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CARDIFF NATURALISTS' SOCIETY

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<http://www.cardiffnaturalists.org.uk>
<http://cardiffnaturalists.blogspot.com/>

LIST OF OFFICERS

Immediate past President

Roger Milton

President

Christopher Franks

Secretary

Mike Dean

36 Rowan Way

Cardiff CF14 0TD

029 20756869

secretary@cardiffnaturalists.org.uk

Treasurer

Dr. Joan Andrews

Rothbury Cottage Mill Road

Dinas Powis, CF64 4BT

treasurer@cardiffnaturalists.org.uk

Indoor Meetings Secretary

Hilary Wicks

029 20257012

indoor@cardiffnaturalists.org.uk

Membership Secretary

Danii Roberts

17 Rose Street, Roath, Cardiff, CF24 3EA

membership@cardiffnaturalists.org.uk

Field Meetings Secretary

Bruce McDonald

5 Walson Close, Wenvoe

outdoor@cardiffnaturalists.org.uk

Publicity, Website, Blog & Newsletter

Andy Kendall

Shenstone Ty'r Winch Road

Old St Mellons Cardiff CF3 5UX

Tel 029 20770707

info@cardiffnaturalists.org.uk

Cover: - A Riot of colour, Whiteford Landscape by Bruce McDonald

PRESIDENTIAL AMBLINGS

Following on from our attendance at the 'Unknown Wales' conference we staffed a stall at the Cardiff 'Out of the Woods' Festival set in Coopers Field in August.

This is all part of our evolving strategy to be accessible to potential members. The outdoor event is aimed at all the family and featured woodland and wildlife activities including the chance to paddle a traditional style coracle. Many thanks to all who contributed to these events.



Chris and Lucy manning the stand at the Out of the Woods event in Bute Park

The sad theft of rare orchids was highlighted by the Society in the Western Mail and the Echo. We face a dilemma regarding the announcing the location of interesting plants and this matter will be kept under review. The publicity did highlight the role and activities of the Society and should encourage us to identify other suitable topics to supply to the media.

The AGM is now on the horizon and grateful thanks must go to the Council members who dedicate so much time to ensure that the Society functions efficiently and effectively. Our finances are sound and the winter programme is agreed. The duties of the Membership Secretary has now successfully been handed over to Danii Roberts.

We do need to consider the level of support for some of the field trips and again this is being kept under review. I look forward to seeing as many members as possible at the AGM in the new building at Llandaff.

And don't forget the 'Christmas Bash' on 17 December.

INDOOR MEETINGS AUTUMN 2012

The Autumn series of evening lectures for 2012 will follow as listed on the programme and the website. **All meetings will start at 7.30pm**

Beginning on **Monday 19th September** with the AGM followed by a talk from Teresa Darbyshire on “**The Wonderful World of Worms: Marine Bristleworms (Polychaetes) and Their Importance**”. The Marine Section National Museum of Wales has been undertaking surveys and research around the coasts of Wales and further afield for over 30 years. Our research is particularly focussed on the Polychaeta (marine bristleworms, an important and diverse group of animals of which there are over 1000 species in UK. waters. This talk will introduce the work of the section, what we do and why more importantly, what are polychaeter and why you should care about them.

Monday 15th October “**Invasive plant species in Britain: a historical, scientific and socioeconomic perspective**” a talk by Professor Denis Murphy. So called “invasive alien species” are estimated to cost billions of pounds to the UK economy as well as their often considerable ecological impacts. In this talk I will examine the phenomenon of invasive plant species with a special focus on their presence and management in Wales.

Tuesday 23 October “**Underwater photos Maldives and Finnish wildlife**”, a talk by Cate Barrow. Underwater photos from the “Maldives” taken in 2011 and 2012 including Manta Rays, Sharks and many other species. “Finland wildlife” including Osprey, Brown Bears and Butterflies

Thursday 15th November “**Why life is tough for Tits in Bute Park**”, a talk by Dr Peter Ferns. Please note this is a combined meeting with Cardiff Wildlife Trust (WTSWW), Wildsoc of Cardiff University and Cardiff Naturalists’ Society. The meeting to be held at The Wallace lecture theatre, Main Building Cardiff University

Monday 26th November “**South Africa’s Western Cape- the Flower Route**”, a talk by Linda and Rob.Nottage. In addition to the wealth of wild flowers in the renowned Cape floral kingdom, South Africa boasts a variety of exciting birds mammals and wildlife amid superb scenery.

