



GLAMORGAN BIODIVERSITY ADVISORY GROUP



SEWBReC

SOUTH EAST WALES BIODIVERSITY RECORDS CENTRE
CANOLFAN COFNODI FIOAMRYWIAETH DE DWYRAIN CYMRU

Glamorgan Recorders' Forum Meeting

Saturday 27th February 2010
Kenfig National Nature Reserve Centre, Bridgend

Theme: Aquatic Habitats and Species

The Glamorgan Recorders' Forum was held at Kenfig National Nature Reserve, where we welcomed a new Chair for the event, **Rob Parry** (*Wildlife Trust for South and West Wales*). Kicking off proceedings was **Dr John Taylor** (*Environment Agency Wales*), with a talk on the captive breeding and juvenile culture of the freshwater pearl mussel taking place. This species is at risk of extinction in Wales, with factors leading to past decline including poor water quality, silt build up, habitat loss and pearl fishing. It is hoped that the breeding program, in conjunction with habitat improvement work, will secure the future of the species.

Next up was **Judith Oakley** (*Marine Biologist*), speaking on marine non-native species. The talk included details of the project 'Marine Aliens II: Controlling Marine Invasive Species by Targeting Vectors of Dispersal', as well as her input to the Wales Biodiversity Partnership Invasive Non-Native Species subgroup. We were also treated to some stunning photography, which accompanied information on the species themselves. **Dai Roberts** (*The Riverfly Partnership*) then brought us up to date on the work of the Partnership, including their training workshops and river monitoring program, and the importance of riverflies to aquatic conservation and function. The series of themed talks was concluded by **Rob Parry** himself, with a presentation on 'Re-introducing Beavers to Wales'. This began with fascinating details of beaver anatomy, ecology and life history, and the reasons why a feasibility study into their re-introduction is being undertaken. The talk also included tales from Wildlife Trust Wales' 2008 trip to Norway, where Rob had the opportunity to observe beavers, their habitats and interaction with the community.

Outside the central theme, **Dr Rob Davies** (*IT/GIS consultant*) gave us the latest information on mobile recording technology, including the pros and cons of different software and a comparison of different gadgets. He also recounted his experiences using such technologies to map rocky outcrops and black eagle in Africa. The day was rounded up by **Dr Mike Wilson** (*National Museum Wales*), with a talk entitled "Industrial melanism in the meadow spittlebug (*Philaenus spumarius*): a 25 year perspective". A survey of this species (which has both typical and melanic morphs) was undertaken between 1973 and 1987 around the Phurnacite Plant, Abercwmbi, revealing that the population in the area was predominantly black. Alongside a Nuffield funded bursary student, Mike revisited these survey sites in 2009, with the aim of discovering whether any changes in population composition had occurred since the plant closed. Preliminary findings showed a large decrease in the number of melanic morphs adjacent to the plant.

A SEWBReC update, including details on becoming a member of the company, was provided by **Adam Rowe** (*SEWBReC*). The event also featured a walk around the site at the end of the day. Attendees were lucky enough to spot a bittern at Kenfig Pool.

A big thank you to all the speakers at the fora. They made the day highly informative and very enjoyable.