

## **BMIG reports for AGM 2024**

### **4. Secretary's Report - Helen Read**

BMIG currently has 598 contacts on the mailing list (an increase from 535 last year). If I'm understanding the statistics provided by MailChimp: For the most recent newsletter mailing 98% of emails were delivered with just 11 bouncing. 310 opened the email. 178 clicked to open the newsletter. 3 unsubscribed. As far as I can tell this level of activity is pretty typical for our mailings.

As ever I get little feedback, so while it is an effective way of delivering the newsletter it is not a great way to stimulate responses and interactions.

### **5. Treasurer's Report for 2023 - Paul T. Harding, 12 March 2024**

BMIG's accounting year runs from 1 January to 31 December. The Statement of Accounts for 2023 includes 2022 for comparison. It will be tabled at the AGM. During 2023 the main financial activity has been that relating to our annual field meetings.

**2022 Field Meeting (Shropshire)** The final account from FSC came to £5090 reflecting not only the increased numbers attending (28), but also the increased cost of accommodation etc. Three BMIG Bursaries were approved for the 2022 field meeting, but only two were taken up by the recipients.

**2023 Field Meeting (Somerset)** The budget for the 2023 field meeting was nearly £7000, again reflecting the increased numbers (27 residential) and the increased cost of accommodation and meals. Three BMIG Bursaries were granted for the 2023 meeting and BMIG paid for dinner for our invited guests John & Sheila Lewis.

**2024 Field Meeting (Snowdonia)** The committee decided that the meeting should be held in North Wales. A venue proposed by Dafydd Lewis was not receptive to my exploratory enquiries for a group booking and eventually I negotiated suitable accommodation at the Snowdonia National Park's Field Centre, Plas Tan y Bwlch. A total of 29 residential participants have booked. One BMIG Bursary to attend the meeting was approved. BMIG has subsidized the cost of the meeting room at Plas Tan y Bwlch.

**Questionnaire survey on future annual field meetings** This was sent in May 2023 to about 50 BMIG members and active IRecord contributors, especially those that had attended a field meeting in recent years. Less than half responded, three of whom had never attended a BMIG field meeting. The inconclusive results were reported to BMIG Committee at its autumn meeting with the need for reasonable quality accommodation and moderate prices being recognized.

**Publisher's Licensing Services** BMIG was in receipt of £70.89 (nett) during 2023.

**Article for *British Wildlife* magazine** We are very grateful to Helen Read for donating her fee to BMIG for this now annual article on BMIG activities.

**Subscription to Buglife** BMIG's subscription continued at the nominal rate of £2/year.

**Insurance** Hitherto BMIG had benefitted from its affiliation to BENHS for 3<sup>rd</sup> party insurance for people attending the BMIG annual meeting. This cover was withdrawn by BENHS (without consultation) in late 2023. BMIG Chairman has been investigating options for insurance and how it may be financed in future.

## 6. Recording Scheme reports

### a. Centipedes – Steve Gregory

Last April Tony Barber stepped down as scheme organiser and the reins have been taken up by Steve Gregory. Tony continues to be active in the background with all matters centipede.

Records continue to be submitted to the recording scheme through iRecord (either submitted directly or via iNaturalist). In 2023 this amounted to 950 verified records, and so far in 2024 (3 months) 323 records have been verified. Of note is the continued increase in the number of House Centipede *Scutigera coleoptrata* sightings. In 2023 this totalled 16 verified records. In the first three months of 2024 already there has been 17 records! This appears to have been boosted by the BBC article published about its discovery in Nottinghamshire, with several people subsequently emailing images to me for confirmation of identification and for advice for ‘reporting’ their sighting. This centipede seems to be well established in Weston Super-Mare, with 13 records from 7 sites since 2022.

In March an image of a very leggy centipede rolled into a ball and exposing a ‘red belly stripe’ was posted on iNaturalist [<https://www.inaturalist.org/observations/203401422>]. This had been provisionally labelled as *Himantarium gabrielis*, a species that is widely distributed across the Mediterranean region, but this was central southern England! This is not a species I have ever seen (though I am aware that it is renowned for having up to 179 leg pairs!). Thus, I tagged Etienne Iorio who agreed with the identification, and added that it frequently turns up in synanthropic habitats and is known from ornamental gardens at a site in Paris (albeit on the wrong side of The Channel!).

### b. Millipedes – Paul Lee and Helen Read

We have been concentrating on the Synopsis and prioritised this above all else so apologies from both of us if we haven’t kept up to date with other BMIG issues recently.

The text of the Synopsis is being submitted for layout in sections and all has been sent now apart from the Chordeumatida, the references and a couple of tables. Most of the figures have been completed with just five Chordeumatids remaining. We are aiming to send the remaining items by June. Joerg Spelda is hoping to describe the new Welsh Chordeumatida at this very moment (finger’s crossed!) if that doesn’t happen we may need a plan B to deal with these in the Synopsis. We (and Christian Owen) have offered any help he needs from us... Many thanks to all those who have loaned/given specimens for us to draw and look at. Male Chordeumatida seem to have been especially hard to find this year!

Paul Lee is aware of problems with *Indicia* from his work with the Spider Recording Scheme and will pick things up with Martin Harvey once the Chordeumatida section for the Synopsis is completed.

In terms of new records there has been *Leptoiulus belgicus* from Surrey and *Leptoiulus kervillei* from Northants but Steve Gregory may know more.