Monday 10th December “**Captain Scott: South for Science**”, a talk by Tom Sharpe Department of Geology of the National Museum of Wales. Captain Scott’s 1910-1913 British Antarctic Expedition is remembered for the tragedy which befell Scott and his four companions on their return march from the South

Pole to which they had been beaten by Roald Amundsen's Norwegian expedition. But there was much more to Scott's expedition than an attempt to reach the South Pole. It was a major scientific undertaking which brought back much new knowledge of the geology, biology, ice physics and meteorology of the Antarctic continent and arguably laid the foundations of modern Antarctic science.

Monday 17th December will be the Xmas Bash plus an illustrated talk by Margaret and John Samuel on "**St Lucia – A Beautiful Island**".

"St Lucia" is a mountainous beautiful island, still mostly unspoilt rainforest, with six endemic species of Birds, apart from Lesser Antillean species, lovely Wildflowers, and interesting Fruiting Trees.

Meetings are in the Havard lecture theatre in the New Building, The Cardiff School of Management Metropolitan University Llandaff Campus Western Ave Llandaff Cardiff.. This is to the rear where older members will remember we used to meet. New Members please ask at the Main building reception where a notice and signs to the lecture theatre will be placed.

Field Meetings

Please check the website for any late changes to the programme
Mobile on the day only 07847 560027

Rearranged from September 16th Ashton Court, Bristol

Sunday 30th September 2012

Start time 10am

Tredegar

Packed lunch

Trees again with Tony Titchen, this time at Bedwellty Park in Tredegar (note: nowhere near Tredegar House). The house is a listed Regency villa surrounded by a historic garden established in the early 19th century with many mature trees. From the south on the A4048, take B4256 left off roundabout (also called Promenade D'Orvault), passing Bedwellty Park on your left and find a parking spot. There are car parks at Morgan Street next to the Masonic Hall, or further on turn left after Wetherspoons to Lower Salisbury Street. **We shall meet at the Town Clock in the Circle** which is 100 meters from the entrance to the Park along the B 4256. Grid Ref for Town Clock is SO 14161/08810. If you do not know Tredegar, allow time to get to the meeting point.

Saturday 5th January 2013

Start time 9am

Roath Park

Packed lunch

The new year starts with our annual birdwatch led by Rob and Linda Nottage. We shall be at Roath Park in the morning before heading on to another location after lunch. Meet at Wild Gardens Road at the north end of Roath Park.

French Spring and Water Bugs

Zigmunds Orlovskis

Easter Recess had just began when twelve Cardiff University ecology students lined up for their flight to Lion from Bristol airport. At Departures we were met by a team of three distinguished academics in freshwater ecology – Professor Steve Ormerod, Dr Isabelle Durance and Dr Ian Vaughan. They turned out to be not only excellent mentors and practical project supervisors but also brilliant tour guides during our field course in France.

When we arrived in Lion, the sun was welcoming us, and, together with the songs of nightingale and other passerines, marked the beginning of spring season. We accommodated ourselves in the comfortable seats of rented Mercedes seven seaters for a three hour journey South to Malvières in the Massif Central, Auverne Province.



**View over woodlands in Massif Central
from our accommodation.**

This large upland area was formed by Hercynian volcanism some 300 million years ago, reshaped by several more recent volcanic activities in the Pliocene Epoch and polished by the mighty force of water and ice during the commence and retreat of glacial periods. Now the landscape is dominated by open fields and lush mixed woodlands that provide shade from the intense spring and summer sun. The elevated land masses provide a source for many mountain streams that form part

of the Loir catchment and is a great place to study freshwater ecosystems and communities within them. We stayed in nice country gîtes where we found ourselves at home for the next seven days. We set our laboratory space with stereo microscopes, invertebrate identification aids, dark room for behavioural studies, i.e., everything necessary for work with freshwater organisms.

