

CNS



CARDIFF NATURALISTS' SOCIETY

Founded 1867

NEWSLETTER NO.68

DECEMBER 2005

Charity No 1092496
www.cardiffnaturalists.org.uk

LIST OF OFFICERS

Immediate past President

Dr. Joan Andrews

President

Patricia Wood

20 Dryden Road Penarth CF64 2RT

029 20701754 (home) 20494018 (work) 20450008 (fax)

Email Cardiff.pah@pdsa.org.uk

Vice President

Roger Milton

Secretary

Mike Dean

36 Rowan Way

Cardiff CF14 0TD

029 20756869

Email LisvaneGraig@aol.com

Treasurer

Eric Renshaw

64 Everest Avenue

Cardiff CF14 5AQ

029 20754509

Indoor meetings/Membership Secretary

Margaret Leishman

47 Heol Hir

Cardiff CF14 5AA

029 20752882

Field Meetings Secretary

Patricia Wood

(As President)

Edited, published and printed for the Cardiff Naturalists' Society

Brian Bond 22 Douglas Close Llandaff Cardiff CF5 2QT

Tel: 029 20560835 Email: b.bond7@ntlworld.com

Cover photo Grey Heron at Roath Park from the CNS Website

Presidential Amblings

I sit writing this on one of those typical grey November days looking forward to a trip to the Southern hemisphere in one weeks time.

A day like today makes one consider winter migration a good idea although temperatures continue to be exceptionally mild- I even spotted a red admiral butterfly on the wing two days ago.

I always enjoy seeing our avian summer visitors at their 'winter' quarters when I travel south in the winter. Seeing what we consider 'our' birds in a foreign back yard and realising that to them our global boundaries have no significance.

We also benefit from migration of birds to us in the winter classing the UK weather mild as compared to the more extreme climate to the north and the near continent. It is one of the delights of the winter to view these birds such as winter thrushes – fieldfares or redwings and Bewick or Whooper swans on one of our bright winter days when the light can be so spectacular.

I am hoping for another influx of waxwings next year as I was one of the few people who missed seeing them this year as I was on one of my antipodean trips. Oh well, I suppose successfully finding a red-tailed tropic bird was some compensation!

Patricia Wood.

Field Meetings January to March 2006.

Sunday January 8th

Start time 9.00am

Cardiff Birdwatch.

Packed lunch.

Rob and Linda Nottage have kindly agreed to be our guides starting with a stroll around Roath Park Lake .We will be combining our meeting with the Wildlife Trust this year and as usual will probably go on to other sites after. Please dress appropriately and bring lunch if you intend to be out all day. Meet at Wild Gardens Road on the north side of Roath Park Lake.

Friday February 10th

Start time 8.00am.

River Exe cruise.

Packed lunch.

Explore the Exe, one of Europe's top wildlife rivers. View at close range large numbers of birds from the comfort of a vessel with a centrally heated saloon deck, plenty of cover, tea and coffee and full bar facilities!

Please note a deposit is required for this trip and any balance for coach travel and cruise fee will be collected on the coach. Approximate extra cost £10. Booking form is included with this newsletter.

Sunday March 26th.

Start time 10.00am

Chew Valley lake.

Packed lunch.

Chew Valley lake is the largest artificial lake in south-west England and is internationally important for its populations of wintering wildfowl and waders. The surrounding reedbeds are also the largest in the south-west.

Take the B3114 south from Chew Stoke , bear left for West Harptree and head north-east on the A368. Parking at Herriott's Bridge.

For all field trips it is expected that members will have read and agree to comply with the Field Meetings Safety Code.

It is useful to know who is coming on the trip especially if you are willing to give a lift to those without transport. Please contact me if you need a lift and hopefully I can arrange one. Contributions towards drivers' petrol is appreciated.

Patricia Wood 20, Dryden Road, Penarth, CF64 2RT.

Telephone numbers 029 20701754 (home)

029 20494018 (work)

029 20450008(fax)

Email cardiff.pah@pdsa.org.uk

Indoor meetings Spring 2006

The new year will start for us on Thursday, 5th January, when Jeff Curtis will give a talk on Lavernock, a place most of us think we know, but Jeff is sure to give us some new insights and tell us many things that will enhance our future enjoyment of this local patch on our doorstep.

