

Officer Reports for BMIG AGM meeting 11 April 2025

4. Secretary – Helen Read

We have 635 people on the MailChimp mailing list. For a while there seemed to be a problem with people signing up and so I added a few by hand. Steve and I both had a go at signing up from the website and had no problems so we are not sure what was happening. If anyone else is aware of any problems please let me know and I will try to follow up.

In the absence of an autumn or spring newsletter I sent slightly longer Mailings as notification of the field meeting bookings being open and about the AGM. The last mailing according to MailChimp had a 98% delivery rate and 240 people (40%) opened the message.

5. Treasurer's Report for 2024 (with comments to March 2025)

BMIG's accounting year runs from 1 January to 31 December. The Statement of Accounts for 2024 includes 2023 for comparison. It will be tabled at the AGM. During 2024 the main financial activity was that relating to our annual field meetings,

2024 Field Meeting

After uncertainty about the costs of the 2024 field meeting in Snowdonia based at Plas Tan y Bwlch, the final invoice (agreed only on the evening before we departed) was within the predicted budget.

2025 Field Meeting

Duncan Sivell has kindly dealt with all matters relating to the venue at Berkhamsted School and with individual bookings.

Payments

Payments were made for the BMIG domain name (£7.19 via Steve Gregory), purchase of lights for use with microscopes (£32 via Paul Richards), annual insurance (£126 via Duncan) and second-hand microscopes (£150 to BENHS via Duncan).

Income

Income from PLS for copyright royalties was £34.99 in March.

Helen Read kindly donated to BMIG her fee (£60) for the now annual article on BMIG activities in *British Wildlife* magazine.

End of year accounts

The final accounts for 2024 were prepared in January 2025 and have been circulated to the Committee. The Statement of Accounts for 2024 will be available at the AGM. Our operating net balance in 2024 was around £6000, as it has been for several years.

Resignation as Treasurer

My intention to resign as Treasurer was recorded at the 2024 AGM. My personal circumstances determine that I should not continue in even this rather minimal role and that a new Treasurer for BMIG should be appointed. Although not onerous for whoever is appointed, an essential duty must be to renew BMIG's banking including possibly selecting a new provider, changing signatories and implementing whatever level of

remote banking is appropriate and practical for BMIG. I will provide practical support to whoever is appointed, as appropriate, including dealing with payments until the new Treasurer has renewed BMIG's banking facilities.

Personal comments

I have been part of the structure of BMIG since it was formed in 2000 and, before that, of BISG (one of BMIG's predecessors) since about 1970. My 25 years as Treasurer of BMIG has meant that I have been at or close to many aspects of its development and growth. It is particularly heartening to see a new cohort of people getting involved, particularly at the annual field meetings which have re-vitalized in the "post-Covid" era. Long may it continue!

6. a) Centipede Recording Scheme Report – Steve Gregory

Records continue to be submitted to the recording scheme through iRecord (either submitted directly or via iNaturalist). In 2024 this amounted to 1145 verified records. This compares favourably with the 950 records verified in 2023. However, there seems to be an increasing trend by a few iNaturalist users of posting multiple images of different specimens of the same species seen on the same site on the same day, thus resulting in duplicity of species records.

iNaturalist user Liam Keene is proving very helpful with species verification. With just a few months of experience he has been recording many of the less common centipedes (and woodlice and millipedes too!). In addition, he has been trawling through many hundreds of the older records with vague identifications (such as 'arthropod', 'chilopoda', 'geophilomorpha', 'lithobiomorpha', etc) and in many cases coming up with a species identification. As a result he has added many records (which I have verified) for uncommon centipedes, such as *Henia vesuviana*, that can be safely identified from a photo (and many millipedes and even more and woodlice too!).

Another relative newcomer on iNaturalist, Joss Carr, has compiled an interactive key to geophilomorph centipedes based in the first instance on leg count. I had a brief look at the key and it looks very good and potentially a useful addition to other identification guides. However, the real test will be through usage by a relatively inexperienced recorder.

b) Millipede Recording scheme report

At the end of 2024 I completed two exercises for Natural England's Threatened Species Recovery Actions (TRSA) and Species Evidence Base (SEB) projects. These bring together a wide range of taxonomic and ecological information on the six 'threatened' millipede species, assessing their vulnerability to climate change and other pressures, and identifying potential recovery actions. Whether there will be any practical outcomes or whether it was just a form-filling exercise remains to be seen.