After adjusting the depth of our breath to capture enough of that thin mountain air at twelve hundred meters above the sea level, our taste buds were introduced to French style vegetable stew, complemented by local vines and cheeses. That was a promising start! There is time to treat one's soul, and time to exercise the mind.

In the following days we had a series of lectures on freshwater ecosystem services, processes, communities and methods to study them. We practiced in various freshwater invertebrate sampling techniques as well as identification.



Having had tasted the practical aspects of river ecology, each student came up with an individual project idea and hypotheses to be tested empirically. We collected our data during a couple of days fieldwork in the picturesque valley of river Dorette, located near our accommodation.

Kick-sampling is one of the most popular methods of aquatic invertebrate sampling. A known area of river bed is disturbed to collect the drifting material and organisms in a fine mesh net.

The student projects focused on the effects of different abiotic environmental components on the composition of invertebrate communities in streams. Some students compared invertebrate assemblages between relatively intact reaches and areas with river bank erosion and sediment deposition from forestry activities. Others looked at the relationship between stream velocity, substrate type and invertebrate community composition. Intensity of river bed disturbance and recolonisation rate by stream invertebrates was also investigated.

Rivers are the hotspots of local biodiversity – they often contain more species per unit of area than any other temperate terrestrial ecosystem. Many soil scientists would, however, argue that much of the below-ground biological diversity in forests and grasslands is not fully accounted

for and could match or exceed species richness in rivers! Most likely many more new species could be found in both freshwaters and in soil, especially amongst fungi, so I will not make a judgement call here.

A great proportion of lotic biological diversity is constituted by invertebrates: hydrozoans, oligochaetes, crustaceans, gastropods, arachnids and mites, insects and other groups of animals. These organisms are a significant part of aquatic food webs. Many are primary



Mayflies of family Baetidae are abundant in headwater streams and can tolerate moderate pollution levels (left). In contrast, caddisflies of family Goeridae are found exclusively in clean waters and have relatively low population densities (right, stone case). The composition of stream invertebrates gives valuable information about the condition of a stream and is used in many biological indices such as Biological Monitoring Working Party (BMWP) scores.

consumers of organic matter found within water. Different feeding guilds can be distinguished among primary consumers. There are grazers of algae or moss, shredders of coarse organic matter such as leaves, filter feeders that capture phytoplankton or detritivores which consume mainly dead organic matter.

Much of the organic matter in mountain forest streams originates outside its boundaries from riparian vegetation and is referred as allochthonous material. The organic matter synthesised within the stream constitutes the autochthonous fraction of primary production. Allochthonous and autochthonous organic matter is the basal energy source for river food

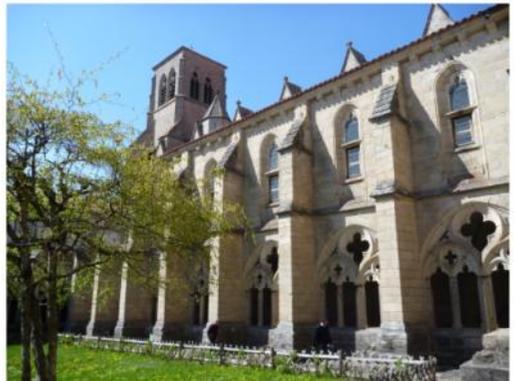
webs and may influence the structure of freshwater invertebrate communities.

Researching the links between primary production and organisms of higher trophic levels is key to quantifying and understanding the mechanisms of energy fluxes in freshwater food webs. In my own project I compared the structure of primary consumer assemblages in an open and shaded reach of a headwater stream in order to evaluate the association between abundance of particular feeding guilds and autochthonous or allochthonous source of primary production.

Increase in grazers was found to be associated with greater autochthonous production of stone biofilm in the open reach. Higher abundance of detritivores and shredders was associated with greater standing crops of allochthonous debris in the shaded reach. Functional diversity demonstrated a high degree of intra-guild variation at familial level. Intra-guild competition, resource partitioning or microhabitat preferences could be possible explanations for these taxon-specific responses.