Next, on Tuesday, 17th January, is our hardy annual Members' Evening. We can expect it to live up to the normal standard, with a varied selection of snippets illustrating members' wide-ranging interests in wildlife habitats at home and abroad.

A visit to America with Paul Bowden on Wednesday, 1st February, will focus on birds of the U.S.A., particularly those encountered on visits to Florida and Missouri over the last couple of years, when he has developed special skills in the illustration of wildlife on film and video.

Dr. John Haughton is a member of the School of Biological Sciences at the University College of Swansea. He has a special interest in marine life, and his talk will be particularly concerned with the life of turtles and jellyfish around our shores. The date for this is Tuesday, 14th February.

On Thursday, 2nd March, we have a visit from Dr. Russell Thompson, whose talk on 'Antarctica over 48 years' will cover his life and work there with the British Antarctic Survey over three years from 1958 to '62, and his subsequent many visits on expeditions with cruise ships to the Antarctic regularly during the U.K. winter seasons since 1997, with extensive references to the wildlife of the region.

Our indoor meetings will end with a return visit from Mike Clark, well known to us as a wildlife artist-photographer, who will talk about and show us 'Rare and Scarce Wildlife of the U.K.', on Tuesday, 14th March, 2006.

I hope this summary of what is on offer will appeal to members, and give us something to look forward to until the arrival of Spring and Summer for another year.

Margaret Leishman. Indoor Meetings Secretary.

Editorial

First a correction to the write up of the Welsh Moors field trip in the last newsletter. The species recorded as Dwarf Willow should have been Creeping Willow and for Spleenwort it should have been Lesser Spearwort.

Don Llewellyn of Pentyrch and District History Society asked CNS for permission to reproduce extracts from two CNS leaflets of nearly forty years ago, about the Lesser Garth. They have now published their booklet on the history of the Lesser Garth, an extract from this booklet is printed on pages 22-24. A copy of the booklet has been sent to CNS. Members who would like to read this booklet may borrow it from our Secretary. A copy may also be purchased from the local Post Office and stores or by post from:-

The Chairman Pentyrch and District History Society

Elmdale

Moumountain Road

Pentyrch

CF15 9PQ

One copy costs £2.00 Plus p&p Two copies £4 inc p&p Three copies £5 inc p&p

At the last CNS AGM the Officers and Committee members were voted into office for the forthcoming year. The officers are the same as last year, a list is shown on page one, the Committee members are:-

Mrs Mary Salter

Ms Marie C Makepeace

Mrs Valerie Ward

Mrs Elaine Harper

Mr Graham Duff

Mr Bruce McDonald

Copy for the March newsletter by 15th February please
Brian Bond

MAGOR 3rd SEPTEMBER 2005

This proved to be a very popular venue, with us soon filling the small car park. Our leader, Steve Williams (Senior Ecologist for Torfaen) arrived so we set off along the access path.

Steve's modified bat detector was soon put to use identifying not bats but grasshoppers! Short winged Coneheads proved to be common. Although late in the season many flowers were still in bloom. Among those noted were: Meadowsweet, Water Mint, Ragged Robin and Purple Loosestrife.

Everyone was impressed by the number of dragonflies - too late for some species - but Southern and Migrant Hawkers along with Common and Ruddy Darters did their best to elude the photographers. Emerald Damselflies blended into the vegetation but at least they stayed still. Raven and Buzzard were noted flying over, while a Kingfisher (seen briefly by some earlier) showed well in front of the hide. At the side of the hide a patch of the uncommon Marestail (the real thing not the gardener's mis-identification) could be seen, even if some did have to stand on tiptoe!



Marestail

A Greater Spotted Woodpecker was most obliging, perching on the top of a tree and a Tawny Owl pellet was examined. Otter spraint showed that they used the site and a live frog proved that amphibians did also. After lunch some members drove down to Goldcliff where the highlights were a Wheatear and a Little Egret. Also, in a nearby field a group of Giant Puffballs proved irresistible to the photographers. Much impressed by an excellent day the group dispersed.