BMIG's new iRecord Species Recording Form went live in December 2024. This enables recorders once again to submit structured ecological data along with the basic 'what, when, where, who' information. When verifying millipede records on iRecord I have been encouraging use of the new recording form. I have asked BRC to look at transferring data they hold from the last 25 years to the iRecord database but I suspect there are many more records from the same period that have never been submitted to

the recording scheme. Encouraging the submission of missing data will be essential to undertaking a new Species Status Review and producing a new National Rarity list.

Jorg Spelda has confirmed that the two *Turdulisoma* species present in Wales are *T. helenreadae* and *T. turdulorum*. Differences in the structure of the gonopods between Welsh and Iberian specimens are seen as within the range of natural variation. However, *Psichrosoma cf. breuili* is still considered a new species and awaits description.

There are now *Polydesmus asthenestatus* records from an increasing number of locations but no records of *P. taranus* have been submitted to the recording scheme or iRecord. Chris Owen continues to make interesting finds in South Wales. He has collected *Polydesmus barberii*, the first record of the species outside South Devon, and two other species, a Blaniulid and a Chordeumatid, that he thinks are new to Britain.

The last year has seen the usual batch of emails due to swarming millipedes and millipedes entering houses. More unusual was the request from a dealer in the pet trade asking about the identification of SE Asian species. He was hoping he could get help from a British expert that would save him the expense of shipping specimens to Thomas Wesner. The most interesting emails I received included photos of *Polydesmus* egg chambers sent by Lin Jenkins.

Synopsis update

The revision of the Synopsis has suffered a delay as John Crothers who was doing the layout sadly died at Christmas time. Fortunately he had already passed over all the documents to Rebecca Farley/Brown at FSC and she has taken over the job. She did however have several other projects to finish first.

Last week we received the proofs but we haven't had time to look at them yet – though we can spot some obvious errors...

c) Non-marine Isopods - Thomas Hughes

Records have been trickling in as usual, from 01/05/2024 until present we have had 1,700 observations, a slight decrease from last year. There have been a few exciting records though, with *Chaetophiloscia elongata* and *Proasellus coxalis* being particular highlights. I also received an unexpected gift in the post of a non-native woodlouse from the glasshouse at Kew Garden that has so far been attributed to the African genus *Synarmadillo*. It's been a busy year on a global scale for the recording scheme too. There has been developing project to consolidate a global distributional and literary database for woodlice, a platform that will be called Oniscidbase. In addition to this, and to curtail the growing trend of blackmarket and unregulated woodlouse trade a woodlouse specialist group is being forwarded to the IUCN very soon (including two British contributors, myself and Liza Fowler). There are very few species of woodlice of conservation concern with sufficient data to allow reviews, but the British Isles and overseas territories already boast two, including *Metarichoniscoides celticus* and *Pseudolaureola atlantica* (the yellow spiky woodlouse of Saint Helena). Furthermore, Natural England (NE) have been pushing to update and review invertebrates with protection status in the UK for species specific recovery plans (TSRA and SEB), this database has included 2 woodlice (*Oniscus asellus occidentalis* and *Stenophiloscia glarearum*) and 2 waterlice (*Asellus aquaticus* and *Proasellus meridianus*). As the two former species are more targeted jobs and not something that casually turn up through

the recording scheme, I will try and encourage more dedicated recording of these two taxa in the coming years to hopefully allow for a sufficient review to support both the IUCN and NE initiatives. Back in spring 2024 I assisted with the identification of c.100 pitfall samples of woodlice from Gibraltar, for the Gibraltar Ornithological and Natural History Society, although these are not directly associated the BRC record scheme, perhaps we could consider maintaining record lists for some of these overseas territories in the future?