Towards the end of our field course, we presented our findings to our peer students as well as lecturers. I enjoyed listening to the presentations from others. Discussing results and comparing experimental approaches from other projects helped to better interpret the findings from my own work.

On our last day in France, we went to a small medieval town La Chaise-Dieu, literary meaning ‘God’s Chair’. Indeed, it was a calming and romantic corner – a perfect place to retire and enjoy French vines and cheeses.



La Chaise-Dieu is famous for its annual music festival inside the wonderful Benedictine

Above and next page Benedictine abbey in the heart of *La Chaise-Dieu* and embodies the historic aura of the town.

Abbey, founded in the 11th century. In fact it was one of the most influential religious centres in medieval France.

Pope Clement VI who reigned during the Black Death in Europe came from this abbey, and here lies his tomb today.



One of the aisle walls within the abbey is decorated with a memorable fresco depicting various socio-economic classes meeting death (plague) and judgement of their contribution to a wider society.

All in all, this was an unforgettable trip and treat for our taste buds as well as rewarding and highly enjoyable academic experience!

I thank again our academics for organising and running this outstanding field trip!

Editors note

Zigmunds' email to me is addressed as follows: - BSc (Hons) Ecology, First Class, Cardiff University graduate.

Clearly well deserved and I am sure we all wish him continued success in his new career wherever he decides to take that

Deadline for next newsletter 15th November 2012

Articles do not need to be about one of our events, or even about South Wales. If you've been somewhere or seen something interesting please consider giving us an article for use here or on the blog. The more we show how active we are, the more active members we will get

Cowbridge and Sigingstone

Andy Kendall

It was a wet and windy Summers morning on June the 30th, and I enjoyed a lazy cup of tea before heading out to join the CNS walk. I was alone that morning as Rhian had other commitments. Arriving at the start location I was surprised not to see anyone else as I was only just on time. I checked the time in my phone and the appointment was for 10:30, but the text said 9:30 (I had put it in wrong).

All was not lost because we have now purchased the CNS field meetings phone and after a quick call home as I'd not thought to store it in mine as a number (it's 07847 5600027) I called it and a surprised Rob Nottage answered. We quickly worked out a place I could meet to catch up and we duly did so.

The walk was around the lanes and through the woods in the area to the South of Cowbridge towards Sigingstone and covered wildflower meadows, Hedgerows and woodlands. The section I missed was the wettest section which was nice for me. Soon we were passing Sloe, Hazel, Hawthorn, Cleavers and the usual hedgerow plants with Nettle-Leaved Bellflower and Shining Cranesbill picked out by an eagle eyed team.

We passed many large houses and on one of the bridges there was a nice Wych Elm (identified not with a guidebook, but an app on my new smartphone). No Green Hairstreak butterflies spotted on this damp day, but nice to see it's food plant in such good form.



Cleared section for power lines

Into the woods and we had the plants of darker places with Hartstongue Fern, Hedge Woundwort, Wild Currant and Wild Privet amongst them, and an opportunity for something else to thrive where the space below

the power lines has been cleaned out
Out into the light we came fields and at
last a field in the sunshine. Both before
and after lunch we were able to see
butterflies flitting and crickets jumping.
How Linda managed to not only catch,
but identify a tiny nymph of the
Specked Bush Cricket will remain a
mystery to me.



Grassland buzzing with insects



Yellow Rattle

Birds were also abundant so the Meadow Browns
had to avoid the Swallows as they both vied for air
supremacy to the tune of the Skylarks and Chiff
Chaff. Whilst they circled above the Yellow Rattle

The next stop was a set of pools which Rob
lamented were now mostly grown over, but it was
still a wonderful show of Iris.

Up onto Ruff Moor and once again the habitat
changed and we had big stands of Marsh Thistle
with and some wonderful mature grass meadows
blowing in the breeze.

We finished the walk with a visit to the
Physic Garden that has been planted in
Cowbridge and which Rob and Linda
have helped with.

Outside the walled garden was a
wonderful wildflower meadow which
had been cultivated by the volunteers
and was an absolute riot of colour and an
excellent way to finish.



