

A close-up photograph of a green grasshopper with long antennae and large eyes, perched on a thin, light-brown plant stem. The background is a soft, out-of-focus green. A semi-transparent grey horizontal band is positioned across the middle of the image, serving as a background for the title text.

# ANNUAL REPORT

2015 - 2016



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**Dave Kilby:** [www.davekilbeyphotography.co.uk](http://www.davekilbeyphotography.co.uk); pages 15-16, 78, back cover

**Matt Berry:** [www.butterflyconservation.org](http://www.butterflyconservation.org); page 41

**John Sawyer:** pg 55





A close-up photograph of a small, brown mouse with long, thin whiskers. The mouse is perched on a stalk of golden wheat, looking directly at the camera. The background is a soft-focus field of similar wheat stalks, creating a warm, natural setting.

# BUSINESS REVIEW OF THE YEAR

“ The NBN Strategy provides a clear mandate for sharing biodiversity information so that it can be used by all interested parties to improve the quality of decisions that affect biodiversity.



# INTRODUCTION

The National Biodiversity Network is a membership organisation built on principles of collaboration and sharing. Our vision is that:

“ Biological data, collected and shared openly by the Network, are central to the UK’s learning and understanding of its biodiversity and are critical to all decision-making about nature and the environment.

To achieve that vision the Network must deliver improvements to the recording, collection, verification, curation, aggregation, analysis and use of biological data in the UK.

The Network’s priority is to grow the national commitment to sharing biological data and information. Through this we will provide a comprehensive, unparalleled and

authoritative understanding of our natural world and will use that knowledge effectively to educate and inform.

This review of 2015 – 2016 highlights the work that has taken place over the last year to support the new NBN Strategy 2015 – 2020. To that end, we have information on project work that supports the five strategic aims:



## Strategic Aim 01

*Record, collect, diversify, enhance and mobilise biological data:* We will grow our capacity and capability to record and collect high quality biological data.

## Strategic Aim 02

*Make biological data and information available to everyone:* We will continue to collaborate to embed our collective data and knowledge creation at the heart of biodiversity learning and environmental decision-making.

## Strategic Aim 03

*Captivate and engage people about wildlife:* We will promote the natural world, the enjoyment and importance of observing nature and biological recording and the utility and power of our shared data.

## Strategic Aim 04

*Provide the best biological information management infrastructure:* We will ensure stability, security and usability for an increasingly mature data management infrastructure.

## Strategic Aim 05

*Support the development of the NBN, its Board and its members:* We will support and grow our Network as an indispensable partnership for nature and in the successful implementation of this Strategy.

Phrases or terms “National Biodiversity Network”, “NBN Trust” and “NBN” all refer to the people and organisations that are members of the NBN Trust or share data via the Network. The Network employs a team to facilitate and coordinate its growth and development and that is referred to as the “Secretariat”.

This Annual Report is produced by the Network’s Secretariat.





Professor  
Michael Hassell

“

This is the first step in the NBN Atlas Project for the whole UK that should transform our biodiversity infrastructure.

## CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

The past year has been a tumultuous one for the NBN, and overshadowing it all has been the sudden and tragic death of our CEO, John Sawyer. John was an inspirational leader of the NBN and had been CEO only since May 2014. During that short time he has had an enormous impact on the NBN, with his vision, his enthusiasm and energy as well as his hugely motivational leadership of his team at the Secretariat, and all his colleagues across the Network. John was making a huge difference in the way that the NBN was moving forwards. In 18 months he had started to revolutionise the Network and its way of thinking and working. He was the driving force behind our new Strategy and he was enthusing our partners to be part of the exciting new direction in which we were heading. Our thoughts are often with his partner, Karlene Hill, and their newborn son, Rowan.

We have been very fortunate in having Rachel Stroud as Interim CEO and she and the rest of the NBN team have done an excellent job of making sure that this momentum is maintained and that our new Strategy continues to develop. It is particularly exciting to see the NBN Atlas Scotland unfold; this is the first step in the NBN Atlas Project for the whole UK that should transform our biodiversity infrastructure.

The NBN Conference underwent major changes in 2015. From the previous pattern of a one-day event held at the Royal Society, London, the venue moved to York and the Conference was held over two days. Also inaugurated, was the ceremony to present the new UK Awards for Biological Recording and Information Sharing, and we are very grateful to Swarovski Optik UK for their sponsorship. 180 people from across the Network attended the Conference and gave us very positive feedback to continue with a two-day format in different UK locations around the country.

During the year the NBN Secretariat has grown and we welcome Ella Vogel and Purba Choudhury who have joined the team. As usual, the team has been the epitome of efficiency and cheerfulness. As I write this, our new CEO, Dr Jo Judge, has just started her new role and we are looking forward to working with her as the NBN continues to develop and flourish. Finally, I would like to thank the NBN Board of Trustees for their wise guidance and support during the year.

*Michael Hassell*



## INTERIM CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S REPORT



Rachel Stroud



Never has there been a more pertinent time to work together to show our future generations that we cared for this legacy.

If I could use one word to sum up 2015 it has to be 'collaboration'. 2015 feels like the year that 15 years of hard work by our Network came together and really started to blossom.

Together we have seen the Strategy 2015-2020 published and implementation started, the development of the supporting Action Plan, the creation of a new NBN Website, the NBN Atlas Scotland developed, uptake of data licences on the NBN Gateway and a shift towards open data take traction across the Network.

The Network has started to look at how we can mobilise historic data using crowdsourcing platforms, we had an amazing two day conference in York and launched a new UK Awards Scheme, including the John Sawyer NBN Open Data Award presented to the Mammal Society who has submitted over 43,000 open records to the NBN Gateway as part of their National Mammal Atlas Project. We had our first two students join the NBN Secretariat and secured a PhD studentship with the Centre for Ecology & Hydrology and Exeter University to work with the Network to improve non-native species data flows.

We saw a surge in social media traffic, our collective profile being raised in mainstream media and over 20,000 records being shared by consultants across the UK. Data Holding Certificates were sent to all data partners, the NBN Gateway reached over 125 million records and the British Trust for Ornithology supplied the NBN with over 140 million records to be added to the NBN Gateway.

Alongside all of this activity, the Network entered a period of grief and readjustment following the all too untimely passing of John Sawyer. For most of us we worked hundreds of miles away from John however, I think I speak for all when I say we couldn't have felt closer to him. John had a special way with people which brought out the best in them whilst bringing people along with him and his vision.

He was willing to break the mould and was a clear, visionary leader. In the 18 short months that he led the Network, he inspired us all to seek out new challenges and push ourselves, a characteristic which he not only nurtured in his team at the NBN Secretariat, but also in individuals across our Network. His focus was bringing about change for the better, making waves and bringing people through them with him and he wasn't afraid to push people and ask the question 'why', or 'why not'. A trait which, coupled with his charisma, sent a ripple across our Network, with organisations challenging themselves in order to contribute to achieving the new NBN vision. His

continuous 'can-do' attitude and overwhelmingly positive personality never failed to shine through, even during the toughest of times.

This annual report reflects John's infectious positivity and can-do approach that impacted not just his team at the NBN Secretariat but hundreds of people across the UK, but it is also an opportunity to look forward to the future and the start of a new, and exciting chapter for the NBN under the leadership of Jo Judge. I would like you to join me in welcoming Jo into our family. We have endless exciting opportunities ahead of us to continue to grow our Network as the world class leaders in recording, managing, sharing, analysing and using biodiversity data that we are.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the entire Network family for all of your time and hard work you have put into developing the NBN Strategy. Now we must continue to work closely together as we move to implementing the Strategy and realising our vision that:



**We must create a landscape we can be proud of and one in which a new generation of biological recorders can enter, inheriting the skills and knowledge of our diverse Network and continuing to realise and harness the power of our collective biodiversity data holdings.**

Together we can change the way biodiversity data are collected, managed, shared, analysed and used. We have custodians of a legacy of hundreds of years of recording time and expertise. Never has there been a more pertinent time to work together to show our future generations that we cared for this legacy. We must create a landscape we can be proud of and one in which a new generation of biological recorders can enter, inheriting the skills and knowledge of our diverse Network and continuing to realise and harness the power of our collective biodiversity data holdings. I encourage you to pick up a copy of our Network's Action Plan 2016-2020 and identify one action which you can contribute to over the coming twelve months. Let the Secretariat know how we can support you in achieving this and continue to tell us of your successes and achievements over the coming year.

Over the next year the Secretariat will continue to support and promote the work of the Network. Together we will continue to grow the strength of our partnership as world leaders in what we do.

It has been a true honour to work with such a diverse Network of individuals and organisations as Interim CEO and I would like to take this opportunity to thank you all for your ongoing support and commitment to building and shaping our National Biodiversity Network. I look forward to the next twelve months of continuing to implement the NBN Strategy, together.



# CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER’S REPORT



Dr Jo Judge

“  
We need to ensure that information about what the Network does is reported and celebrated.

The coming year will be an exciting one both personally, as I settle into my role, and for the National Biodiversity Network as a whole. At the time of writing I have only been in post for two weeks, therefore, there is still a lot for me to assimilate as well as many more Network partners and members to meet.

I will strive to continue the excellent progress my predecessor, John Sawyer, and Rachel Stroud as interim CEO, made towards the implementation of the NBN Strategy. In particular, I will maintain the priority to engage with partners and members to build a stronger Network and greater collaboration between those within the Network.

One of the strategic aims of the Network is to provide a stable and secure platform for the NBN infrastructure. We are well on our way to doing so in Scotland as demonstrated at the milestone event for the pilot NBN Atlas Scotland which took place at the end of May. Further development of the Scottish portal and the implementation of the overarching NBN Atlas along with the front-end portals for Wales, England and Northern Ireland are high priorities for this year. As with everything we do, the involvement of the Network family is crucial for the success of the NBN Atlas, there is still much work to do and many possibilities to explore. With your help the finished product should be a system we will all be proud to be involved with.

Another strategic aim I see as being a high priority for the coming year is developing and promoting

the NBN brand, and through that the NBN family, both within the biodiversity community and to the wider public. The work undertaken by the Network is of vital importance to the understanding of our natural world and should be used to educate and inform others from all walks of life. We need to ensure that information about what the Network does is reported and celebrated. Work has begun on this through the Communications Strategy published in March last year, and we will continue to improve the ways in which we ensure that NBN members and partners are well informed of what is happening within the Network and to raise awareness for those unfamiliar with what we do.

I am thrilled to be joining the NBN Secretariat at a time when there are many opportunities to progress the Network in a variety of ways. I am very eager to begin developing existing programmes of work and introducing new ideas where appropriate. But most of all I am looking forward to meeting and working closely with the partners and members who make up the Network family.