Jeff Curtis

AFAN
FOREST
PARK -
AFAN
ARGOED

25th September 2005

Afan Argoed Forest Park is beautifully situated in the upper reaches of the Afan valley a few miles north of Port Talbot. The Centre itself is well provided with facilities for the comfort of visitors be they casual walkers or serious cyclists.

Our visit started with an introductory talk by the Managing Ranger, Mr Richard Wagstaff, who has spent 30 years here. This set the tone for the day's walk when we were able to enjoy the natural history of an area that is so rich in industrial history. We were able to appreciate how the forest had evolved since the closure of the coal mines and the importance of management for the benefit of wildlife and the enjoyment of visitors. The Centre is closely involved with the local community and provides educational opportunities for local school children.

There are several way-marked trails varying in length and

difficulty. We set off along the Yellow trail passing an 18th century stone-built tunnel. The path then crossed a series of more recent early 20th century brick-built tunnels through which a narrow tributary of the Afan flows carrying with it spawning fish.



Artificial otter holts have been constructed along the river, but we were not fortunate enough to see an otter this time. We did however see a grey wagtail on the stream and our first butterfly of the day- a red admiral in fine colour. This one landed on a margarine box, but we saw many others on Buddleia bushes further along the way. Three pairs of herons have been recorded nesting in the park and dippers are present along the river.

We climbed steadily through mixed deciduous woodland of oak, birch, rowan and alder. In addition, sweet chestnut has been planted for the deer. There is a large population of fallow deer which includes escapes from adjacent Margam Park. In the past the deer were killed and the meat cleaned, chilled and sold locally. Regulations now prohibit this

and most of the venison is exported. There is a deer management programme in place as there are no natural predators – yet !



We noticed a stand of larch trees which had suffered from sawfly infestation and learnt that a parasitic wasp had been introduced to control this. There were also plenty of healthy larch trees, their cones proving attractive to crossbills.

We were fortunate to see several goldcrests flitting in the bushes close to the path. Robins and chaffinches were in good voice and we had many sightings of blue tits, great tits, coal tits and green finches as well as a steady stream of swallows. At one point two ravens flew noisily overhead.

A sunny bank was covered with wild strawberries and further along was a group of earth balls – *Scleroderma. sp.*

Other fungi recorded were:-

Common yellow russula – *Russula ochroleuca*

Salmon salad - *Tremiscus helvelloides*

Sulphur tuft – *Hypholoma fasciculare* in spruce plantation

Red-cracked bolete – *Xerocomus chrysenteron*

Larch bolete – *Suillus grevillei*

Tar spot on sycamore – *Rhytisma acerinum*

Golden spindles – *Clavulinopsis fusiformis* in long grass.



THE SQUIRREL THAT WENT TO SEA

There were just the three of us, John Davis of Mid Wales Bird Watching Holidays, Joyce Lloyd of the CNS and me. We were bird watching at Ynyglas on the great expanse of beach stretching out beyond the great expanse of treeless sand dunes, which were backed by the great expanse of treeless golf course and even more barren expanse of Borth Bog reaching back inland. This was no place for a grey squirrel to search for hazel nuts.



A bunch of ringed plovers pattered over the sun-drenched beach. With them were a few dunlin and some curlew sandpipers, passage migrants, like the five whimbrel resting on the golf course. A big flock of sandwich terns idled at the estuary mouth or dipped for fish just offshore, while a little stint and a sanderling tripped along the strand. Suddenly all the

resting black-headed gulls tilted their heads obliquely skywards. We followed their gaze - to a peregrine quartering the blue above. But there was more.

To our astonishment a grey squirrel cantered out of the wilderness of marram grass, through the flowering sea rocket onto the broad stretch of beach. From powder-dry humps to damp, tide-washed flats and across low ridges of flat, sea-smoothed pebbles, he hurried towards the sea, sitting up at intervals to view the nothingness ahead.

Rational creatures that we are, we wondered at his motives. What drove him on across that Saharan emptiness, fully exposed to buzzards and kites, ever further from the scant cover of burnet rose and brambles behind the foredunes?