Grasses blowing in the winds

I'm sure we'll head that way again sometime and I would strongly
recommend it to anyone. I ended with a list of 60 Plants, 8 insects, 6 birds
and some excellent memories.

Evening Walk in Coed y Felin, Lisvane, 11 July 2012

Stephen Nottingham

This Wednesday evening stroll through Coed y Felin, organized by Mike Dean and led by local ranger Raj Chettri, took in many interesting aspects of the 16.3-acre semi-ancient and mixed woodland. We had a short welcome & introduction by David Jones, Chairman of the Friends Group and then enjoyed the walk. It was acquired for public use in 1980 by the City of Cardiff, and is now managed by the Friends of Coed y Felin and a small team of rangers.

Oak trees were clear-felled during both World Wars; apparently not for naval timbers but for tannin to use on Army boots and other equipment. Nevertheless, a few mature oaks survive on the periphery of the wood. One of these is known as Napoleon's oak, although, as Raj related, it is around 350-years old and so predates Napoleon. At one time, there was also a woodland garden, evidenced by an area of Rhododendron. Ash and beech are also among the 15 types of tree in the wood.



Mary Salter, a long standing friend of the reserve and Raj Chettri of the Rangers



Bat and Bird boxes abound

The present management regime is essentially about enhancing habitats for the benefit of wildlife. Sycamores are removed to open up the canopy, for instance, while brambles then have to be prevented from becoming too rampant. This enhances biodiversity, and benefits plants such as foxglove, dog's mercury and enchanter's nightshade.

Coppicing has been introduced to get stands of different age, bat boxes have



The Sculpture tree. Set as a challenge to 2 members of pars staff who were often seen whittling on pieces of wood. It took 6 months 1 day a week to create this masterpieces and its well worth taking the walk just to see it

been attached to trees, and a pond has recently been restored.

The Coed y Felin sculpture tree (see also rear cover) is carved with representative flora and fauna, most notably Herb Paris. Nearby, a secluded area is carpeted with this plant, for which the wood is an important site. A delightful representation of the Green Man is also carved into the tree stump.

A higher level in the wood descends to a lower level, where we were shown the Nant Fawr stream and the Millrace bog area. Upstream in the wood the Nant Fawr naturally meanders, but lower down its course has been artificially straightened. The wood is named after the mill that was located on this stream just to the south of the present woodland.

After the walk, Sue Johnson & Vernon Hanson of the Friends group gave a fascinating talk at the Old School Community Centre in Lisvane about the mill (demolished 28th August 1962) and the mill pond. They have painstakingly traced the history using old maps and photographs.

Photo's Andy Kendall

Editors Note

The demolition of the mill was one day after I came into this world. A noteworthy 50 years ago as I type this. I must point out I was not responsible for the destruction in any way!

FIELD TRIP TO WHITEFORD, GOWER

Bruce McDonald

It was a very disappointing turn-out for this field trip on Saturday 9th June to one of the best nature reserve areas in South Wales but the three who made it enjoyed great weather, some fascinating beetles, wildflowers and orchids in particular in abundance along with displaying lapwings. We were very lucky to have the event led by Steve Bolchover who is the vice-county recorded for Coleoptera (beetles).



On Whiteford Beach

So, let's put this area in context. Gower was the first Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) to be created and this was back in 1956. The geology is very varied and there are many historical and archaeological remains. At one end of Gower is Whiteford Burrows which has one of the most extensive calcareous sand dune systems in Britain with 840 hectares of dune, extending to 1,600 hectares if you include the beach and saltmarsh at low tide. Designated a National Nature Reserve, Whiteford has around 150 dune slacks which support a myriad of wasps, spiders and beetles. It was the latter that, with Steve's expertise, we were going to focus on initially.

From the car park at Cwm Ivy we headed down towards the pine plantations, Linda Nottage quickly noting an Azure Damselfly *Coenagrion puella*. Steve soon followed that with a bright green weevil, *Phyllobius argentatus*. although the 'argent' in the name suggests a silver colouration.



Azure Damselfly



Robber Fly

Next was a Robber Fly of the family Asilidae and as the photo shows it was posing appropriately with its prey in its mouth - some other hapless flying insect. The hairy legs and bristly face are evident as is the prominent projecting haltere.