# NBN IN NUMBERS

All figures relate to the end of the period 1st April 2015 - 31st March 2016 unless stated otherwise.

30,000+	Biological records made daily in the UK
142	Network members
175	Data Providers
125.7 million	Records shared by Network members on the NBN Gateway
15.6 million	Biological records loaded onto the NBN Gateway
913 million	Biological records downloaded from the NBN Gateway
c101 million	Records aggregated by Local Environmental Record Centres
25,876	Records on the Consultants Portal
301	Registered users of the Consultants Portal
2,645,762	Records on the NBN Atlas Scotland (at June 2016)
6 FTE	Staff employed in the Secretariat of the NBN Trust
21,500	Planning data requests to Local Environmental Records Centres







# PUTTING PARTNERSHIP INTO PRACTICE

WORKING TO ACHIEVE THE  
NBN VISION TOGETHER

“

Biological data, collected and shared openly by the Network, are central to the UK's learning and understanding of its biodiversity and are critical to all decision-making about nature and the environment.



## A WORD FROM OUR MEMBERS

**As mentioned in our main introduction to this report, the National Biodiversity Network is a membership organisation built on principles of collaboration and sharing.**

Our members are diverse with their own aims and objectives, but they are playing their part in the Network and are supporting the NBN Strategy and Vision. Here we bring you reports from a cross section of our member organisations and an individual supporter member who give their thoughts, in their own words.

### The cost of a biological record?

Written by Chris Du Feu – Supporter member

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New dots on distribution maps are always highly motivating...

Some time ago my son announced that he had read the colour ring on a bird using his new telescope. He remarked that the cost of that biological record was therefore over £1,000. By the time he upgraded to an even more powerful model he said that the cost per sight record had come down to about 10p. But, of course, this is a gross oversimplification. He has used his telescope for other things too, bringing down the cost per record but has also spent a great deal on transport, other equipment and time. His records will then be processed by other people before eventually arriving in some appropriate database. All that increases the cost of a record.

Over recent years I have led slug workshops for various conservation and gardeners' organisations. These consist of an illustrated talk to describe slug ecology and identification. Following the talk, we identify the specimens brought in by members. My initial aim was simply

to gather more distribution records for this much under-recorded group. New dots on distribution maps are always highly motivating and these workshops have only once failed to provide at least one new 10km record, and never failed to bring new records at higher resolutions. Using an under-recorded group is helpful, but also species records from gardens are often relatively sparse compared to those from wild, exciting habitats often frequented by recorders. The advent of the NBN Gateway maps has massively enhanced the impact of these talks simply because of the ease of illustration of the local distributions (or, very often, the lack of local information).

The NBN Gateway has also brought a development in emphasis. I now am able to tell people more about the nature of biological records, their uses, their collection and compilation. I stress that a great deal of the work is done by ordinary

people such as they. All this promotes awareness of the NBN Gateway – and I hope that many of the people will then use the NBN Gateway to look at species distributions in their own area.

But the cost of records? I always ask for travel expenses to be covered and for £100 speaker's fee. However, I will waive this entirely provided some slugs are brought in by members. So far, I have never been paid the £100 fee and will be very disappointed if I am. However, this arrangement does help stress to the audience the value of species records. How many records are generated? Anything from a handful up to about 100. That makes the notional cost of a record well over £1. It is impossible to assess accurately the real typical cost of records but I think £1 is not unreasonable. With 30,000 records made every day by NBN partners that annual cost will be around £10 million. The value of the records, though, is far simpler to assess – invaluable.

### Field Studies Council – Bronze member

Written by Rich Burkmar

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Our greatest contribution will always be in providing tools and training that help others reach their full potential as biological recorders within the NBN partnership.

The Field Studies Council (FSC) is proud to be an active member of the National Biodiversity Network Partnership. For more than 70 years FSC has worked to connect people with the natural world that underpins our economic, mental and ecological well-being. It started with inner-city children in war-damaged London and from there we have reached into virtually every corner of our country and its communities, striving to do justice to our mission – *bringing environmental understanding to all*.

Right from the get-go FSC used natural history as a vehicle to connect people and nature and FSC tutors today still use it to capture the imagination of visiting school children. They work stealthily in the little gaps and quiet moments to be found between the boxes that must be ticked for increasingly prescriptive and unimaginative education frameworks.

Our provision of natural history and biological recording education for adults is unfettered by changes to curricula, and consequently we continue to offer a broad portfolio of courses. For many people the annual arrival of our natural history courses brochure through their letterbox is as eagerly anticipated as the first swallow! But maintaining this provision isn't without its challenges; for example where school groups (by far and away our largest customers) no longer require dissecting microscopes, it becomes increasingly difficult for our centres to maintain good stock of them for the less financially secure adult courses.

Some of these problems are offset by FSC's strategy of boosting natural history provision through externally funded projects like Invertebrate Challenge, Biodiversity Fellows, Tomorrow's Biodiversity and Biodiversity Links, all of which



strive to boost participation in biological recording and monitoring. Sue Townsend manages the FSC team responsible for running these projects and leads FSC's side of the partnership with Manchester Metropolitan University which has, for 15 years, delivered post-graduate training in biological recording. Our Publications Unit has a long history in, and great reputation for, producing high-quality identification resources, both in its own right and in partnership with others such as the Linnean Society and the Royal Entomological Society.

Through our courses, publications, partnerships and general ethos, FSC works as part of the wider

biological recording community – the NBN Partnership – to increase participation in biological recording and the number of records flowing into the NBN. We are always looking at ways to improve our participation; for example we are striving to develop a culture within our centres of proper collation and submission of biological records. We hope that very soon, all of our centres will use iRecord tools to contribute records to the NBN Gateway so that FSC becomes a direct data provider. But our greatest contribution will always be in providing tools and training that help others reach their full potential as biological recorders within the NBN partnership.

### Ministry of Justice – Silver member

Written by Phil Thomas

Ecology, biological diversity and the protection of our native habitats and species is probably not everyone's first thought when they think of the Ministry of Justice Shared estate (MoJ). However, as the MoJ shared estate is one of the largest built and non-built (rural) estates in Government, it's hardly surprising that the rural estate at MoJ has such diversity when it comes to native wildlife; which includes 10 nationally important SSSIs, including 3 European designated sites, as well as over 39 sites of rural biodiversity significance; including one of the largest priority species databases on the Government estate. As a consequence, the protection of these species and habitats is not only a priority for the MoJ and their Ecology network, but it has become an integral part of our

strategy and policy for the natural environment; and how MoJ reports on the Government's Biodiversity Transparency Targets and towards the Biodiversity 2020 outcomes.

The partnership we have with the NBN has proved invaluable in many ways and has given the MoJ an opportunity to develop learning and skills for offenders in the natural environment, whilst contributing to the Restorative Justice Agenda and local community conservation projects.

Over 10 years ago parts of the Prison Service rural estate, an Executive Agency of the MoJ, started to get involved in the Big Garden Birdwatch (BGB), and it was realised at an early stage that gathering data on wildlife, and in the case of BGB,

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The partnership we have with the NBN has proved invaluable in many ways.





it was proving invaluable to help offenders understand that they can have a purpose, that they are not just looking at wildlife for their own interest, but rather providing valuable data to support the community, the natural environment and a wider biodiversity network.

The MoJ Ecology network has since formed many partnerships, not just with the NBN, but with NGOs (some of whom are themselves members of the NBN) such as Bumblebee Conservation, People's Trust for Endangered Species, RSPB,

Amphibian & Reptile Conservation, the Woodland Trust and many more. Our BAP Coordinator Beatrice Finch maintains our liaison with the NBN on uploading data to the data-hub NBN Gateway.

The many conservation projects we now run, including annual species surveys, BioBlitzes and Biodiversity Days will contribute to the NBN and other partner's data-hubs; and we hope to this end, it will in some small way, contribute to the eventual halting of the decline of our native species.

## National Forum for Biological Recording – Affiliate member

Written by Graham Walley

National Forum for Biological Recording (NFBR) aims to provide an arena for discussing biological recording in all its aspects. We have members who are active in many areas of the subject, as individuals, so we remain an independent voice.

### 2015 Conference

NFBR's annual conference brings members together to hear about and discuss developments in biological recording. The 2015 conference at Sheffield University and titled "A question of ecology - answers from biological recording" was a great success. The conference was arranged jointly with the British Ecological Society, Macroecology Special Interest Group which provided access to new projects and brought new people into contact with NFBR. There were 100

delegates over the two days. The workshops and talks covered current biological recording interests including the new NBN Strategy.

### Communication

Two newsletters were produced during 2015 and the new NFBR website went live in December. Social media follower numbers increased over the year and a core of members added new content to maintain interest and reach new potential members.

### Collaborative working

As the NBN is a key partner in national biological recording NFBR's relationship in it is an important one.

NFBR is an Affiliated Member and can nominate a NBN Board Member. Paul Harding who had been our nomination for many years decided to resign in 2015. We owe him our sincere thanks for representing the recording community at that high level for so long. NFBR's replacement nomination is Alan Stewart, who runs a National Recording Scheme, he was involved in the Co-ordinating Commission for Biological Recording (CCBR), teaches ecology at Sussex University, and is excellently placed to take on this important responsibility for NFBR and NBN.

NFBR also had the success in 2015 of nominating Bill Ely to receive NBN's Honorary Member award. NFBR was invited to join the NBN and the Biological Records Centre in setting up new awards for excellence in biological recording, distributed at the NBN Conference of November 2015.

NFBR Council committed time to respond in depth to the NBN's new Strategy, and will support the various working groups set up to deliver the NBN Strategy: many of them match NFBR's own priorities.

NFBR attends the Biodiversity Data Group, and during 2015 it joined the State of Nature Partnership.

## Natural England – Affiliate member

Written by Keith Porter

“

We have seen the development and adoption of a new strategy for the NBN and a strong push for more open data.

The last 12 months has been a difficult time for all publicly funded bodies; budget pressures mean that new solutions are needed across all work areas. At the same time we have seen the development and adoption of a new strategy for the NBN and a strong push for more open data. Natural England recognises that traditional approaches have not worked in biodiversity and we need fresh approaches that match the pressures and opportunities of today and into the foreseeable future. The NBN Strategy provides a clear mandate for sharing biodiversity information so that it can be used by all interested parties to improve the quality of decisions that affect biodiversity. This overall aim fits

well with the Biodiversity Monitoring and Surveillance Strategy that we, and our Defra group partners, are using to shape our future priorities for assessing and understanding biodiversity trends.