On reaching the final pebble ridge, he hopped back and forth along

it, stopping frequently to preen. Was this a displacement reaction, while he considered what to do next? Occasionally an object three to four inches long could be seen protruding from his mouth, seaweed or flotsam, too salty to slake a thirst born of that long hot trek, and soon discarded.

Meanwhile the incoming tide was seeping inexorably along the gully behind his ridge. Turrets of silvered water rose from his furry feet as he hopped from end to end of his diminishing beat. We willed him to look landward, onto the easy, if damp, scamper to terra firma, but his head was turned always seaward when he reached up to survey his surroundings. Surely he could not see the beckoning bank of homely looking trees on the slope behind Aberdovey on the opposite shore?

There was no wind. The waves were only inches high, but the end was inevitable. He made little or no effort to scramble ashore when washed from his last perch, although all mammals are said to be able to swim, using the universal 'dog paddle'.

The sad little corpse was washed further and further out - to a watery grave where the bells of Aberdovey toll beneath the waves for those who have ears to hear.

Squirrels are not lacking in grey matter. We admire - or resent - their skill in defeating our efforts to keep them from our bird feeders. Why then, did our little traveller not realise that he was on a road to destruction? Or was it that very quality of exploration and experimentation that drove him on - a pioneer, willing to risk all to explore the unknown?

The famous submerged forest that might have nurtured the squirrels of four thousand years ago could no longer provide sanctuary. Beyond the sodden tree stumps life went on as usual:- a bottle-nosed dolphin and calf, a raft of coal black scoters and the odd matching cormorant, a

smattering of diving gannets and even a red-throated diver, the first of the winter on this, the tenth of September.

The few pale blue *Rhizostoma* jellyfish stranded along the shore were insufficient to entice any leatherback turtles. A longshore fisherman had landed two sea bass and a clutch of flounders. Decapod crabs had been scurrying over the sands, leaving long, curved, ten-toed tracks among the sea shells. Those, a profusion to tempt the collecting instinct in all of us, included orange 'butterfly-winged' banded wedge shells, pinky-mauve rayed trough shells, radially ribbed striped Venus, longitudinally ribbed and spiny cockles, irregular oysters and fragile razor shells.

We left, wondering at our strange encounter. There is much muted drama in the natural world that we miss when we have no time to stand and stare.

Mary E. Gillham



WILDLIFE PHOTOGRAPHIC GROUP

The Wildlife Photographic Group is an Associate Member of the Wildlife Trust of South and West Wales and meetings of this group are held monthly in the Parc Slip Visitors Centre, Fountain Road, Tondur, Bridgend (access from Junction 36 [M4] – follow brown signs for Parc Slip). The meetings are on a Wednesday evening from 7:30 pm until about 9:30 pm and these run from September through to May.

Graham Duff and Paul Bowden have volunteered to jointly run the group for the next few years and they will be aided by Margaret and John Samuels (responsible for opening up the centre, organising the catering and locking up).

The group currently has about 40 members. We are hoping to expand the membership over the coming years and would encourage members of Cardiff NATS to attend. Currently, annual membership is only £4-00 and we charge £1-00 for each meeting attended to cover the refreshments and hire of the facilities.

The subjects and formats covered by the group vary and encompass digital video presentations and still images in slide, print or digital format. Presentation subjects include birds, animals, butterflies, dragonflies and other insects, flowers and landscapes. Some focus on trips to particular places and cover several aspects of the wildlife seen. The evenings are structured into a short members own presentation, a technical tips presentation, coffee/tea break and a main presentation. Members should contact Graham a week before each meeting if they wish to present any of their own slides or digital images to the group. As quite a few people are expected to travel to the meetings from the Cardiff



area and other places distant from Bridgend, please let Graham know if you would like to car share and he will try to co-ordinate this.

The programme for Dec 2005 to May 2006 is detailed below and we hope some of you will find time to attend. We both hope that a good number of new members

will consider joining the group. The meetings have always been very enjoyable events and we hope to build on previous successes to the satisfaction and pleasure of all concerned.

Thank you for your support,

Paul and Graham.

