



SOUTH EAST WALES BIODIVERSITY RECORDS CENTRE  
CANOLFAN GOFNODION BIOAMRYWIAETH DE DDWYRAIN CYMRU



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# **A DEDICATED NATURALIST: THE DR MARY GILLHAM ARCHIVE PROJECT**

## Who Was Dr Mary Gillham?

- A pioneering female naturalist who took an active role in natural heritage conservation for over 50 years
- Had a particular love for the wildlife of South Wales, spending most of her life in the Cardiff area.
- Dr Gillham inspired many others to engage with natural heritage as a long-serving extra-mural tutor at Cardiff University.
- Founder member and subsequent President of Glamorgan Naturalists' Trust (now part of Wildlife Trust of South and West Wales)
- President of Cardiff Naturalists' Society
- Instrumental in building the foundations of the varied and active nature conservation community of South Wales.
- Awarded an MBE for services to nature conservation in Wales in 2008.
- Dr Gillham died in 2013 and left the archive of her life's work to SEWBReC.



## Why Do We Need The Project?

- To unlock the information contained within the archive:
- 5,000 documents, 4,000 photographic slides and 100s of wildlife illustrations.
- Over 150,000 high quality and reliable wildlife sighting records.
- Extensive field notes, diaries, drawings, photographs and letters relating to Dr Gillham's world travels and her extensive study of South Wales' natural heritage.

The project aims to celebrate the life and work of Dr Gillham, engaging people with her legacy and enabling access to the wealth of information contained within the archive.



## What Will The Project Consist of?

The project will be a mixture of data extraction and document preservation tasks, plus outreach activities including:

- Wildlife Recording Field Days, guided walks and BioBlitzes;
- Blogs and social media outputs;
- Giving presentations to local wildlife and community groups;
- A “Square of the Month” style recording scheme;
- Recording oral histories from Dr Gillham’s friends and colleagues;
- Development of a botany mentoring scheme;
- E-publishing previously unpublished books by Dr Gillham;
- Creating a pop up exhibition of Dr Gillham’s work, to be toured around local wildlife sites and events;
- Creation of a website.

## How can you help?

This project will require many helping hands in order to achieve its aims. A Project Officer is currently being recruited for a January 2016 start, but we are already looking to start a list of potential helpers for the project. Please add yourself to the sign-up sheet or email [dedicated.naturalist@sewbrec.org.uk](mailto:dedicated.naturalist@sewbrec.org.uk) if you would like to contribute to (or just be kept updated on) the project.

Ways in which you could help include:

- Volunteering at the SEWBReC offices to digitise the wildlife records;
- Working with Glamorgan Archives to preserve the physical documents;
- Promotion of the project's social media outputs, through sharing, retweeting, etc.;
- Attending wildlife recording events, either as a general recorder or as an expert;
- Becoming a mentor for the botany mentorship scheme;
- Visiting under recorded areas highlighted by the "Square of the Month" scheme;
- Inviting the Project Officer to give a presentation to your wildlife or community group / society;
- Those who knew Dr Gillham can contribute to an oral history, by allowing us to record anecdotes and thoughts about her life and work.