We support the NBN Strategy, especially with respect to creating a new 'NBN Atlas England'. The England Atlas will build on the work already started by Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland to replace the NBN Gateway with an improved portal based upon the Atlas of Living Australia. This will provide greater access to a wider range of biodiversity data in ways that add value to basic biological recording and will provide a central pivot for the whole NBN partnership. In addition we are developing a small



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One of the core challenges for the project is looking at diversity within recruitment into the sector.

grant scheme to support open data release by local organisations or groups, and, in conjunction with other NBN partners, we are contributing to the development of data verification and improving how records are captured as part of our contribution to supporting the NBN Strategy. In our own right we have been very active in mobilising over 2,000 datasets under Open Government licence in response to the challenge set by the Secretary of State for the Environment on improving access to publicly funded data. These datasets include

information on species occurrence and land use and management that is collected by Natural England staff as part of our site and species protection work. This includes large amounts of plant data that has been collected as a routine part of our monitoring work on SSSIs and Agri-environment schemes. We believe that mobilising data in this way will be of considerable benefit to a wide audience, especially when species data is linked to habitat and other environmental datasets through the new portals.

## Natural History Museum – Affiliate member

Written by Chris Raper & Steph West

The Natural History Museum, through the Angela Marmont Centre (AMC) for UK Biodiversity, continues to play a very active role in the NBN by providing a London base for meetings and workshops, and partnering with other network members in several major projects, including the Identification Trainers for the Future and the UK Species Inventory.

### HLF Identification Trainers for the Future

The HLF funded Identification Trainers for the Future project is now in its second year. This project is run as a partnership between the Museum, NBN Trust and Field Studies Council and supports 5 trainees a year through a 12-month long programme of species identification workshops, training in scientific communication and education and placement experience.

Our first cohort of trainees successfully completed their programme at the end of February 2016 and are now actively working and volunteering within the biodiversity sector. Mike Waller is

now Conservation Ecologist for the London Wildlife Trust, Chloe Rose is working for Middlemarch Ecology in Sussex, Katy has started a position with Operation Wallacea to set up and run an entomology training & recording scheme, Anthony is working for Earthwatch and Sally has recently moved to Sheffield and has started volunteering for the Sheffield Wildlife Trust while she searches for work in the local area. In addition, Katy is co-organiser for the Biological Record Centre's Cerambycidae Recording Scheme while Anthony & Chloe recently presented at the Natural Sciences Collections Association conference and National Forum for Biological Recording

conferences respectively on their experiences on the traineeship. Chloe also presented her work on the ID Trainers course at the NBN Conference in 2015.

Jaswinder, Sophie, Krisztina, Joe & Nicola all started with the Museum in March and, having completed their introductory Phase 1 (which included the first phase of the NBN workshop in biodiversity data and data handling with Rachel Stroud), are now dividing their time between their species identification workshops and helping us with various projects in the AMC. So far they have completed a curation project on the AMC's synoptic collection of birds' eggs, designed & managed stands at the Brompton Cemetery BioBlitz and Gilbert White's Museum Nature Day, assisted with the development of the Earthworm Watch project and assisted with the day-to-day running of the Identification and Advisory Service. Now that they have returned from their placements at various FSC centres they will be tackling the remaining species workshops over the next 3 months before heading to their placements in NHM curation departments in September.

One of the core challenges for the project is looking at diversity within recruitment into the sector. With very challenging targets set by HLF we have been striving to improve the visibility and attractiveness of the project to the whole range of communities within the UK. Looking at data from the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management and the British Ecological Society, and the Museum itself, there are clearly certain key diversity challenges for the sector and we have been actively working with a wide range of partners to see how we can challenge this within this project. Table 1 below highlights the achievements so far beyond the sector averages, however we recognise that there is always more that we can do here to encourage participation and engagement in taxonomy and recording, whether through amateur recording or professional entry into the biodiversity sector. We will be continuing to work on this in advance of the next round of recruitment for cohort 3 in September 2016.

**Table 1 -** Comparison of gender & ethnicity statistics within the UK, biodiversity sector and recruitment for the Identification Trainers for the Future project.

	NHM <sup>1</sup>	NHM Science <sup>2</sup>	BES <sup>3</sup>	UK <sup>4</sup>	IDTfF Year 1	IDTfF Year 2
Female	54%	54%	40%	51%	57%	56%
Male	46%	46%	60%	49%	43%	44%
White	84%	93%	91%	86%	86%	84%
Other Ethnic Group	12%	7%	9%	11%	12%	16%

<sup>1</sup>NHM "Current ethnicity, gender, age dated 29/11/13" (unpublished)  
<sup>2</sup>NHM "Current ethnicity, gender, age dated 03/11/15 (unpublished)  
<sup>3</sup>British Ecological Society "Making Ecology for All" December 2013  
<sup>4</sup>Office for National Statistics, 2011 census Data  
 NB - data from the BES is supported by currently unpublished survey data from CIEEM (not shown here)



### UK Species Inventory

The NHM continues its commitment to maintaining and developing the UK Species Inventory, the database of names and taxonomic concepts that underpins most major UK biological recording systems and the NBN Gateway. Chris Raper, who manages the Inventory, also continues to build links with new contributors and partner organisations, focusing on building a database that serves the biological recording community and prioritises updates that enable data to flow into the system.

Highlights this year included the latest checklist of British Lepidoptera from the Royal Entomological Society's book by Agassiz, Beavan & Heckford - adding many new species and correcting the taxonomy significantly. Also, we have focused on importing a few checklists that are of particular use to statutory bodies, local authorities and local environmental records centres because they allow them to extract NBN Gateway data for reporting

purposes. These included the GB Non-Native Species Information Portal checklist of non-native species which, for the first time, allows anyone to extract lists of records of non-natives in their area and gives them the ability to predict potential spread and plan responses. In the future we plan to add an index of invasiveness which will give additional levels of detail to any reporting. Another has been the Defra Crop Wild Relatives checklist which allows them to report on the distribution of native plants that are close relatives of crop plants and filter by their relatedness to the crop plants. On a similar theme we continue to provide access to the Joint Nature Conservation Committee's checklist of statutory designations, allowing users to report on species rarity.

Chris is also involved in the establishment of a Working Group for the UK Species Inventory, more detail on which can be found on page 56.

### Natural Resources Wales – Affiliate member

Written by Barnaby Letheren

Natural Resources Wales (NRW) is the largest Welsh Government Sponsored Body. We were formed in April 2013, largely taking over the functions of the Countryside Council for Wales (CCW), Forestry Commission Wales and the Environment Agency in Wales, as well as certain Welsh Government functions.

#### Our mission and purpose

The Environment (Wales) Act and the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act together create modern legislation for managing Wales' natural resources and improving the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales. The Environment Act gives Natural Resources Wales a new purpose - to pursue sustainable management of natural resources. We will apply a specific set of principles while maximising our contribution to

the well-being goals. The Environment Act focuses on building resilience into our ecosystems and recognising the benefits that they provide if we manage them in a smarter way.

### NRW's data on the NBN Gateway

We are currently building our new biological records database which will be the repository for all NRW biological data in the future. Currently we have just under a million records on the NBN Gateway, mainly from the legacy CCW, although once the new database is finished and populated we will be exporting any records from the legacy Environment Agency Wales and Forestry Commission Wales which are not already on the Gateway.

### Supporting the Local Environmental Records Centres in Wales

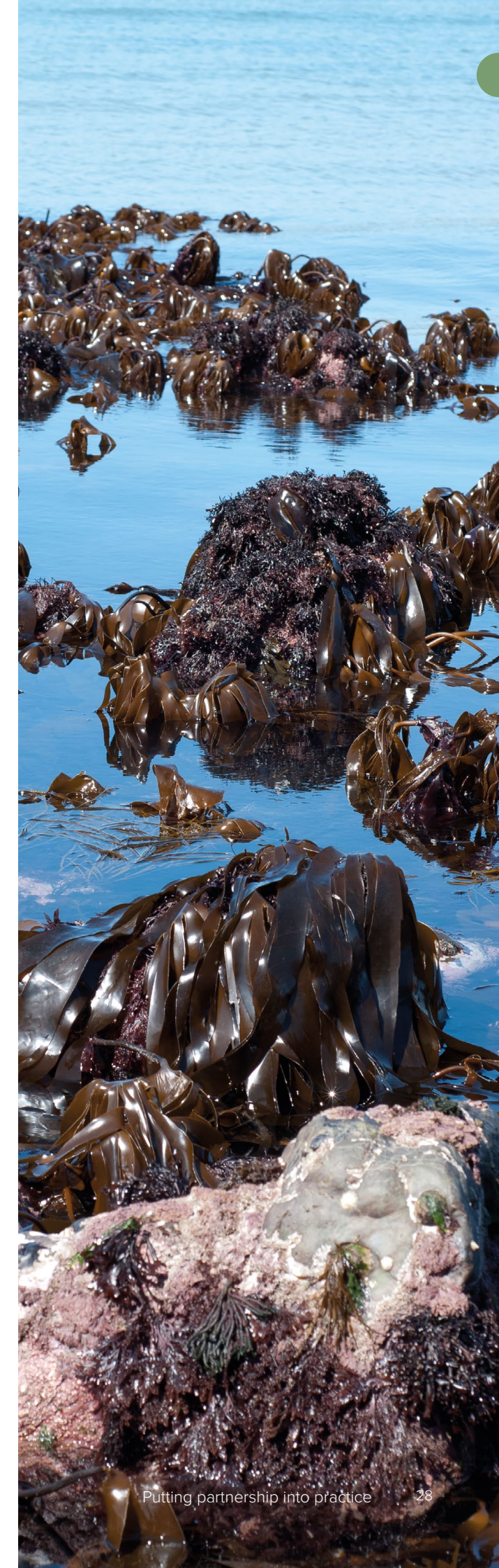
Wales is very fortunate in that we have a complete geographic coverage of Local Environmental Records Centres (LERCs). The four LERCs in Wales were all set up with the same business model and work closely with each other and with NRW. NRW supports the LERCs to engage with recorders and citizen scientists to encourage, enthuse, train, support and provide tools. In this way we support the collection and mobilisation of biological data and information. This year we achieved a big milestone in that all the data held by the Welsh LERCs (that they have appropriate permissions for) are now available on the NBN Gateway at coarse resolution. This has added nearly 2.5 million records to Wales' coverage. The LERCs also manage some of NRW's data on the NBN Gateway on our behalf. In addition they have made well over 35 thousand Invasive and Non-Native Species (INNS) records available at full capture resolution.

### Progress on the NBN Atlas Wales

At the end of the last financial year NRW and Welsh Government identified some funds which we were able to make available to support the development of a Welsh implementation of the Atlas of Living Australia. The first stakeholder meeting has been held and project governance is being put into place to steer the ongoing development and implementation of an Atlas of Living Wales. This is to ensure that, in the spirit of the NBN, this is done as a collaborative project which will deliver a system which has been designed by, and works for, all the Network members in Wales.

“

This year we achieved a big milestone... all the data held ...are now available on the NBN Gateway at coarse resolution.