PROGRAMME
(Dec 2005 – May 2006)

Meetings will take place at the Parc Slip Visitors Centre, Fountain Road, Tondy, Bridgend, beginning at 7:30 pm until about 9:30 pm.

Wednesday 14th December: CHRISTMAS SPECIAL

- Members Slides or Digital Images
- Technical Tips Members wish to share
- Wine, Soft Drinks, Tea or Coffee and Festive Nibbles provided
- Christmas Quiz
- Computer Workshop – Altering Original Images

The evenings in 2006 will be organised as follows:

- Members own slides or digital images (30 mins approx)
- Technical Tips related to main presentation (15 mins approx)
- Tea or Coffee and Biscuits (30 mins approx)
- Main Speaker: titles given below with dates (45 mins approx)

Wednesday 11th January:

- **Bruce McDonald – Photography on a Budget**

Wednesday 8th February:

- **Nick Jenkins - Landscapes**

Wednesday 8th March:

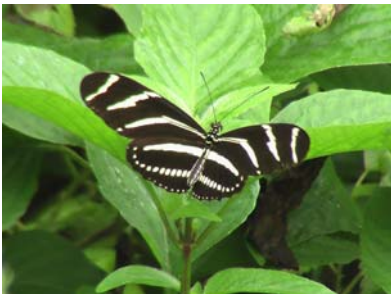
- **Rob & Linda Nottage – Ecuador & the Galapagos**

Wednesday 12th April:

- **Paul Denning – Wildlife of Northern Greece**

Wednesday 10th May:

- **Margaret & John Samuel – Discovering Costa Rica**



Contact Details and Further Information:

Paul Bowden: 029-2081-3044 or [Bowden@cf.ac.uk]

Graham Duff: 029-2023-262

FUNGUS FORAY - HENSOL FOREST ON 15th OCTOBER

As we drew into the car park near Welsh St Donats we were surprised to find it nearly full of cars and people milling about. We thought perhaps there was another event taking place with the unwelcome possibility of disruption to our foraying. It turned out that almost all had come for our field meeting, a combined event of the Nats with the Glamorgan Fungus Group. The former made up the majority present, reflecting an encouraging level of interest and curiosity in finding fungi, with most of the expertise coming from the latter, primarily from the now familiar Teifion Davies and Mervyn Howells from Swansea. While we waited for them and our busy President to arrive, Linda gave an impromptu welcome, particularly to the newer faces present, followed by a quick introduction to the main forms of the larger fungi, illustrated by specimens gathered during the week from other sites.

Such a large group, of around 50 people including children, is difficult to manage. Some preferred to do their own thing and wandered off in various directions, others kept close to the leaders to confirm tentative identifications or glean expertise from Teifion who patiently and knowledgeably highlighted the key distinguishing features of a species or particular family to explain each identification he arrived at. As on previous occasions, the children were enthusiastic finders.

The immediate area near a car park often proves to be productive, and this was the case here with some of the day's most spectacular finds close at hand, illustrating some of the various forms and habits that fungi can have. In the grassland under the larches we quickly found a scattering of the yellow-capped Larch Bolete *Suillus grevillei* with spongy spore tubes rather than gills. More spectacular were several of that quintessential toadstool, the red-capped Fly Agaric *Amanita muscaria* which were much admired. At the base of trees nearby, a large bracket of Dyer's Mazegill *Phaeolus schweinitzii* which attacks conifers (Larch in this case) was found, soon followed by the unusual *Sparassis crispa*, its recommended English name being Wood Fungus but also more appropriately for its resemblance, Cauliflower or Brain Fungus.



Wood (Cauliflower) Fungus

Encouraged by these finds, we moved slowly on, branching away from the track into the plantations of conifers and broadleaves (mainly beech). Blushers *Amanita rubescens*, Butter Caps *Collybia butyracea*, Ochre Brittlegills *Russula ochroleuca* and Yellow Stagshorns *Calocera viscosa* proved to be the most frequently encountered but none were really numerous - as had been found in other woodlands locally over previous weeks, perhaps reflecting the late arrival of autumn this year. Many of the toadstool-type fungi had been well eaten by slugs and perhaps also by the woodlice some harboured.



