie and Bob Haycock, David Harries, Ron Elliott, Stephen and Anne Evans, Trevor Theobald and Jane Hodges. A barn owl (*Tyto alba*) was seen roosting in an old building south east of the farm, Royal fern (*Osmunda regalis*) was recorded in a wet flush to the west of the farm. The high proportion of Elm trees (*Ulmus*) in the woodland on the farm was noted and a possible otter holt was also recorded.



### Training days

Wales Biodiversity Partnership (WBP) funding made it possible again this year for WWBIC to arrange the following training days:

Plant identification training led by Richard Pryce at Pengraig Goch, Llanddeusant by kind permission of Dr Ruth Watkins. In partnership with Anna Hobbs who works for Carmarthenshire County Council on the Carmarthenshire Landscape & Heritage Grant Scheme the training was advertised amongst grant applicants, mainly small holders within Carmarthenshire. 19 people braved the weather and attended the training on a very wet 1<sup>st</sup> of August. It was a great opportunity for participants to see some interesting species rich habitat within the county as well as practical habitat management.



Plant identification training, Penygraig goch



Butterfly identification, Carmel NNR

Butterfly identification and habitat management was held at Carmel National Nature Reserve on August 14<sup>th</sup> and was led by Deborah Sazer. This event was organised in partnership with the Grasslands Trust and they kindly provided lunch on the day for all participants. The day began with a presentation by Deborah at the village hall and the afternoon was spent out on the Reserve catching and identifying butterflies. 9 people attended the training and 8 different butterfly species were identified in total.

Grass identification led by Steve Chambers was held on National Trust land at Mwnt. The training was attended by 13 people and 22 different grass species were identified at this species rich site. The whole day was spent outdoors, from the top of Foel y Mwnt we were able to watch bottle-nosed dolphins while we ate our lunch.



Invertebrate identification, Rhos Pil Bach



Grass identification, Mwnt

Invertebrates – field collecting and identification was led by Phil Ward on August 22<sup>nd</sup>. The day began at Capel-y-Wig vestry where Phil introduced the invertebrates and described the main orders. After lunch we went to Rhos Pil Bach Wildlife Trust Reserve where various techniques were used to catch and identify some invertebrates. The day ended back at the vestry keying out species under the microscope. 5 people attended what was a very interesting day.

## Forthcoming Events

**Natur Autumn Conference** 4/5<sup>th</sup> October 2012

Our Special Places ~ Their Future in Balance

For more information go to the Natur website: <http://natur.org.uk/>

**Wales Amphibian and Reptile Symposium** - 3rd November 2012 - Llandrindod Wells

For more information got to: <http://www.arc-trust.org/welshdragons/>

**Pembrokeshire Fungus Recording Network** 2012 recording programme

Sunday October 14<sup>th</sup> 2012 at Freshwater East

Saturday November 3<sup>rd</sup> 2012 at Pengelli Forest

Please contact David Harries to book a place. Email [dandh@f2s.com](mailto:dandh@f2s.com) or phone 01646 661340

### **National Botanic Garden of Wales**

Wales Fungus Day Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> October 2012

For more information, contact Bruce Langridge on [bruce.langridge@gardenofwales.org.uk](mailto:bruce.langridge@gardenofwales.org.uk) or phone Bruce on 01558 667162

### **Finding Fungi in Carmarthenshire** with Philip Jones

Saturday 20th October. Tumble Community Woodland, 2pm. Meet in the car park off Heol Hirwaun Olau, Tumble (SN 538126).

Sunday 21st October. Tregyb Wood, Ffairfach, Llandeilo, 2pm. Meet at the Woodland Trust car park, on the south side of Bethlehem road about 400m east of the school (SN636220).

Email: [philipjones8fungi@gmail.com](mailto:philipjones8fungi@gmail.com)

### **WWBIC Annual General Meeting**

Wednesday October 10<sup>th</sup>, 2pm at Landsker Business Centre.

Please contact the WWBIC office on 01994 241468 for more information.

## Thank you

Thanks to the National Trust for allowing us access for recording days at Henllan, Ceredigion and Southwood Farm, Pembrokeshire and to Jo Oliver for our visit to Cwmdduhen in Carmarthenshire.

Thanks to the training day leaders Phil Ward, Deborah Sazer, Steve Chambers and Richard Pryce. Thanks also to the Grasslands Trust and Anna Hobbs for making the Carmarthenshire training days possible and to Dr Ruth Watkins, the Wildlife Trust and the National Trust for providing sites for the training days.

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If you have any comments or feedback regarding this newsletter please email: [kate@westwalesbiodiversity.org.uk](mailto:kate@westwalesbiodiversity.org.uk) or phone the WWBIC office on 01994 241468