## Norfolk Biodiversity Information Service – Supporter member

Written by Sam Neal

Norfolk Biodiversity Information Service (NBIS) has worked hard to raise the profile of recording in Norfolk, delivering outreach in addition to an effective data service for the county. We play an active role in the National Biodiversity Network, by contributing data to the NBN Gateway and in many other ways:

- We have an excellent relationship with our county recorders, with an annual evening meeting held every year in Norwich. This year's meeting in March focused on 'borderlands' and included short talks and posters on topics ranging from Norfolk cetaceans to lichens and volunteer recorders.
- Through the 'Wildlife Recorders of Tomorrow' project, part of the Heritage Lottery Fund supported 'Breaking New Ground' project, NBIS has created many opportunities for getting involved with recording in the Brecks – a wildlife hotspot with unique habitats spanning across Norfolk and Suffolk. This new monitoring will play a key part in developing strategies to ensure the long-term survival of all components of this unique ecosystem.
- The Brandon Country Park BioBlitz, where county recorders helped out to record species and give talks and lead walks. Over 250 species were recorded during the course of the event which engaged with over 100 visitors.
- Training events for helping the public to develop expertise and confidence to become wildlife recorders in the Brecks, including recording workshops on: dragonflies; birds; bees; lichens; bug sorting; lunar yellow underwing caterpillars; grasses and sedges. As well as learning new taxonomic ID skills, the volunteers were contributing to research into the effect of different management types on invertebrate assemblages in the Brecks. Once sorted, the samples were sent off to local experts to be identified to species level.
- Creating a series of 'Wildwalks' for recording wildlife along the way.
- Earth Observation Data Integration Pilot. Led by the British Trust for Ornithology under contract to Joint Nature Conservation Committee (JNCC), to appraise the potential for volunteers and communities to become habitat validators and to look at the open source technologies to support this. This project neatly followed on from Making Earth Observation Work 2 - an initiative to develop "Living Maps" (habitat maps); the first was developed for Norfolk. NBIS was chosen by JNCC as the preferred sub-contractor on this project and undertook intensive stakeholder interviews and acted in an advisory role on the steering group.

- NBIS Recording Fund, where each year money received from commercial enquiries is made available to support projects which result in more records for the NBIS database. 2015-16 had a distinctly

marine feel, including seaweed pressings ID book and a marine sponge workshop. In addition, pond research, by University College London on invertebrates has been funded.

In August 2015, NBIS was awarded accredited status by the Association of Local Environmental Records Centres (ALERC). This means that we demonstrated that we were meeting or exceeding a set of criteria drawn up by ALERC to ensure LERC's are providing a good service to their users and providers.

## Northamptonshire Biodiversity Records Centre – Supporter member

Written by Steve Whitbread

“There is considerable scope to contribute to and to gain from the NBN Strategy and Action Plan, and many LERCs are playing their part.

Reflecting their individual origins and circumstances, Local Environmental Records Centres (LERCs) are a varied bunch, adding considerable diversity to the Network. We are able to focus on meeting local needs, although our priorities, differences and resource constraints can get in the way of united action. There is a definite need for LERCs to evolve to be better able to help in meeting future challenges and opportunities. In part this will be through greater collaboration with each other, sharing the best practice already adopted by some, developing new tools and approaches and working with other partners, locally and nationally. There is considerable scope to contribute to and to gain from the NBN Strategy and Action Plan, and many LERCs are playing their part. The Northamptonshire Biodiversity Records Centre is one such LERC.

Celebrating its tenth anniversary this year, it still has a long way to travel. One clear priority is to encourage and offer more support to recording activities in the county, integrating

with and filling the gaps in existing, excellent initiatives. Now in its pilot phase, we hope that our HLF-supported WILDside project will let us take several steps forward in this direction.

As a partner in NBN's successful Data Capture Initiative (DCI - funded by the Cabinet Office), we anticipate contributing to the NBN working group on Mobilising Historic Data, and being able to digitise many more local wildlife moments from the Second Millennium. We are also looking forward to seeing what picture is painted of changes in the county by our DCI-digitised bird records.

Alongside, the expectation of passing the one million records mark for the county this year, we're also working towards becoming an 'accredited centre' (in accordance with the requirements of the national Association of Local Environmental Records Centres). We'll also be encouraging wider sharing of more data via the NBN Gateway (including back to the Centre) and iRecord.



The NBN as a whole is stronger if records centres are better supported and better able to offer support in turn. There are issues over the funding mechanism that urgently need to be resolved – not only for LERCs. Planning for and implementation of the Government’s

‘Twenty-five Year Plan for the Environment’ and the necessary adoption of a natural capital approach offer a real opportunity to tackle these issues in support of the NBN Strategy. The year ahead will certainly be an interesting one, for NBRC, for LERCs and for the Network.

### Royal Horticultural Society – Silver member

Written by Andrew Salisbury

“The RHS views the NBN as a vital outlet when sharing biological information and is pleased that the facilities on the NBN Gateway enable tracking of data use.

The Royal Horticultural Society (RHS), the UK’s leading gardening charity dedicated to advancing horticulture and promoting good gardening, actively supports the NBN and sharing of biological data. Sharing information is key to the RHS and its science strategy. The RHS collates biological record data from two sources, a record of the wildlife that RHS gardens support and reports from the gardening public.

Most gardens are valuable habitats for a wide range of animals and plants in addition to (and because of) the ornamental and edible plant collections, the four RHS gardens are no exception. At approximately 50,000 records, the data on native and naturalised fauna and flora from the four RHS gardens (Wisley in Surrey, Hyde Hall in Essex, Rosemore in Devon and Harlow Carr in Yorkshire) comprise the largest dataset the RHS shares via the NBN Gateway, namely “RHS monitoring of native and naturalised plants and animals at its gardens and surrounding areas”. A wide range of plants and animals are covered by the records and they date back

to 1889 (preceding the donation of Wisley to the RHS in 1904). The records of wildflowers have enabled a comparison of the flora at Wisley over 100 years and the book, the Wild Flowers of Wisley: A Centenary Flora by Barry Phillips and James Armitage was published in 2010.

The RHS gathers information via RHS (members) Gardening Advice service on non-native garden insects, for example, detailed information on the establishment, rate of spread and host range of lily beetle (*Lilioceris lillii*) and rosemary beetle (*Chrysolina americana*). A more proactive approach for four insects was developed using web surveys that enable gardeners to submit records for lily beetle, rosemary beetle, berberis sawfly (*Arge berberidis*) and hemerocallis gall midge (*Contarinia quinquenotata*). Since the launch in 2008 over 28,000 records have been received. Information submitted is analysed and maps, web pages and advice updated on an annual basis. A vital part of this process is sharing the information via the NBN Gateway. In addition, records of Southern green shield bug (*Nezara viridula*), Pittosporum sucker (*Trioza vitreoradiata*), fuchsia gall mite (*Aculops fuchsiae*) and wisteria scale (*Eulecanium excrescens*) are shared.

The RHS views the NBN as a vital outlet when sharing biological information and is pleased that the facilities on the NBN Gateway enable tracking of data use; there were more than 2000 downloads of RHS data between May 2015 and 2016.







# PUTTING PARTNERSHIP INTO PRACTICE

## REALISING THE NBN STRATEGY 2015 - 2020 TOGETHER

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2015 - 2016 saw the release and publication of the new NBN Strategy 2015 - 2020. It also saw the development and publication of the NBN Action Plan 2016 - 2020, which sets out the commitment NBN members and data partners are making to deliver the Strategy. The information in this section of the Annual Report shows what progress has been made over the course of the year and what activities are underway by each Strategic Aim.



## STRATEGIC AIM

# 01

RECORD, COLLECT, DIVERSIFY,  
ENHANCE AND MOBILISE  
BIOLOGICAL DATA.



## QUALITY CONTROL AND VERIFICATION AND BIOLOGICAL RECORDING ONLINE WORKING GROUP

A Working Group for “Quality Control and Verification” and “Biological Recording Online” held an initial meeting on 12th February 2016. The membership of this group was informed by the Action Plan consultation. Invitations were circulated to ensure the group’s membership accurately represented the diversity of our Network.

### Quality Control and Verification

The NBN partnership collates biological records from many different sources, using many different techniques. Inevitably the quality of this data can vary. Some data are contributed by novices just starting out with an interest in watching wildlife, some is contributed by internationally recognised experts.

Biological records are used in many ways, which can lead to significant outcomes, for example in research, conservation, policy work and development control.

In order to ensure that data are used appropriately we need to know about the quality of the data: has it been checked, and if so how and by whom? Currently a variety of approaches are taken to checking biological records, using a mix of human review and machine analysis, and carried out by a mix of volunteers and professionals.

It was identified at the first meeting of the working group that there is a need for a standard set of verification terms to be used across all systems. With help from the working group, Association of Local Environmental Records Centres (ALERC), Biological Records Centre and NBN will review the existing verification terms with a view to these being adopted by NBN, and assess how these can be mapped onto sets of terms in use across other systems, and how they can be brought into use within the “NBN Atlas” environment. Further consultation will then be needed to explore how the use of a standard set of terms can be more widely encouraged, and how to deal with verification taking place at multiple points within the recording community, so that options can be circulated for agreement among the group. This should allow us to take a significant step towards our aim of having an agreed and transparent protocol for verification that can be used across the Network.



Biological Recording Online

The immediate priority for this theme within the Working group is to focus on issues pertaining to systems explicitly capturing biological records. In this way, the working definition of online recording, which will be finalised by the Working Group, is:

“ Online recording is the process of entering a species record into an online system that has been specifically set up to enable users to contribute data to a survey or ongoing effort to gather species records.

The overall objective of the Working Group is to ensure good quality data are available for sharing regionally and nationally via the NBN data infrastructure as quickly, and as accurately, as possible. The group will focus largely on setting standards for online recording and will not be prescriptive about which system Network partners should be using, the multiplicity of platforms breeds creativity. The group will address the needs of the various users. Those that record and collect, quality assure, curate, aggregate, analyse or use data captured via online recording systems. In this way, the group will facilitate the NBN Data Flow Pathway and thereby contribute to delivering the overall NBN Strategy 2015-20.

CONSULTANTS PORTAL

The Consultants Portal has been developed as a platform whereby environmental consultants and ecologists can upload, share and manage their survey records online. The purpose of this platform was to provide a professional interface providing the ability to easily and quickly upload large numbers of records, to allow collaborative working between colleagues, to be able to structure records under a Consultancy>Project>Record hierarchy, and to give access to summary reporting and mapping tools, downloadable for reports.

An increased effort towards the continued development and promotion of the Consultants Portal began in June 2015. The main development phase continued until September 2015 when the focus changed towards promoting the Consultants Portal and training Consultants in its use.

