

Reports for BMIG AGM; April 21st 2022

SECRETARY'S REPORT

We have 500 contacts and 495 subscribers (5 = BRC helping with administration). There were 439 at the last AGM so numbers are growing.

Mail Chimp is working well from my perspective, but I'm unsure how many people not getting the newsletter as going into their junk box. Tried various things to try and reduce this problem and feedback seems to be that it has improved but I think it is still not perfect. I also feel some people are confused that the email appears to come from BRC, but this is not easy to change this unless I use my personal email address, which a bit reluctant to do. We could set up some separate email addresses but the BRC link is helpful as I can tap into their expertise in case of problems.

Last mailing was the spring newsletter and 52% of emails were opened. (an improvement on the AGM announcement which was 28%). The autumn newsletter was 32%. People may not be opening it if they know that it just means the newsletter is on the website and this is visible in the preview panel?

Thanks to the testers who are great at responding really quickly – it's really helpful to ensure I don't do something daft and make sure the links work.

I submitted a report on our groups to British Wildlife which was published last year. I have committed to doing one this year too, which should be in the August edition of the magazine. If anyone has anything they would like me to include, please do give me details.

Steve Hopkin's symphylid slides were picked up from Reading University last summer and I have catalogued them onto Excel. They are now with Steve Gregory to be delivered to Dinton Pastures in the near future. While cataloguing them I discovered that many of them are actually of woodlice genitalia and some are of specimens that belong to Copenhagen Museum which will be returned with some other material I have from loan in the next couple of weeks. We are not sure where the bodies are of the woodlice.

Helen Read

BMIG TREASURER'S REPORT TO AGM 2022

This being the first 'proper' BMIG AGM since 2019, I am providing a review for two financial years (2020 and 2021). The Statement of Accounts for 2021 also includes 2020.

Income

Copyright earnings: BMIG continues to receive scheduled payments from Publishers' Licencing Services (PLS) with regard to copyright earnings on the BMIG *Bulletin* and its predecessor publications. These have amounted to £1974.39 (2019), £580.05 (2020) and £250.32 (2021). The payments in 2019 and 2020 included considerable back payments from before BMIG had signed-up to receive copyright earnings though PLS. In future annual earnings of about £250 can be expected.

E-book sales: Previously sales were handled by the Nature Bureau with BMIG receiving a share of the royalties. The entire remaining stock of the E-book was purchase from Nature Bureau in 2021. Since then the E-book has been sold direct by BMIG at £7.00/copy including p&p, with 50% of the net income being retained by BMIG and 50% of the net going to Paul Richards as royalties. Any slight surplus from postage and packing will be retained by BMIG.

Other: BMIG received a payment of £40 for an illustrated article published in *British Wildlife*. We are very grateful to Helen Read for writing the article and generously donating her fee to BMIG.

Annual Field Meeting finances

Income and expenditure related to organising the BMIG annual field meeting normally constitute our main financial transactions. This is essentially “in-out” money because BMIG does not aim to make a profit from organising its annual field meeting; nor does it normally subsidise meetings (unless a loss is made), apart from through BMIG Bursaries for a few individuals. Although BMIG Bursaries were launched in 2019, none will have been used until 2022.

In early March 2020, when the prospect of a Covid-19 epidemic looked certain but the UK Government was procrastinating, I took the decision (after consulting other committee members) to cancel our booking with Bridgwater and Taunton College for the 2020 field meeting. We were expecting two overseas visitors who would need to cancel their flights. I was able to get the College to reduce our cancellation charge to the amount of our initial deposit (£163.50), which had been paid in August 2019. All those that had booked and paid a deposit were offered a refund. Some were refunded, but others instructed that BMIG should retain their deposit against an expectation that a meeting would be organised for a future date. These retained deposits were either re-activated for 2022 or refunded where individuals were unable to book for 2022.

Other expenditure

In 2021 the main large expenditure was the purchase of the remaining stock of E-books from Nature Bureau (£288). Residual royalties from sales by Nature Bureau in 2020 were paid to Paul Richards. BMIG made presentations to Paul Lee and John Lewis during 2021; these were organised for BMIG by Steve Gregory.

Paul Harding, BMIG Treasurer, 10 April 2022

CENTIPEDE RECORDING SCHEME REPORT

With Covid-19 restrictions, the lack of meetings and collecting opportunities and other factors the number of records coming in has clearly been affected. Nevertheless, records, based on either specimens or photographs have continued to come in and Steve has gathered valuable data via his verification of iRecord reports and through social media. It might be useful, sometime, perhaps, to think about drawing up a list of the photographic “shots” that might be most useful in verification although these are clearly different for the four orders of centipede (as well as for isopods and millipedes). Possibly the BMIG website would be a place for this.