The woodland floor was dotted with molehills and vole holes, and in places hopping with small frogs. Red Admiral and Speckled Wood butterflies floated around more open areas, and a small attractively-marked caterpillar which dropped unwelcome onto one teenager's shoulder was thought to be of a Nut-tree Tussock moth. Birdlife though was notably quiet and little seen, but the distinctive harsh calls of Jays deep in the woods and the "kronk" of a Raven overhead revealed their presence.

Returning to the car park at 1pm for lunch, the warm autumn sunshine provided a pleasant inducement for alfresco picnicking. The specimens that were collected in the morning's search were then spread out on a sheet, the 40 or so species displaying a variety of colour and form. Among the more unusual encountered were Jelly Tooth or Jelly Tongue *Pseudohydnum gelatinosum*, Jellybabies *Leotia lubrica*, White Saddle *Helvella crispa* and a rather contorted specimen of the Bitter Beech Bolete *Boletus calopus* with its distinctive red veining on the sturdy stem.

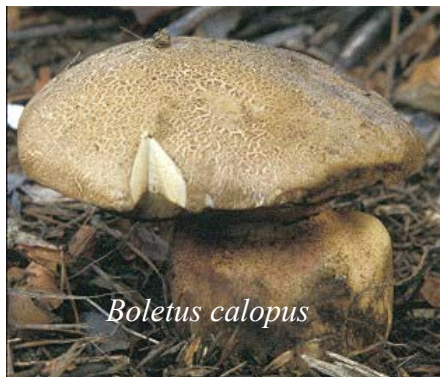


Taking a different direction for the afternoon's exploration, but with a reduced number of participants, only a few further species were added. The final list will appear in due course for inclusion in a later newsletter, when the experts have had time to pore over their microscopes and reach their conclusions.

Note:

Apart from some of the commoner species, in the past fungi have only been known by their scientific names and that does not encourage wider knowledge of them. To counter this, the British Mycological Society, Plantlife and other relevant organisations have produced a list of recommended English names for about a thousand of the commoner British species, and these have been used in this article alongside the scientific version. Although I approve of this initiative in principle, not all the names have been welcomed or are the more familiar ones; for example, the Ochre Brittlegills referred to above were better known as Common Yellow Russulas - and having used the latter name for years, that's what they will always be to me!

Rob Nottage



Boletus calopus

Extract from (With the kind permission of the Pentyrch and District History Society)

SECRETS OF THE LESSER GARTH.

'Back to the future ... onward to the past'

(With grateful thanks to Cardiff Naturalists' Society and the National Museum of Wales) - also to the Rev. Roger Brown for providing some of the basic material.

This issue of the Garth Domain takes us back to ancient times - to pre-history in fact. In earlier editions we have made several references to the older historical sites in the Garth area including the Cromlech dating from Neolithic times at Caeryrfa, the Bronze Age burial mounds on the mountain ridge and the discovery of Roman coins on the north side of that hill. We have also dealt with the Lesser Garth to a limited degree and helped to unlock some of its many mysteries. Now though, it is time to take a closer look at what is known about that particular treasure house of historical gems. To do this we have been fortunate in receiving permission from Cardiff Naturalists' Society and the National Museum of Wales to reproduce the work of Dr H.N. Savory and Mr. M.S. Hussey who published scholarly papers on the Lesser Garth finds in the 1960s. Mr. Hussey's work is largely based on his extensive dig carried out at the Lesser Garth Cave, whilst Dr Savory's paper mostly covers the discovery of another hoard in the woodland a short distance away. We then touch once more upon those other (aforementioned) aspects of ancient history, ending with the dawn of Christianity and the arrival of St Catwg.

Don Llewellyn, Editor.