At the time of writing (July 2016), the Consultants Portal holds 26,886 records, and has 321 registered members. 10 training sessions have been run, providing training to over 110 consultants.

IMPROVING ACCESS TO DATA

As a first step in implementing the NBN Strategy 2015-2020 the NBN Secretariat sought views in 2015 from all NBN Data Partners about a range of issues.

These issues included:

- Data sharing globally via Global Biodiversity Information Facility (GBIF)
- Non-native and invasive species
- Pollinators
- Data shared via an atlas platform
- Data licensing
- Data flow (especially via iRecord)

A total of 98 responses were received and in general Data Partners are keen to make changes with regards to opening up data on non-natives (94% Yes or Maybe), pollinators (86% Yes or Maybe), historic data (86% Yes or Maybe). In general, Data Partners are keen to increase data flow between NBN members (93% Yes or Maybe) and are keen to share data via an Atlas (97% Yes or Maybe) and with GBIF (92% Yes or Maybe).

This questionnaire has provided us with the foundation to implement the NBN Strategy, and the NBN Secretariat will be working with the Network to resolve some of the main questions and issues raised as a response to this questionnaire. These were:

- What are the definitions of ‘non-native’ and ‘pollinator’ and what would be the desired resolution for sharing these data?
- How will increasing the openness and resolution of data affect the business models of NBN Data Partners and how can we monitor commercial use?
- If we are to improve the systems for directly sharing data between NBN Data Partners, could consultants be a Data Partner and therefore have open access to data holdings?
- What resolution would data be required to be held on the NBN Atlas platforms and on GBIF and what are the implications of applying data licences to these data holdings?

We thank everyone who took time to complete this questionnaire and we look forward to working with you all to find solutions to the issues raised.



DATA CAPTURE SUMMIT

On the 25th September 2015, 58 members of the NBN met to kick-start a strategy for using crowdsourcing to mobilise our extensive historic collections. Held at Manchester Museum this event had representatives from Local Environmental Records Centres, NGOs, Government Agencies, libraries, herbaria and museums, Wildlife Trusts, National Schemes and Societies, academia, crowdsourcing platforms and international representatives from GBIF (based in Denmark) and the Naturalis Biodiversity Center (in the Netherlands). This is one programme of work that the NBN Secretariat is coordinating in conjunction with Network members to implement the new NBN Strategy 2015-2020.

NBN members are world experts in collecting biological records, with more than 30,000 records collected each day. However, despite this, large quantities of undigitised historical data collections are threatened with loss or destruction and are inaccessible for onward reuse. Throughout 2015 the NBN Secretariat has collated metadata for over 21.8 million biological records held in 21 different ‘undigitised’ formats by Network members across the UK. This is likely to be just the tip of the iceberg in terms of undigitised data.

Some of these datasets will require professional data handling to mobilise, however for many datasets we can turn to ‘Crowdsourcing’ - the empowering of citizens to help with a task - in this case,

mobilising data. The focus of the NBN Crowdsourcing Data Capture Summit was to raise awareness of the wide spectrum of approaches to data mobilisation and use this information to build a strategy for the NBN to start mobilising its historic data holdings.

Some people may question why historic data are important and why we are looking at this as part of the NBN Strategy 2015-2020. The presentations during the day reaffirmed the need to collaborate to protect these data. Not only because museums and other data centres are changing rapidly and there is an ever increasing lack of awareness of the collections held within, but also the increasing need to use these data in describing our changing environment. We know a lot about biological change over the last 3-4 decades, however most transformation of the British landscape happened before WWII. As Nick Isaac (Centre for Ecology & Hydrology) said during his presentation, crowdsourcing the extraction of data from notebooks and diaries is an opportunity to re-shift the baseline of our knowledge of biodiversity in the UK. The NBN must also engage more effectively with UK museums to help merge historic data collections with the data collected daily by NBN Data Partners. There was also discussion about if we cannot justify efforts to preserve data collected years ago, why should anyone support future data collection. We undermine our entire industry by not caring for historic data.

DATABASE OF RECORDING SCHEMES

During 2015, our summer placement, Lizzy Arnold, embarked on a huge task to create a database of all recording schemes and surveys. The database started out as a simple list on the NBN website with links to the schemes’ own website or survey. With the creation of the new NBN website, we were able to create a fully searchable database, which allows users to browse all the surveys or search for species or survey names, depending on their interest.

The database includes all surveys that take place in the UK and are open for participation by anyone.

For each recording scheme, the database includes information about what species, group of species or habitat is the focus of the survey, what geographical area it covers, what time of year volunteers can participate and how to get involved.

The database already lists 197 different schemes or surveys and we expect this to continue to grow as scheme organisers can have their survey added to the database. The database is already one of the most viewed pages on the NBN website.





## STRATEGIC AIM

# 02

MAKE BIOLOGICAL DATA  
AND INFORMATION AVAILABLE  
TO EVERYONE

## WORKING GROUPS FOR INCREASING USE OF OUR DATA AND IMPROVING BIOLOGICAL DATA FLOW

The efficient flow of data from a recorder to a data user is of paramount importance to members of the NBN and its data partners.

Both recorder and user may be the same person or organisation, but often they are not and are separated by a complex data flow involving verifiers, curators and aggregators. Investment in biological recording over a long period of time, largely by volunteers and citizen scientists, has not been accompanied by a corresponding investment in data use.

In response to the need to improve data flow, and increase the use of data, the Network has developed and published a Data Flow Pathway (see pages 45-46). This pathway has six stages and can be applied to any data flow for any organisation or biological recording scheme or initiative. Not all stages are always critical to data flow. For example, data does not always have to be analysed before it can be used. Similarly, data can be analysed and used without being aggregated. However the six steps provide a useful structure for understanding biological data flow in the UK.

Alongside improving the flow of data throughout the Network, the NBN seeks to maximise use

of biological data. To do this, it is essential to understand user needs so that user-friendly data access systems and processes can be developed. When looking at data use, data users at all stages of the NBN Data Pathway must be considered, including recorders, many of whom put more into the NBN than they get out, through the contribution of records, however they may not use the NBN Gateway or other products. Improving user interfaces on NBN products is key to this, and recorders' needs must not be overlooked as a result of a focus on the needs of 'environmental decision-makers/researchers/government' on one hand and 'the public' on the other

Two working groups have been planned to examine how to increase the flow of data throughout the Network (the working group also includes Quality Control & Verification and Biological Recording Online) and in turn increase use of biological data, with an additional emphasis on ensuring the infrastructure is fit for efficient data use.



GLOBAL BIODIVERSITY INFORMATION FACILITY  
(GBIF) STRATEGY

Through GBIF, billions of records are accessed annually, through downloads - around 234 billion in 2014, and over 174 billion in 2015. As of October 2015, the UK made about 50 million records available through GBIF, with roughly 35 million records published via the NBN Gateway (about 16% of the total GBIF holdings). The NBN Strategic Action Plan Objective '2E: Share all biological data internationally and collaborate with partners in Europe and GIBF' sets out the NBN's commitment to sharing data with GBIF. This includes working with NBN members to maximise visibility of UK biological data on international platforms.

Work began to align the NBN data sharing principles more readily with

GBIF at a NBN Gateway Terms and Conditions workshop in November 2014. The Network was supportive of assigning data licences to NBN Gateway datasets and this functionality was developed within the NBN Gateway. Throughout 2015, NBN data partners were consulted about allowing data sharing under licence to GBIF, with the majority being supportive, as long as they have permission from their recorders and other third parties involved. To this end, a strategy was developed to resume sharing data with GBIF, in conjunction with Joint Nature Conservation Committee. Subsequently, permission has been granted for 205 datasets from 31 Data Partners to be transferred to GBIF. Data will be transferred throughout 2016.

NEW LICENCE OPTIONS ADDED TO NBN GATEWAY

In 2014 -15 the NBN Secretariat undertook a review of data licensing on the NBN Gateway in order to improve options for data sharing and facilitate increased data use. One of the main requests from NBN Data Partners was for the ability to assign a data licence to their own datasets. In response to this the NBN Gateway technical team developed the capacity for the NBN Gateway to hold data licences.

Dataset administrators were asked to assign one of four licences to their datasets.

The available licence options are:

- CC0: Creative commons no rights reserved
- CC-BY: Creative commons, with attribution
- CC-BY-NC: Creative commons, with attribution, non-commercial
- OGL: Open government licence

There has been a very positive response to the assignment of data licences, which provide clear information about the approved use and any restrictions for that dataset.

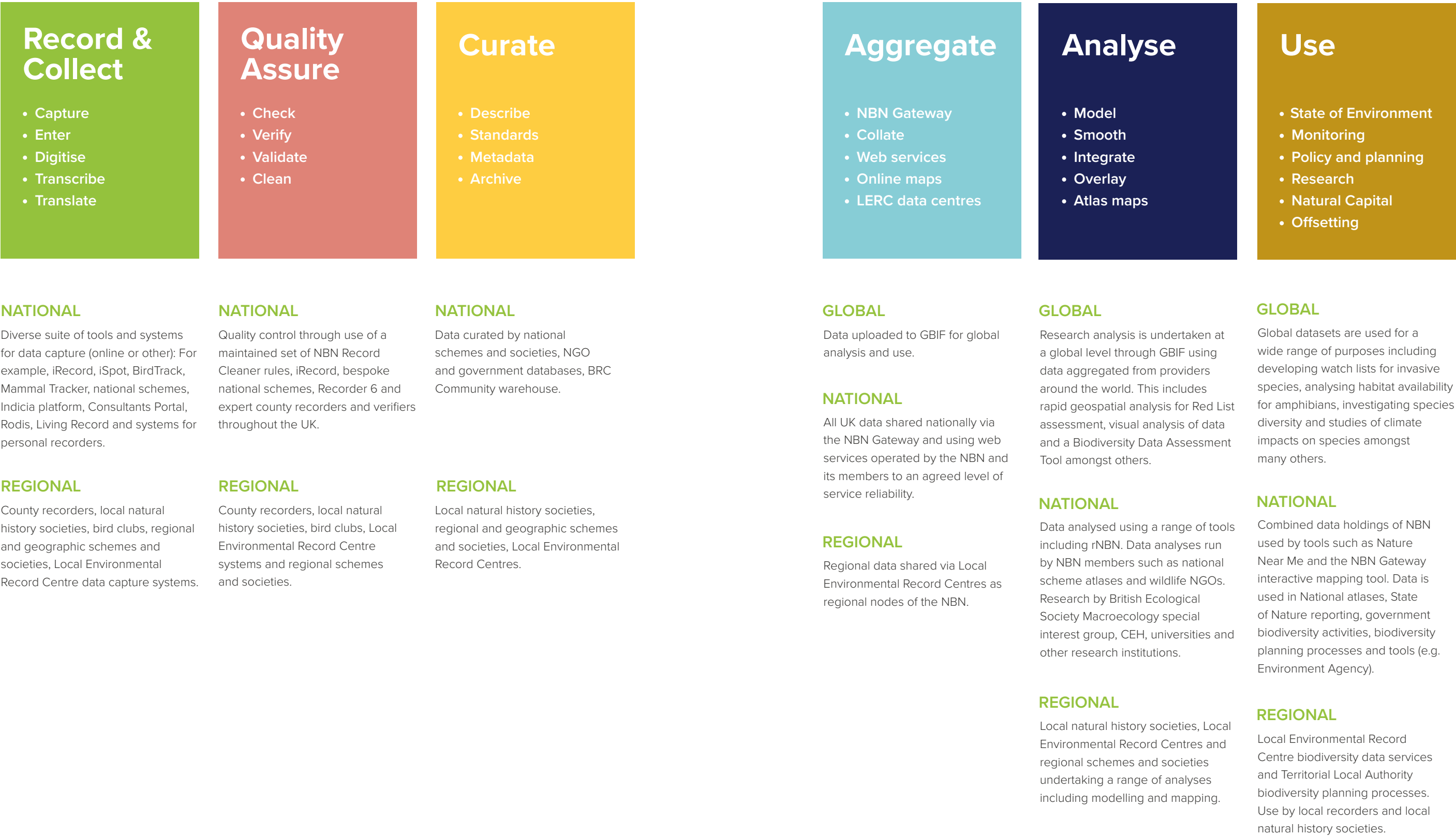
By April 2016, data licences had been assigned to 238 datasets. The CC-BY licence was the most popular (88), followed by CC-BY-NC (79) and OGL (69). Only 2 datasets were assigned the most open, CC0, licence.