d) Intertidal isopods - Warren Maguire

Intertidal marine isopod records continue to come in, not in huge numbers but steadily, through iRecord and, especially, iNaturalist (which, once they reach 'Research Grade', get passed on to iRecord for further verification). Occasional records are submitted by email and several others have been extracted from Facebook posts (including, as usual, some excellent ones by Steve Trehwella). Most records are of common, larger species and unfortunately the more difficult genera (especially *Lekanesphaera*, *Jaera*) rarely come with enough detail for specific ID. There have been, surprisingly, quite a few records of *Munna* species on iNaturalist as well, and these can also be difficult to ID to species from photos. Owing to work pressures, I haven't had much time for record verification in 2025, but I caught up with everything other than a few difficult cases in early April. There haven't really been any surprises amongst the records, but there have been some excellent ones submitted by 'sacisaacs' from the Channel Islands, and I was pleased to confirm the presence of *Paragnathia formica* (several males) at Alnmouth, Northumberland, in October 2024, the most north-easterly record of the species so far known, apparently last recorded at this location in 1976 by Martin Sheader. A record of *Cleantis prismatica* at Seahouses, Northumberland in July 2024 was also a welcome find (by me) of a poorly recorded species.

7. Bulletin – Helen Read

Steve more or less single handedly managed to produce the Bulletin for 2024 which I'm very grateful for as I was so busy with other things. We currently only have one article but Steve has promised one on glasshouse woodlice, an update on *Scutigera* and has offered to do the report for Somerset unless anyone else has made any progress with this.

Any offers to write up Plas Tan y Bwlch from last year?

Any other articles would be welcome.

8. Newsletter report - Warren Maguire

Unfortunately I have not been able to devote enough time to the BMIG Newsletter this year as a result of work pressures, etc. As a result, the Autumn Newsletter did not appear, even though I (eventually) received enough copy for it, though it took quite a while to get all of the materials together. I indicated in our committee meeting in December that I wished to demit office as Newsletter editor as I could not give it the time needed, but no solid arrangements were put in place to follow this up. So far, the Spring 2025 Newsletter has not appeared either, though there is plenty of copy to put one together, but I won't have time to do this, and still wish to demit office.

9. BMIG Collection - Steve Gregory

A specimen of *Scutigera coleoptrata* from Somerset has been donated to the BMIG collection. It was found dead by Ben Goldsmith in a pot high up on a kitchen shelf. Previously it (or another?) had been seen by Ben and the record submitted (and verified by myself) via iNaturalist. Currently I have the specimen at home, but it will be transferred to the BMIG voucher collection kindly housed by the British Entomological and Natural History Society (BENHS) at their headquarters at Dinton Pastures, near Reading.

11. Social Media report - Warren Maguire

BMIG runs the following social media:

- The BMIG Twitter/X account (@britishmiggroup)
Managed by WM. 1,598 followers (down from 1,707 this time last year). Not very active but still some questions and retweets
- The *Isopods and Myriapods of Britain and Ireland* Facebook group
Managed by WM, with SG, TH and KL. 1,418 members (up from 1,280 this time last year). Quite active across all species groups, really the social media 'beating heart' of BMIG online.
- The *British Myriapod & Isopod Group* Facebook page
Managed by ?. 1,300 followers. Inactive (last post 30/11/2021)

BMIG does not (yet) have a presence on other social media platforms. Should we have a presence elsewhere? There has been a significant move off Twitter/X, including amongst wildlife-oriented accounts, and many of these appear to have gone to Bluesky, though many wildlife-oriented accounts remain on Twitter/X. Should we have a Bluesky account? I don't know how active it is or whether there is any 'audience' on other similar platforms such as Mastodon or Threads. I am happy to continue managing the Facebook group, the BMIG Twitter/X account isn't much work, but I'm not sure if I personally want to increase the amount of social media management I am responsible for.

12. Website manager's report - Steve Gregory

The right for BMIG to use the domain name bmig.org.uk was renewed in January 2025 and also bmig.uk in March (though the latter still remains unused by BMIG).

On-going updating of the website continues. The woodlouse *Chaetophiloscia elongata* (found in Kent in 2024) and the waterlouse *Proasellus coxalis* has been added to the BMIG checklist. Many thanks to Steph Skipp for alerting us to the recent discovery (2022) of the latter species in the UK. In addition there has been the usual updating of odds and ends, including uploading articles from BMIG Bulletin 36 (2024) and various species images.