Extract from the article written by M.S. Hussey of Cardiff Naturalists' Society called 'Final Excavations at Lesser Garth Cave, Pentyrch'

DESCRIPTION OF THE SITE

The cave is situated on the side of the heavily wooded Lesser Garth hill just north of Radyr, Glamorgan (ST 126822, O.S. one-inch sheet 154). The approach to the cave entrance from the south is a steep slope with outcropping carboniferous limestone, heavily glaciated, with a thin covering of earth and leaf mould. The cave, the entrance to which is a small hole at the foot of one of these outcrops, is 300 ft to the west of the Tynant Quarry and 50 ft below the ridge. It has a main passage

approximately 100 yards long, some 50 ft high and 20 ft wide, at its largest point (plan, Fig 1). Several smaller passages run off from this main chamber, which is filled with loosely packed large boulders to a height of 20 ft. These no doubt represent a roof collapse which, as will be seen, probably occurred during the history of human occupation of the cave. A very large quarry, exploited by the Steetley Dolomite Quarry Co., is now beginning to encroach on the area of the cave from the west, and this made its final exploration highly desirable.

NATURE OF EXCAVATION

The Lesser Garth cave, mainly owing to its proximity to Cardiff, is popular for cave explorations and it was during one of these that the writer found several sherds of Romano-British fumed ware, and became interested in the cave as an archaeological site. These first finds came from the debris and boulders 20ft below the floor of the first chamber. Here there were two small screes of stone and earth which had fallen from the floor above. The material from one scree consisted of Roman-British pottery and that from the other of a few sherds of 12th century ware. While some boulders were being moved to clear a larger area for excavation a fall occurred bringing down several tons of boulders and rubble on to the top of the dig area. This material came from a shaft of 6ft. diameter between the boulders. Amongst it were exceedingly well-preserved human remains but no associated artefacts to prove dating. After this fall the whole area of excavations was inspected and made safe by using small charges of gelnite to clear any unsafe boulders. During operations a few finds were made amongst the debris. When the dig was next visited it was found that it had been tampered with by unknown persons and that another major fall had occurred, once again burying the original site under several tons of stone and mud. There was some doubt at this time as to whether it would be worthwhile carrying on. However, on the strength of a promise of help and labour from several caving clubs in South Wales and the encouragement of Dr Savory, it was decided to re-start excavation from an entirely different viewpoint. The plan was now to dig at floor level in the first chamber. This was a very heavy task owing to the amount of material which would have to be moved out of the cave. The floor level had of course been exceedingly disturbed by the passage of many feet and also probably by previous excavations. To the writer's surprise, finds immediately began to appear; one area especially was very productive, yielding bone tools and several sherds of Bronze

Age pottery. The ground here consisted of small boulders calcited together.

Outside the cave a section was then cut in an attempt to find out whether the present entrance was, in fact, the original entrance. The earth here again was extremely disturbed and apart from a charcoal layer which had no dateable finds associated, nothing of interest was found. At this stage the excavations inside the cave had been carried back into the passage between the first and second chambers. Removal of extremely large boulders in this area revealed traces of the Dark Age occupation. In the second chamber much Roman pottery was discovered and also the site of a small hearth, although the two were not directly connected. Further into the cave a search was made amongst the enormous mass of boulders extending to the original cave floor, it being impossible to remove any material. This was rewarded with a collection of sherds both Bronze Age and Romano-British, distributed in such a way as to suggest indiscriminate dumping. By this time the winter had begun and excavations in the first chamber in an attempt to reach the original site, now some 20 ft. deep, became extremely wet, muddy and unsafe, and it was decided to close the excavation for the season. Surveys were carried out in the spring of 1964 but the site was still considered to be extremely unsafe and so excavations were finally abandoned.

The area with which the excavations were concerned was the first 100ft. of the cave. Immediately inside the entrance, the floor slopes down into the first entrance chamber. This is approximately 6 ft. high and has a floor made of large boulders and mud. There follows a lower part of the cave the floor of which, during occupation, was probably smooth rock, and beyond this was a second chamber similar to the first. Lying alongside the right-hand wall is a 20ft. deep crevice leading to several small chambers beneath the floors of the first and second chambers. Beyond the second chamber the cave underfoot consists of huge boulders with crevices and gaps between them, sometimes up to 20 ft. deep, ending in a 16 ft. drop to the floor of the main cave. Here, also, on the left-hand side of the cave there are two passages, both narrow and of considerable depth.