Assigned licences enable datasets to be shared via GBIF and other platforms such as the NBN Atlas Scotland (with express permission of the dataset administrator).





NBN DATA FLOW PATHWAY





## STRATEGIC AIM

# 03

CAPTIVATE AND ENGAGE  
PEOPLE ABOUT WILDLIFE



## INCREASING COMMUNICATION RESOURCES

Over the last few years, the importance of communications for the NBN, has been increasing apace. That's not to say that it was ever a low priority, far from it, but with a new Communications Strategy and the NBN Strategy and Action Plan in place it was clear that in order to succeed, even better communications would be essential.

With that in mind, in order to supplement the work of Mandy Henshall, we recruited for another Communications Officer to join the team and support Mandy, who would become the Senior Communications Officer.

We were therefore delighted when Purba Choudhury joined the team in September 2015, especially as she brought with her a wealth of experience, having previously held senior communications and PR roles in organisations as varied as symphony orchestras, a university, the Arts Council of England and a local authority.

Purba has already made her mark, as shown in the success we have been achieving through the media and social media.

## ALL NEW NBN WEBSITE

The NBN website is one of our main communication tools and as the current site had been in place since December 2011 we carried out a review to assess whether it was still suiting our needs, in late 2014. This review led to a proposal for a new website in 2015 and our new site launched in March 2016.

The website has a much simplified navigation and contains links to the main tools and resources, available through the Network, for recording, sharing and using data. It is our main repository for news items and, as it is a site for our Network, it also gives prominence to our members.

New pages and functions that have been added to the website are:

- Members' Pages
- Discussion facility at the end of news articles or pages
- A database of wildlife surveys and recording schemes – "Find a survey or scheme"
- Related articles link to news stories
- Quick links to key sections from the home page



Comparing the statistics from the old to the new sites for the period 1st March – 19th June 2015 and 2016 (to cover only the period March to April 2016, would give too narrow a set of statistics) the main points of note are as follows:

	OLD SITE	NEW SITE
<b>Page Views</b> (Total number of page views)	48, 030	52,652
<b>Unique Page Views</b> (Page is viewed at least once)	39, 356	41,621
<b>Average Time on Page</b>	00:01:26	00:01:36
<b>Most Visited Page</b>	News	News

It's never too late to give your feedback, so do feel free to tell us what you think about the site and if you think anything can be better, we'll do our best to make some changes.

MEDIA AND SOCIAL MEDIA

Media and social media clearly play a key role in implementing NBN's aim to captivate and engage people about wildlife.

The increase in staffing on the Communications team has allowed us to give real focus to all media channels and has resulted in increased coverage of NBN activities and more engagement with NBN's Facebook and Twitter accounts.

For example, we achieved media coverage of the winners of the inaugural UK Awards for Biological Recording and Information Sharing in publications including BBC Wildlife magazine, BSBI news and Porcupine Marine Natural History Society Bulletin, and on the website of organisations such as iSpot, Joint Nature Conservation Committee and the Highland Council.

Also, good contacts have been made with various BBC science

journalists, so that promoting NBN's other activities, such as the NBN Atlas platforms or the NBN annual conference should be easier in the future.

NBN's social media following has increased substantially. Between 1 April 2015 and 31 March 2016 the number of NBN Facebook 'likes' increased by 50% from 493 to 739 and the reach of a typical Facebook post has increased by 228% from an average of 65 people in April 2015 to an average of 213 people in March 2016.

NBN's Twitter followers have increased by 29% from 2703 at the beginning of April 2015 to 3493 at the end of March 2016. While the number of other people's Tweets mentioning the NBN has remained fairly constant around 80+ mentions per month, as have the number of Twitter followers visiting the NBN's

profile page, at around 1000 visits per month, the number of NBN's Tweets being seen by others (Tweet

Impressions) has increased by 185% from 13.6K to 38.7K.

UK AWARDS FOR BIOLOGICAL RECORDING AND INFORMATION SHARING

The late John Sawyer was instrumental in these publicly-nominated awards coming into being as he was very keen to celebrate the tremendous contribution that volunteer biological recorders make in observing and documenting our natural world and for recognition to come via the NBN.

2015 was the inaugural year of these awards which were developed in partnership with the National Forum for Biological Recording and the Biological Records Centre, and were generously sponsored by Swarovski Optik UK.

There were four categories:

- David Robertson adult award for recording marine and coastal wildlife.
- David Robertson youth award for recording marine and coastal wildlife.
- Gilbert White adult award for recording terrestrial and freshwater wildlife
- Gilbert White youth award for recording terrestrial and freshwater wildlife

Nominations

We were delighted to receive 53 nominations from members and others – nine for the David Robertson adult award, four for the David Robertson youth award, 23 for the Gilbert White adult award and 17 for the Gilbert White youth award.

The 2015 winners were:

- David Fenwick** – winner of the David Robertson adult award
- Callum Ullman-Smith** – winner of the David Robertson youth award
- Ian Evans and the late Pat Evans** – winners of the Gilbert White adult award
- James McCulloch** – winner of the Gilbert White youth award

In addition, the late Nigel Jee was awarded a one-off National Biodiversity Network Special Award.

As well as being the first year of the UK Awards for Biological Recording and Information Sharing, 2015 was also the first year of the NBN Open Data award – renamed the John Sawyer NBN Open Data Award, in John's memory – to recognise those who are dedicated to sharing biological data openly to educate and inform, as per NBN's vision.

The 2015 John Sawyer NBN Open Data Award was presented to The Mammal Society to celebrate their commitment to open data.



UNDERSTANDING RECORDER MOTIVATION

As part of a three-month internship, NBN commissioned University of Nottingham PhD student, Ben Brown, to survey biological recorders about why they record wildlife.

Ben received around 200 responses and clocked up 20 hours-worth of interview material with biological recorders. The headline findings from this research are as follows:

- Survey respondents came from over 70 vice-counties, and recorded in over 130 vice-counties across the British Isles.
  - They ranged from 18 to nearly 80 years old, having started recording anywhere from 0 to 70 years ago, and recorded 83 different species groups (grouped as per iRecord).
  - The range of backgrounds across the surveys and interviews was broad. Several held senior positions in wildlife organisations or schemes but others were recent starters.
  - The majority of respondents were also members or employees of non-recording focused conservation organisations
  - Recorders are committed - respondents rated biological recording as one of the most important things they did in their free time.
  - Respondents regarded conservation of biodiversity as a personal and collective duty, felt fairly able and empowered to help, and undertook a range of activities in pursuit of this.
  - Respondents cared deeply about how the data they collected were used, i.e. it is as open and available for use as possible for scientific or decision-making purposes.
  - While some were uncomfortable with datasets that hadn't been checked and accepted on a per-record basis, others saw promise in technical developments
- such as automated pre-screening or tagging/filtering of records by confidence – assuming the systems responsible were reliable and effective.
  - Respondents saw the NBN as needing to play a key role in unifying the fragmented nature of biological recording (both in terms of coordination and technology), and resolve difficulties around data ownership and data sharing, so that recorders don't have to be distracted from their recording by these issues.
  - Respondents' entry into recording was not typically influenced by friends and family, and opinion was divided as to whether organisations should set up more opportunities to interact socially.
  - Respondents welcomed getting together with other recorders for a purpose (not just socialising), to improve their own knowledge and identification skills, as most respondents wanted more training than they were receiving.
  - The social aspect of biological recording was reported to be an important factor contributing to people's enjoyment of the activity - most had made new friends via recording.
  - Of the respondents who felt they did not have a communication route to other organisations or recorders, their highest preference was for communication via social media and face-to-face, for example, during meetings.

We thank Ben for all of his hard work, and for these fascinating findings. We are also indebted to all of the interview and survey respondents who contributed to Ben's research.

WORKING GROUP FOR CAPTIVATING AND ENGAGING PEOPLE

The NBN and its members promote the natural world as well as the enjoyment and importance of biological recording. We want to celebrate the work of all those involved in recording and sharing data, because this is vital for protecting our environment. In addition, the UK has an historic fascination with wildlife and still today people, young and old, are interested in nature. This offers enormous potential for the NBN in terms of engaging a new generation of biological recorders.

Many people and organisations have been dedicated to recording for many years, but there remain significant issues that make increased effort across the Network vitally important, such as:

- Limited numbers of recorders in some parts of the country, for some taxonomic groups and for habitat and ecosystem data
  - Lack of a clear learning pathway to enable people to grow their knowledge and expertise.
  - Limited appreciation of the value of biodiversity, and the value of data collected about its changing status and condition.
  - Lack of awareness of the health benefits of an active biological recorder lifestyle and of contact time with nature.
- as promoting biological recording and the benefits of sharing data. It will also focus on attracting new generations of biological recorders and motivating them to increase recording and sharing data. Finally, there will be a focus on increasing feedback to recorders.
- The NBN Secretariat has already begun delivering this aim through activities such as:
1. The UK awards for biological recording and information sharing
  2. Redesign of the NBN website
  3. Research project on recorder motivation and demographics.