Of particular interest is the increasing numbers of records for *Scutigera* in recent years with one from Cornwall being noted for the first time in 2021. In the period 1881 to 1990 there appear to be only 8 published records for Great Britain but from 2001 to 2020 there were 30. As yet, there are no totally reliable records for Ireland, it seems. Certainly, an animal to watch out for. 2021 also saw records of *Scolopendra* species from Devon and Cornwall with, what appeared to be a very handsome *S.cingulata* from a plant tray from Holland in a garden centre near Plymouth.

2021 was also a year of rediscoveries. Keith Lugg, having moved to Shetland, along with Mike Pennington, rediscovered *Geophilus proximus* on Unst, not far from the location from which its first, and up to then, only British record had been made in 1974 by a team from Merlewood Research Station. It is an interesting species, parthenogenetic and widespread in Scandinavia and one of the three species of centipedes (along with *Pachymerium ferrugineum* and *Lithobius curtipes*) known from far northern Europe.

The other rediscovery was of *Lamyctes africanus*, first collected here in 1986 by Charles Rawcliffe in a greenhouse in the Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh, identified by E.H.Eason but not found there subsequently by later collectors nor included in the British keys. In recent years it has been found outdoors in both Denmark and Germany and from a greenhouse in the Czech Republic and the likelihood of it being found again in Britain was referred to in the Newsletter. It does resemble *Lamyctes*

emarginatus although described as bright orange and, in life, with a dark “raccoon mask” around the ocelli and differences in legs and forcipular coxosternite. In December 2021, Nicola Garnham found what she thought was this species in a heated indoor plant propagator at home in Lancashire and referred it to Steve Gregory who confirmed it and it seemed well established there. A report is planned for the Bulletin by Steve & Nicola. It is clearly highly unlikely that these two locations are the only places it occurs in Britain so worth checking any specimens of *L.emarginatus*. It would also be interesting to know whether its life cycle parallels the annual one of *L.emarginatus*.

It had been hoped at one time that the *Atlas of the Centipedes of Britain and Ireland* would have been published before Christmas 2021 but this was not to be so for various reasons and at the present time is still “in press”. It had been my intention to relinquish the responsibility for the BMIG Centipede Recording Scheme once the atlas was published but with these delays, that time continued to recede into the future so I think it is appropriate that the change over of responsibility should now take place. As mentioned, responsibility for iRecord verification & Facebook, etc. is with Steve anyway and I offer my good wishes and support to him or whoever takes over the scheme. The originators of the schemes for woodlice, millipedes and centipedes wanted to collect not just location records (“where recorders lived and took their holidays”) but ecological data as well and it will be interesting to see how the BMIG “tailored” version of iRecord will continue to do so. The schemes were very much “species” focussed too and it might be interesting to see how we might look at things such as centipede assemblages. A short while ago I was at a BRC Zoom meeting on DNA-derived species records. Some BMIG members have already been involved in collecting material for such things as barcoding and tree of life. How will BMIG be involved in e-DNA derived species records?

I have been more or less directly involved in BMG/BMIG recording since the Late Palaeolithic (it sometimes seems) and have worked with innumerable individuals and organisations who have contributed records, expertise, encouragement and support and want to say “Thank You” to them all. I would like to continue being involved with BMIG in whatever way I can, including the Bulletin and in offering verification/expertise directly or in connection with the recording scheme.

Tony Barber, April 2022

MILLIPEDE RECORDING SCHEME REPORT

The lockdowns of the last two years appear to have encouraged myriapodologists in Britain to catch up with their paperwork. The last year saw the formal publication of a number of discoveries new to Britain and new to science. Three of the later were first collected from the Welsh valleys several years ago by Christian Owen and Liam Olds but it was only in 2021 that records of *Psichrosoma cf breuili*, *Turdulisoma cf helenreadae* and *Turdulisoma cf turdulorum* were first reported in the Bulletin. These three species have still, yet to be described. Two other species new to Britain, *Cylindroiulus dahli* and *Orthochordeumella pallida*, were collected by Richard Weddle from Glasgow in 2017 but were not identified until 2020 and not formally reported until 2021. The oldest of these new to Britain records reported in 2021 was Helen Read’s collection of *Brachyiulus lusitanus* from the Eden Project during a BMIG meeting in 2009.

Over the last year significant range extensions for other millipedes have been noted. *Polydesmus aesthenestatus* is an Italian species introduced to Northern Ireland but now added to the British list based on its discovery in Devon and the work in Glasgow already mention also produced the first Scottish record of *Propolydesmus testaceus*. The first record of *Thalassisobates littoralis* from the Channel Islands was reported from Guernsey and *Ophiulus germanicus* was found in Manchester, further north than previously known.