### c. Woodlice - Thomas Hughes

The total number of observations submitted to the record scheme from (01/05/23) to present is 2,187, which is broken down into; 39 Asellidae, 40 Ligiidae, 197 Trichoniscidae, 3 Halophilosciidae, 465 Philosciidae, 46 Platyarthridae, 423 Oniscidae, 639 Porcellionidae, 19 Trachelipodidae, 316 Armadillidiidae. After taking over the recording scheme back in April 2023 I have had a slow start due to a series of personal circumstances, but Steve Gregory

has kindly maintained the continuous flow of records until I picked up the reins. Myself and Warren Maguire from the BMIG committee, in addition to Ciarán Bryne in Ireland, have been visiting garden centres within our local areas to look for accidental introductions on potted plants. These visits resulted in some exciting observations, including some disjunct records of *Armadillidium nasatum* and *Trachelipus rathkii*. Two non-native species also made an appearance during these sampling efforts, including a new species record for Britain, which will be reported in the upcoming Bulletin. iRecord has had a steady stream of records, typically around 5-10 observations per day, with the most common species being *Porcellio scaber* with a total of 571 observations followed by *Philoscia muscorum* at 441 observations. Some of the recorder highlights over the past year include: various non-native species observed by Finley Hutchinson from the Eden Project, Cornwall, *Philoscia affinis* in North Yorkshire and *Porcellio laevis* by Stephanie Skipp at Goodnestone Park and Gardens, East Kent.

#### **d. Intertidal Isopod Recording Scheme – Warren Maguire**

I'm not sure why, but there have been fewer intertidal records submitted to both iRecord and iNaturalist recently than we've been seeing previously. There's still a trickle of records, but it would be nice to see more. *Idotea* continue to dominate not surprisingly, but there are also quite a few records of Sphaeromatidae, including *Lekanesphaera*, which can only be identified to species with dissection, so many of these have to remain at genus level. There was a nice find of *Limnoria tripunctata*, the rarest of our Gribble species, by Helen Boyce in Hampshire in January, the first record of this species the recording scheme has received (see Spring 2024 Newsletter).

One thing that did happen was that the records from the Rockpool Project (<https://www.therockpoolproject.co.uk/>) have been sucked into iRecord, producing many intertidal records from the south-west. This is an excellent development, as a lot of intertidal records for all species groups in the south-west appear to be submitted to the Rockpool Project rather than to group-specific recording schemes, and so far I don't think they were going anywhere. Quite a few of the IDs in these records were wrong but had been 'verified' as correct by the Rockpool Project, so it's good that they've come to iRecord for proper verification (hopefully they aren't also being sucked up by other databases without correction). The Rockpool Project records have so far only come in two big bunches.

#### **7. Bulletin editor**

Not much copy has been submitted this year (three obituaries, a book review, one short article and one longer one) although a longish manuscript is hopefully being completed by Steve Gregory. We would greatly appreciate more articles if anyone has anything close to completion please let an editor know.

#### **8. Newsletter Report – Warren Maguire**

I've had plenty of copy for the Newsletter this year, it coming to 17 pages in the autumn and to 14 pages in the spring, so there are no worries on that front. Keep it coming, and any suggestions for additions/changes/improvements are welcome. Turn around time for the Newsletter is still a bit slow, but as it all depends on lots of people giving their time that's not surprising, though it would be nicer to tighten things up a little bit (as much my fault as anything!). Due to work commitments, I wasn't able to get the Newsletter out as early as normal this year, so the one-month notice for the 2024 AGM had to be issued separately.

I've not had any feedback to speak of, but hopefully it's being well received – do let me know if you hear anything.

### **9. Library and collection manager's report**

Nothing to report.

### **10. Events and exhibitions report – Dafydd Lewis**

In 2023 we had a free table at the AES annual exhibition and insect fair, held at Kempton Park Racecourse. This was 'manned' by Helen and Duncan, who brought along some live samples and displayed our leaflets and display boards.

The AES did not have a table at the BENHS exhibition in November, so were unable to publicise BMIG there.

### **11. Social Media Report – Warren Maguire**

Our Facebook group continues to be active, with 1,280 members. Lots of posts and pictures of common and less common species. We currently have 1,707 followers on Twitter/X. Probably the main thing to report on this front are changes to Twitter/X, whereby Tweetdeck became unavailable last summer without payment. Tweetdeck was very handy because it allowed you to have columns displaying constantly updating search results (e.g. I had a column for all mentions on Twitter of *woodlouse/woodlice/isopod(s)* which produced loads of tweets, mostly not relevant to us but picking up odd interesting things I could comment on or retweet). Without Tweetdeck, you can still do a search for those terms, but you have to do it every time you want to look rather than having it as a streamed column of tweets all the time, so it's not really useful. So unless someone tags us in a tweet, I am not very likely to see relevant tweets about woodlice, centipedes, millipedes, symphylans and pauripods, which is inevitably reducing our overall engagement.

### **12. Website managers report – Steve Gregoy**

The right for BMIG to use the domain name [bmig.org.uk](http://bmig.org.uk) was renewed in January 2024 (for the princely sum of £7.19 per annum) and also [bmig.uk](http://bmig.uk) in March (though the latter still remains unused by BMIG).

On-going updating of the website continues. The symphylan section has been updated with a revised checklist with species nomenclature following MilliBase. A species account for *Symphylleloopsis subnuda* has been added (with thanks to Christian Owen). As with the Pauropod web pages, this is work in progress. In addition, BMIG newsletters 47 (autumn 2023) and 48 (spring 2024) and articles from BMIG Bulletin 35 (2023) have been uploaded. Also added are images of under-represented species, including Liam Olds' image of live a *Polydesmus asthenestatus* from South Wales and Finley Hutchinson's images of *Cryptops doriae* from Eden Project and *Polydesmus barberii* from Devon (and images of other species too). My grateful thanks to these and others who allow their images to be used on the website.