This working group will coordinate delivery of Strategic Aim 3 and will focus on increasing engagement with biological recording, through developing and supporting learning programmes and systems for biodiversity identification including promoting, developing and providing resources for recorders, as well

The group will consist of up to 12 members, representing the range of organisations in the NBN that expressed an interest in participating in the actions covered by this Working Group during the consultation on the NBN Action Plan.









## STRATEGIC AIM

# 04

## PROVIDE THE BEST BIOLOGICAL INFORMATION MANAGEMENT INFRASTRUCTURE

### NBN ATLAS SCOTLAND

In response to the NBN Gateway technical user review published in 2015, the NBN Atlas Scotland has been developed as a pilot for the UK-wide implementation of the Atlas of Living Australia's open source biodiversity data infrastructure. This infrastructure is intended to eventually replace the NBN Gateway, as it is more suited to the growing needs of our network, and helps to realise our ambition of open data.

All data held on the NBN Atlas Scotland will be assigned a data licence, in order to ensure clarity for its onward use.

The NBN Atlas Scotland was launched as a beta site in September 2015 and the NBN Secretariat has been collecting ongoing feedback from users. This feedback has helped to grow and shape the NBN Atlas Scotland ahead of its stakeholder launch (May 2016).

Over 2.5 million Scottish records of over 25,000 species, from 17 data partners are held on the Atlas (as at June 2016). These figures are set to

continue as data partner agreements continue to be returned.

Spatial data layers are being uploaded to the NBN Atlas Scotland to help increase the power of the analysis tools available. There are a variety of habitat, landscape, protected area and soil data layers currently available and more are in the process of being secured and uploaded. The data in these layers can be mapped against species occurrence data to allow focused and detailed analysis.

The governance group for the NBN Atlas Scotland has included Scottish Environment Protection Agency, Scottish Natural Heritage, Royal Society for the Protection of Birds, Scottish Biodiversity Information Forum, Natural England, Natural Resources Wales, Northern Ireland Environment Agency and the NBN Trust. There have been regular core business group meetings, as well as meetings with the NBN Atlas Scotland steering group, to ensure that the Atlas is performing to the needs of all of its stakeholders.

### NBN ATLASES FOR OTHER COUNTRIES

Following the successful development of the NBN Atlas Scotland, work was undertaken throughout 2015 to explore

opportunities to implement this infrastructure in Wales, Northern Ireland and England.



This project is part of a work programme to build NBN Atlas infrastructure for England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland. Each of these atlases would have the same functionality and same basic design and be supported by a single database but offer users a more focused, local view of the national data holdings.

Through 2015 the NBN Secretariat met with funding bodies in Northern

Ireland, Wales and England to discuss the development of country Atlases. Funding was secured for an NBN Atlas Wales at the end of 2015 and this platform will be developed throughout 2016 with engagement and steer from all stakeholders involved. Business cases have been prepared for NBN Atlases in England and Northern Ireland, with ongoing discussions surrounding funding.

### UK SPECIES INVENTORY WORKING GROUP

As mentioned in the member sections of this Report, the Natural History Museum (NHM) continues its commitment to maintaining and developing the UK Species Inventory, the database of names and taxonomic concepts that underpins most major UK biological recording systems and the NBN Gateway. Chris Raper, who manages the Inventory, also continues to build links with new contributors and partner organisations, focusing on building a database that serves the biological recording community and prioritises updates that enable data to flow into the system.

Chris is currently working with the NBN Secretariat to define terms for a new Working Group that will explore user requirements for the UK Species Inventory and plan future technical developments. The initial plan is to provide a more scalable and accessible database & network structure that reacts more quickly to changes in taxonomy and allows both contributors and partners to view the live data in real time and suggest amendments which are then checked and approved by NHM staff.





## STRATEGIC AIM

# 05

SUPPORT THE DEVELOPMENT  
OF THE NBN, ITS BOARD  
AND ITS MEMBERS



## NBN CONFERENCE

The NBN Conference has long been the biggest networking event in the NBN calendar. In 2015 it was in its 15th year and for the first time in its history, the Conference ran over two days and moved away from London, which had been its home for all previous NBN Conferences, to York.

So, on 19th and 20th November, 180 delegates from biodiversity organisations, local environmental records centres, recording schemes, government bodies, students and individuals all concerned with biodiversity data and biological recording came together at the Lakeside Conference Centre in York, to discuss "From global to local: building the NBN Partnership".

The extended duration allowed us to reassess the programme and format of the Conference resulting in four keynote addresses, the annual Sir John Burnett Memorial lecture, delivered by David Stroud, as well as the main presentations and an increased number of speed talks, which had proved so popular in 2014. Across the two days, 35 speakers covered a broad range of subjects within the global to local theme. We were also pleased to include a symposium to discuss public engagement in wildlife recording, a session which was developed and coordinated by Bristol Natural History Consortium, who are responsible for the National BioBlitz programme.

The main topics that came up for discussion over the two days were:

- The importance of open data
- Collaboration being critical to achieving our individual and collective goals
- Everyone's contribution being vital to the recording effort, at whatever level that may be.

The overall comments in relation to the Conference were very positive. The two day format was well liked as was the change in location. From our survey, to which 41% of delegates responded, 51.4% rated their satisfaction with the 2 day conference as excellent and 44.6% as very good. A similar number rated the format of the Conference in the same way. Charities were the best represented sector, followed by LERCs, then Government. 78.3% preferred a two day format meaning that the 2016 Conference will once again be held over two days.



**Honorary Membership**

As has become the norm at our Conference, we took the opportunity to present the annual Honorary Membership award, which is given to someone who has shown their commitment to the NBN vision.

In 2015, we were delighted to present the award to William (Bill) Ely in recognition of his commitment and contribution to biological recording and the mentoring of others.

**PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM**

The NBN Trust was established to facilitate and grow the National Biodiversity Network to achieve its mission of recording and caring for the UK’s wildlife data, making it universally accessible to the public, educators, researchers, conservationists and environmental decision-makers.

Work was started in 2015 to develop a Performance Management process for the NBN Secretariat providing a systematic way of ensuring that everyone within the Secretariat works together to contribute to the achievement of the NBN’s Strategy. It will be a powerful tool that helps us achieve our vision, values and strategic aims and objectives.

It focuses us on what the Secretariat staff need to do individually and within the teams to contribute to the NBN’s success, providing

challenging yet realistic goals for a given period. It also provides a process by which staff can receive feedback, praise, recognition and coaching on a regular basis and encourages trust amongst colleagues.

The Performance Management process provides sound performance information, which may be used for a number of purposes, such as development, recognition, remuneration, promotion, talent management and career planning.

The Performance Management Process applies to all employed at the Secretariat and where staff are on short term contracts (for longer than four months) they will also be involved in the process so that they can see how they contribute to the NBN Secretariat’s overall goals.

**MEMBERSHIP SCHEME REVIEW**

As a network partnership, the NBN has only been able to achieve as much as it has done due to the support and participation of its members. The current members have assisted in many projects, most recently the development of the

NBN Strategy, the NBN Action Plan and the NBN Atlas projects.

The Board of Trustees has agreed that the time is right to review the membership scheme, as despite previous reviews of the available





options, the current scheme does not allow enough flexibility to grow the membership as the NBN partnership continues to develop.

The evolution of the NBN membership scheme over the last sixteen years has created confusion with organisations not knowing if they are a member or not. In addition it can be difficult for potential new members to know why they should join and how they can contribute. It is also recognised that the NBN needs to increase the promotion of the benefits to the wider Network.

The Trustees believe that the Network would benefit from a simpler membership scheme that clearly shows the many advantages of being a member and aids the

growth of the Network. A standalone Working Group chaired by Andrew Wood, Treasurer, was set up in early 2016 to complete the review and is assisted by the NBN Secretariat. During 2016 we will be working with current members and potential members for their feedback on what the membership scheme should look like, its benefits and what we can do together to increase membership of the NBN.

It is important to the Board of Trustees that the scheme should be accepted by its membership and its success will be measured by the growth of the membership as more organisations join us to be part of the UK's largest partnership for nature.

COLLABORATIVE WORKING IN SCOTLAND

Between November 2015 and March 2016, the Scottish Biodiversity Information Forum (SBIF) Executive and Steering Groups undertook some work to improve the alignment between SBIF, Biological Recording in Scotland (BRISC) and the NBN. This work resulted in some changes being made to establish an effective biodiversity data infrastructure in Scotland.

Navigating the different organisations with a biodiversity remit has become more difficult while the need for an effective biodiversity data infrastructure has grown. The funding and sustainability of such an infrastructure is also an increasing challenge in this time of decreasing public spending. With this in mind, SBIF, BRISC and

the NBN Trust sought to improve their alignment, and to this end, in November 2015, a range of options were developed.

Following further discussion, the SBIF Executive Group made three recommendations that were welcomed and endorsed by the SBIF Steering Group, the NBN's Board of Trustees and the BRISC Committee.

The three recommendations were:

- That SBIF and the NBN unite so that there is a single body governing the biodiversity data infrastructure and the Data Flow Pathway. To honour the original Public Petition which brought SBIF into existence, the SBIF Steering Group continues as the SBIF Advisory Group to the NBN in Scotland to support and facilitate the NBN and the Data Flow Pathway.
- That the SBIF Coordinator role transfers to be managed and hosted directly by the NBN to act as its Scottish Liaison Officer thereby maximising the capacity of the NBN in Scotland.
- That, following implementation of the above recommendations, the SBIF Advisory Group should focus on two matters:

1. Driving a review and redesign of the Biodiversity Infrastructure in Scotland with a view to re-aligning it,

and...

2. Facilitating the Data Flow Pathway in Scotland so that the envisaged biodiversity infrastructure is highly effective.

To that end, and from the 1st April 2016, Christine Johnston, formerly the SBIF Co-ordinator, transferred to the NBN to become Scottish Liaison Officer. She is now the principal contact between the NBN Secretariat and Network members, data partners and data users in Scotland, and continues to work on behalf of all of SBIF's supporters.



# FINANCIAL REVIEW

Statement of Financial Activities (incorporating the income and expenditure account) for the year to 31 March 2016.





# FINANCIAL REPORT

The Trustees are pleased to present their annual directors' report together with the consolidated financial statements of the charity for the year ending 31 March 2016 which are also prepared to meet the requirements for a directors' report and accounts for Companies House.

The financial statements comply with the Charities Act 2011, the Companies Act 2006, the Memorandum and Articles of Association, and Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of

Recommended Practice (SORP2015) applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard for Smaller Entities.

**To note:** there has been a change in the format of the accounts and how these are presented due to a change in accounting standards from SORP 2005 to SORP FRSSE

The full copy of the audit report and accounts can be found on the **NBN website**.