Over the year I have received more than half a dozen requests for copies of the draft millipede key, but these have been politely refused as the key is being updated in preparation for the revision of the Linnean Society synopsis. In most cases I have offered help with identification and checking of specimens

and have examined millipedes from the Otter Hole cave system under Chepstow racecourse, from Loch Arkaig pinewoods and from the National Botanic Garden of Wales.

Paul Lee, April 2022

WOODLOUSE RECORDING SCHEME

Records are continuing to trickle in, mainly via iRecord. It is unfortunate that typical iRecord users are general naturalists who rarely record anything other than the large, ubiquitous and/or easy to identify species, such as *Oniscus asellus*, *Porcellio scaber* and *Armadillidium vulgare* (I should point out that there are a few notable exceptions to this rule!). In some cases there have been small trichoniscid 'pygmy woodlice' lurking in the background of images which had been entirely unnoticed by the recorder until I have alerted them to this. On a positive note many valuable records of *Armadillidium depressum* from north-west England have been trawled from records of specimens mis-identified as *A. vulgare*!

Recently I have been notified of some records (several sites) for *Trachelipus rathkii* in typical flood plain habitat along the river Avon in Worcestershire. It must be over-looked in other river valleys!

Steve Gregory

INTERTIDAL MARINE ISOPOD RECORDING SCHEME REPORT

Records have continued to come in for intertidal marine isopods via iRecord, not in large numbers but certainly a steady trickle. Ann Wake and Allan Rowat in particular have been doing sterling work around Anglesey. In addition, a good few records have come into iRecord from iNaturalist, following an arrangement by BRC to gather records from the latter platform, which otherwise were not feeding into any recording schemes or databases. I have also received a number of specimens for examination by post from various parts of the UK. Most records have been of obvious and common species (e.g. *Idotea*, *Dynamene*). The records that I've verified have been feeding through to NBN and some of the species maps on there are beginning to look a little less sparse than they were previously.

Notable records since the last AGM include:

- *Ceratothoa steindachneri* (the 'tongue-biting' isopod), found parasitising Lesser Weever by Robin Somes at the Isle of Grain in Kent in late April 2021; this is the first known British record outside of Cornwall and represents a large expansion in its known range;
- *Nerocila orbigny*, an external parasite of various fish species, found by Robin Somes in Southampton Water in February 2022 on Whiting; there have not been many records of this southern species so far, which is occasionally encountered on fish landed on shore;
- *Clypeoniscus hansen*, a small (0.5 mm) parasite of *Idotea* sp. isopods, found on the underside of *Idotea balthica* by Warren Maguire in Berwickshire in late April 2021; this species is probably widespread but there are very few records of it from around Britain and Ireland (and it is not included in Naylor & Brandt's 2015 synopsis);
- A single female *Campecopea hirsuta*, a species only previously known from south-west English and southern Irish coasts, found in a barnacle scraping taken on the Berwickshire coast by Warren Maguire in October 2021;
- A single *Lekanesphaera monodi*, found in the Coquet Estuary in Northumberland in August 2021; this species has previous only been recorded on southern (north to Norfolk) and western shores of Britain.

In the last year, I have given online talks on finding, identifying and recording intertidal isopods to the Rockpool Project in September 2021, for the FSC in March 2022, and at the annual Porcupine conference in April 2022.

Warren Maguire

BMIG BULLETIN REPORT

Volume for 2022 is getting close to publication. There have been some delays this year due to Steve moving house and Helen being busy on other things. Hopefully proofs will be sent out soon and we can publish soon after. Slightly slimmer volume this year but lots of centipede articles.

Helen Read (Bulletin editor)

NEWSLETTER EDITOR'S REPORT

Two Newsletters have been published since the last AGM, Autumn 2021, released in October, and Spring 2022, released in March. Both were quite chunky (12 and 11 pages respectively), with plenty of content from across our areas of specialism. They were distributed to members of BMIG via Mailchimp and were placed on our website. They were also advertised on Twitter and the BMIG Facebook group. I have made some changes in style and layout in the latest Newsletter which I think have improved things a little. Copy for the next Newsletter should be sent to the editor by 7th September 2022.

Warren Maguire (Newsletter Editor)

BMIG WEBSITE

The domain name www.bmig.org.uk (BMIG website) paid for up to Jan 2023. [The domain name www.bmig.uk paid for up to March 2023. The latter currently un-used. Any ideas?]

Images (via Warren) are gradually being added to the species accounts for intertidal isopods.

The first detailed species account with images for a Pauropod, *Allopauropus (Decapauropus) gracilis*, added by Dawid Martyniuk. Hopefully more will follow.

Steve Gregory