The route through pine woodland and then on to the dune system threw up a variety of smaller beetles, particularly those posing in flowers. One example was *Cryptocephalus aureolus* which can often be found on Hawkweeds, Steve pointing out that the *Cryptocephalus* referred to its 'hidden' head. A full list of the beetles found along with some other insects is at the end of this article. And then to the shore where we hoped to find some of the less common Coleoptera species.



Cryptocephalus aureolus

Despite turning over (and gently replacing) some seaweed and wood on the beach we failed to find the Strandline Beetle, *Nebria complanata*, also known as the Beachcomber Beetle. No less an authority than Charles Darwin noted in his book 'On the Variation of Species' that it 'assumed a more pallid hue in the neighbourhood of Bordeaux than it does on the sandy coasts of Devonshire and Wales'.



Strandline Beetle

However, returning the following day and searching in another location several examples were found (see photo) so it was good to note that it was still doing reasonably well.

Another one that initially proved elusive was the Dune Tiger Beetle *Cicindella maritima* although one turned up just as we were starting to head back, scuttling across the beach at great speed to the frustration of the photographers present.

The photo shows a pair photographed at this site the previous year being somewhat less energetic as they had other things on their minds.

Dune Tiger Beetle



Whilst many publications refer to the botanical diversity of Whiteford, the reality is that it is something of a shadow of its former glory as sheep continue to devastate the area of its best and rarest flora. Nowhere was this more obvious than in the fenced-off area at the bottom of the track from Cwm Ivy which has been set up to protect breeding lapwings from disturbance by people and dogs. We were treated to a great display as several Lapwings saw off regular perceived threats from various corvids.

As impressive as the birds was a display of hundreds of orchids, mainly Southern Marsh *Dactylorhiza praetermissa* and Early Marsh *Dactylorhiza incarnata* along with the subspecies *coccinea* which started a few inches inside the fence and stopped abruptly outside it apart from a few isolated and stunted specimens which had clearly received the sheep treatment. One can only wonder at how Whiteford would look if the sheep could be kept out and restricted to the marshes.

And to round off the grand day out, a Shelduck with a contingent of chicks wandered past in search of a suitable home.

For those interested in reading further about Gower's wildlife, try Mary Gillham's 'The Natural History of Gower' (1977) or the more recent 'Gower' by Jonathan Mullard (2006) in the New Naturalist series.

There is a species list of the invertebrates for the day (published overleaf) with scientific names and where available common names

<i>Liocoris tripustulatus</i>	Dune Tiger Beetle
<i>Cicindela maritima</i>	
<i>Poecilus cupreus</i>	
<i>Harpalus (Harpalus) servus</i>	
<i>Dicheirotichus gustavii</i>	
<i>Helophorus (Helophorus) minutus</i>	Garden Chafer
<i>Tachinus rufipes</i>	
<i>Bledius (Bledius) limicola</i>	
<i>Cafius xantholoma</i>	
<i>Phyllopertha horticola</i>	
<i>Athous (Athous) haemorrhoidalis</i>	Common Red Soldier Beetle
<i>Agriotes acuminatus</i>	
<i>Rhagonycha fulva</i>	
<i>Brachypterus urticae</i>	
<i>Coccinella septempunctata</i>	
<i>Harmonia axyridis</i>	7-spot Ladybird Harlequin Ladybird
<i>Opatrum sabulosum</i>	
<i>Isomira murina</i>	Swollen-thighed Beetle
<i>Oedemera (Oedemera) nobilis</i>	
<i>Anaspis (Anaspis) maculata</i>	
<i>Cryptocephalus aureolus</i>	
<i>Chrysolina staphylaea</i>	
<i>Gastrophysa viridula</i>	Green Dock Beetle Red Poplar Leaf Beetle
<i>Chrysomela populi</i>	
<i>Phratora vitellinae</i>	Broad Centurion Fan Bristled Robber fly
<i>Cassida nobilis</i>	
<i>Apion frumentarium</i>	
<i>Archarius salicivorus</i>	
<i>Nedyus quadrimaculatus</i>	
<i>Phyllobius (Phyllobius) pyri</i>	
<i>Phyllobius (Nemoicus) oblongus</i>	
<i>Phyllobius (Parnemoicus) roboretanus</i>	
<i>Chloromyia Formosa</i>	
<i>Dysmachus trigonus</i>	
<i>Xanthogramma pedissequum</i>	

Roath Park
Andy Kendall

Our Good Friend Tony Titchen led a walk around Roath Park to see the trees of the area. Tony as most members will know has an encyclopaedic knowledge of trees, but their biology and their history and is an absolute font of knowledge and for our younger and maybe professional members

an excellent teacher.

We did not unfortunately get a full write up of this walk, but did get this picture and the comment “It was a wonderfully instructive and enjoyable meeting and I thank you for arranging it” from Hilary Perry



Tony Titchen conducting an Ouch Test on *Pinus alba*

On the walk and in a follow-up email Tony referred to our own historical records with the list of. Roath Park-Botanical Plantings By W.W.Pettigrew

in the Transactions of the Cardiff Naturalists Vol 27 Pt 1 1895 . If, like me, you do not know about WW Pettigrew a little research shows just how important he and his family were to the way Cardiff looks today. A little work on Google useful information which I have summarised below

The story begins with Andrew Pettigrew and then his three sons William Wallace (‘WW’), Hugh and Andrew Alexander (‘AA’) who all made major contributions the gardens and parks of Cardiff.

Andrew Pettigrew (1833-1903) was Head Gardener to the Marquess of Bute at Cardiff Castle between 1873 and 1903. Originally from Ayrshire, he and his family moved to Cardiff to work for the Third Marquess of Bute (the richest man in the world at the time) and William Burges (the famous architect) on the layout of the Castle Grounds at Cardiff This became Bute Park when it was gifted to the city along with the Castle and Sophia Gardens by the fifth Marquess of Bute in 1947.

WW Pettigrew (1867-1947) who wrote our article was first his apprentice and then aged 24 Cardiff Corporation's first Head Gardener in 1891. He was initially responsible for the layout of Roath Park and subsequently many of Cardiff's finest parks including the Civic Centre, Victoria Park, Llandaff Fields and Grange Gardens. He left us in 1915 to take up a similar position in Manchester

Hugh Pettigrew (1871-1947) was Head Gardener to the Earl of

Plymouth at St Fagan's Castle from 1900 to 1935. He worked closely with Lady Plymouth on the layout of the Thyme garden, the Rosery and the Italian garden.

AA Pettigrew (1875-1936). After a period working for the Plymouth family at Hewell Grange in Worcestershire, he returned to Cardiff in 1915 to take up the post of Chief Parks Officer vacated by his older brother, and oversaw the development of Cardiff's parks between the wars.

A note on the Cardiff council website says that AA's unpublished account of Cardiff's park's history remains an invaluable resource in the Local Studies Library. The 1885 listing has been made available via our parks page <http://www.cardiffnaturalists.org.uk/htmlfiles/parks.htm>

Tony did drop us a note that some of you may be able to help with. If this was you or you can help get in touch with me and I will pass it on

I want to come back to Roath Park and explore a bit deeper. I would like to get in contact with two people on the trip,

First of all the chap who used to work in the garden and had an encyclopaedic knowledge of what was there today AND what used to be there! The latter is very important to Dendrologists like me .

Also, I met a gentleman who I think was a Friend of the Park-tallish thin faced man. He was asking me for ideas for what to plant at Roath. I did give him a card but did not with everything else going on did not get his name

Letter to the Editor

Dear Sir, I live in the Crindau area of Newport. My Hobby is local history, and at the moment I am researching the Crindau area. I can vaguely remember reading about your society paying a visit to the Glassworks at Crindau, a number of years ago Unfortunately I cannot remember just where I read about your visit

Would you have any archive material that would help me. I will be most grateful if you can help. Any information will be placed in the Central Library Records

John Gale

I suggested he tried our search page <http://cardiffnaturalists.org.uk/htmlfiles/searchpage.htm>, which I was not successful with using any other words that make sense to him **If anyone has details please pass to me and I will pass on**

The request did generate an Idea. The index only goes back since I have had them in electronic format from Brian. Going back more than 10 years we have them in paper format, but we don't have an index for them I can scan most of them, but we would need a volunteer to read through them and give me an electronic index to use on-line.

Please can anyone Interested in helping please make contact and I can show you what needs doing

The Missing Coryton Orchid **Andy Kendall**

As Chris has mentioned in his introduction we unfortunately had email regarding the removal of 2 Common Spotted Orchid Var. rhodochila plants from Coryton. There is always the worry when dealing with rarities



We've since learned about similar problems in Wenvoe and Howardian, and I've been on many sides in other situations: -

Where something was not communicated and subsequently it was wrecked and there was no real record of it.

Some years ago Rhian and I were publishing a paper, the editor suggested something rare was excluded, however it was vandalised before we got into press, but at least we had the original pictures and text which were then published with a rider at the end of the paper describing what had happened

Common Spotted Orchid Var. rhodochila
Photo Rhian Kendall

If we don't tell people that something is important then how do you expect people to respect it. There are people who will not respect the rights of others and they will always be a problem, but we've never published the precise location. The only time this has been done has been where we've shown the rarity on a walk. I know we've given a large number of people pleasure and we've put some important knowledge into the public sphere which is why someone even knew it

Given my past experiences I dislike being one of the people who was brought into a secret so what do we do ask our trip leaders not to show us anything rare on our walks. Now that's no way to learn?

So my personal opinion is to keep publishing with only general locations and to keep showing people things. If we can't do that it will devalue what we do and what we stand for. We ask people to sign into our walks, but not all groups do that and we know other groups have given walks in the area, but we will of course keep our eyes open on walks and if we can help catch someone some time then excellent!

Field Meetings Update

As you all know Bruce McDonald has long said that he would like to stand down from this role as he has taken on a lot of other activities that consume his time.

Since the last newsletter we are pleased to be able to tell you that we have had a volunteer and that Lucy Fay a member for some years and a professional ecologist has agreed to help us as field meetings secretary.

Bearing in mind that it is such a short time until the next season starts and not a fair challenge for someone to take it on in that way, Bruce has agreed to stay as the official arranger for now and help Lucy get up to speed and develop a programme for 2013/14

We must all thank them both very much and we are now looking forwards to 2013 with renewed optimism. All ideas and offers of walks, especially with suggested leaders should continue to be sent to Bruce and we will put in an update as Lucy comes up to speed and is able to take the role in due course

Membership Survey

At many times the committee discusses the attendance at meetings. It is occasionally less than we had hoped as noted in Bruce's write up in this edition. We realise that we are a very diverse society and that interests are varied, and people are busy. Maybe because there are so many wildlife groups in South Wales now. We do want our membership to be happy and hope that you get what you want from our events. In that spirit we have decided to have a survey.

We are not rating the events themselves, but trying to get an understanding of why people come or do not come to events, and some of the reasons why, and ideas for the future

We want as many responses as possible and there are options for responding in an anonymous manner if you prefer, and also are happy for you to decide whether or not to have your name shared with the rest of the committee in terms of discussing feedback.

I could have used an on-line survey system, but given not all our members are comfortable in the on-line world we have adopted for paper this time with an option to download an excel version to speed up completion and sending via email. This can be found at <http://cardiffnaturalists.org.uk/survey/membsurv2012.xlsx>

If you need a second paper copy a PDF can be downloaded as well at <http://cardiffnaturalists.org.uk/survey/membsurv2012.pdf>

The deadline is end September, but will be glad to receive them before that and I will happily take paper copies from people at the AGM.

Do you get our Emails ?

I still hear from some members that they are not getting email reminders for meetings and updates on events. If you are not it means your email is not on the right list or I have it spelt wrong.

The best thing to do is to drop me a note to info@cardiffnaturalists.org.uk



Photographed by Andy Kendall

Green Man, Coed y Felin. Part of the result of a challenge given to 2 members of the parks team often seen whittling after a tree had broken leaving a tall stump

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