	Notes	Unrestricted Funds (£)	Redtricted Funds (£)	Total Funds 2016 (£)	Total Funds 2015 (£)
INCOME AND ENDOWMENTS					
Donations & Legacies	(1)	217,325	110,000	327,325	460,605
Investment Income	(2)	150	0	150	324
Other Income	(3)	421,133	0	421,133	491,396
<b>Total Income</b>		<b>638,608</b>	<b>110,000</b>	<b>748,608</b>	<b>942,325</b>
EXPENDITURE					
Costs of raising donations & legacies		3,762	0	3,762	0
Expenditure on charitable activities	(4)	653,114	64,188	717,302	947,379
<b>Total Expenditure</b>		<b>656,876</b>	<b>64,188</b>	<b>721,064</b>	<b>947,379</b>
NET Income/ Expenditure before transfer funds		(18,268)	45,812	27,544	(5,054)
Transfer between funds *		(4,188)	4,188	0	0

**\* To note:** During the year there was an overspend on the restricted Living Atlas of Scotland fund. This has been covered by the unrestricted fund and therefore there has been a transfer between funds.

NET Income/ (Expenditure) for the year	(22,456)	50,000	27,544	(5,054)
Total funds brought forward	152,027	0	152,027	157,081
<b>Total funds carried forward</b>	<b>129,571</b>	<b>50,000</b>	<b>179,571</b>	<b>152,027</b>

## BALANCE SHEET

	Notes	Total Funds 2016 (£)	Total Funds 2015 (£)
FIXED ASSETS			
Tangible Assets	(7)	1,470	2,438
CURRENT ASSETS			
Debtors and prepayments	(8)	43,813	174,799
Cash at bank and in hand		173,516	178,333
<b>Total</b>		<b>217,329</b>	<b>353,132</b>
CREDITORS			
Amounts falling due within one year	(9)	39,227	203,543
Net Current Assets		178,102	149,589
Total Assets less current liabilities		179,572	152,027
Net Assets		179,572	152,027
FUNDS			
Restricted income funds		50,000	0
Unrestricted income funds		129,572	152,027
<b>Total funds</b>		<b>179,572</b>	<b>152,027</b>



# 01

## DONATIONS AND LEGACIES

	Unrestricted Funds (£)	Restricted Funds (£)	Total Funds 2016 (£)	Total Funds 2015 (£)
Cabinet Office	0	0	0	248, 624
Other	308	0	308	0
<b>Grants Receivable</b>				
NBN Atlas Scotland	0	60, 000	60, 000	0
NBN Atlas Wales	0	50, 000	50, 000	0
Subscriptions	217, 017	0	217, 017	201, 981
<b>Totals</b>	<b>217, 325</b>	<b>110, 000</b>	<b>327, 325</b>	<b>450, 605</b>

# 02

## INVESTMENT INCOME

	Unrestricted Funds (£)	Total Funds 2016 (£)	Total Funds 2015 (£)
Bank interest receivable	151	151	324

# 03

## OTHER INCOMING RESOURCES

	Unrestricted Funds (£)	Total Funds 2016 (£)	Total Funds 2015 (£)
Miscellaneous income	14, 567	14, 567	6, 017
Donated services and facilities	406, 566	406, 566	485, 379
<b>Total</b>	<b>421, 133</b>	<b>421, 133</b>	<b>491, 396</b>





04

COST OF CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES BY FUND TYPE

	Donated servies & facilities (£)	Project staff costs (£)	NBN Atlas Scotland (£)	Support costs (£)	Website dev'mt & promotion (£)	Total funds 2016 (£)	Total funds 2015 (£)
Cost of activities in furtherance of charities objectives	406, 566	79, 781	64, 188	148, 332	18, 435	653, 114	947, 379

05

ANALYSIS OF SUPPORT COSTS

	Support (£)	Governance costs (£)	Total costs 2016 (£)	Total costs 2015 (£)
Staff Costs	82, 393		82, 393	73, 893
Premises	9, 637		9, 637	9, 279
Communications & IT	7, 303		7, 303	9, 221
Legal and professional	1, 553		1, 553	1, 641
Finance costs	590		590	611
Depreciation	3, 908		3, 908	2, 436
Insurance	1, 236		1, 236	728
Printing, postage & stationary	6, 016		6, 016	7, 115
Meeting & conference expenses	18, 978		18, 978	19, 900
Travelling expenses	9, 618		9, 618	14, 592
Bad debts	0		0	1, 157
Accountancy		2, 039	2, 039	1, 890
Auditors remuneration		2, 700	2, 700	0
Trustees expenses		2, 157	2, 157	2, 528
Board meeting expenses		204	204	827
<b>Total</b>	<b>141, 232</b>	<b>7, 100</b>	<b>148, 332</b>	<b>145, 818</b>

DONATED SERVICES AND FACILITIES

The Trust received donated services and facilities, mainly in the form of staff, contributing to Trust objectives. The member organisations provided services costed by themselves, using criteria provided by Trustees as follows;

	Total funds 2016 (£)	Total funds 2015 (£)
Scottish Natural Heritage	38, 500	47, 500
Joint Nature Conservation Committee	91, 042	106, 042

British Trust for Ornithology	9, 838	7, 413
Natural History Museum	46, 726	44, 226
Centre for Ecology and Hydrology	153, 468	209, 920
Natural England	27, 475	36, 000
Natural Resources Wales	24, 500	26, 500
British Ecological Society	2, 400	1, 500
Environment Agency	6, 496	6, 278
National Federation for Biological Recorders	6, 120	0
<b>Totals</b>	<b>406, 566</b>	<b>485, 379</b>

06

STAFF COSTS & EMOLUMENTS

	Total funds 2016 (£)	Total funds 2015 (£)
Total wages & salaries	131, 338	104, 694
Social security costs	9, 621	7, 267
Other pension costs	6, 428	3, 288
<b>Total</b>	<b>147, 387</b>	<b>115, 249</b>

The company pays pension contributions on behalf of its employees and seconded staff. These contributions are included within staff costs.

PARTICULARS OF EMPLOYEES:

The average number of employees during the year, calculated on the basis of full-time equivalents were as follows:

	2016	2015
Number of research staff employed	1	1
Number of administration staff	4	2
Number of management staff- seconded/ employed	1	1

No employee received remuneration of more than £60,000 during the year (2015-2016).



## 07

### TANGIBLE FIXED ASSETS

	Equipment (£)
<b>COST</b>	
Brought forward 1. 4. 15	8, 044
Additions	2, 940
<b>Total at 31. 3. 16</b>	<b>10, 984</b>
<b>DEPRECIATION</b>	
Brought forward 1. 4. 15	5, 606
Charge in the year	3, 908
<b>Total at 31. 3. 16</b>	<b>9, 514</b>
<b>NET BOOK VALUE</b>	
At 31 March 2016	1, 470
At 31 March 2015	2, 438

## 08

### DEBTORS

	2016 (£)	2015 (£)
Trade debtors	40, 230	159, 218
Other debtors	0	9, 489
Prepayments	3, 583	6, 092
<b>Total</b>	<b>43, 813</b>	<b>174, 799</b>

## 09

### CREDITORS

Amounts falling due within one year.

	2016 (£)	2015 (£)
Trade creditors	2, 430	1, 762
PAYE	3, 019	0
Other creditors	33, 778	201, 781
<b>Total</b>	<b>39, 227</b>	<b>203, 543</b>

## 10

### RELATED PARTIES TRANSACTIONS

The Trust has been billed by some of its members for various services supplied as follows:

	2016 (£)	2015 (£)
Scottish Natural Heritage	0	4, 243
Marine Biological Association	0	22, 974

The accounts have been prepared under the historical cost convention and in accordance with applicable United Kingdom accounting standards and the requirements of the Statement of Recommended Practice 'Accounting and Reporting by Charities' (SORP2015)

Each year, for the purposes of the accounts, every support organisation produces a schedule of costs incurred in carrying out these services. These services are costed by the support organisation on the basis of an equitable sharing of its costs, or, where such figures are not readily available, at standard charge-out rates. These figures are shown as intangible income under "Donated services and facilities" (see note 5). We received intangible income, mainly in the form of staff resources and associated costs expended on NBN projects.



RESERVES POLICY

The Board of Trustees, through its Finance and Management Committee (FMC), has established a policy whereby a ‘free reserve’ of £100,000 is maintained. At this level, the FMC of the National Biodiversity Network Trust considers that it would be able to continue the current activities of the charity should there be a significant drop in funding or loss of in kind contributions as identified by the risk register.

RISK REGISTER

The FMC has reviewed the major risks to the charity, and has systems designed to manage them. The main internal financial risks are minimised through procedures for delegation and appropriate authorisation of all transactions and projects and by ensuring consistent quality for all the charity’s operations. The FMC reviews the risks at every meeting. Risks related to external funding agreements have their own risk management policy.

BIOD SERVICES LTD

BioD Services Ltd was set up to help the Trust develop the Network through contractual work and was incorporated as a company limited by shares on 13 March, 2001.

The Articles of Association allow the company to transfer profits or income to the NBN Trust as gift aid. For 2015-2016 there were no profits from BioD Services to be donated over to the NBN Trust as gift aid.

The fees billed are mainly attributed to the one principal activity of the company and consist of invoiced sales of services to Defra.

**To note:** The company no longer sells the Ordnance Survey map tiles and these have been written off from the accounts.

The financial information below shows the total income against expenditure.

More detailed financial statements are available for either the NBN Trust accounts or BioD Services Ltd. Please contact the NBN Trust’s Finance and Business Officer on 0115 924 7132 for your copy.

BALANCE SHEET

	Total Funds 2016 (£)	Total Funds 2015 (£)
FIXED ASSETS		
Tangible Assets	0	118
CURRENT ASSETS		
Stocks	0	3, 000
Debtors and prepayments	17	8, 792
Cash at bank and in hand	14, 448	16, 493
Total	14, 465	28, 285
CREDITORS		
Amounts falling due within one year	548	10, 022
Net current assets	13, 917	18, 263
Total assets less current liabilities	13, 917	18, 381
Net assets	13, 917	18, 381



DETAILED TRADING & PROFIT AND LOSS ACCOUNT  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2016

Details	2016 (£)	2015 (£)
Sale of Map Tile CD'S	0	31

	2016 (£)	2015 (£)
OPENING & CLOSING STOCK		
Opening stock	3,000	3,010
Closing stock	0	3,000

	2016 (£)	2015 (£)
LESS PROJECT COSTS		
DEFRA project costs	0	10,078
<b>Total</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>10,078</b>

OTHER INCOME		
Bank interest	6	7

LESS OVERHEADS		
Website costs (Defra requirements)	0	19
Postage, Stationery and Printing	643	1,024
Travel and subsistence	0	288
Accountancy	500	500
Legal and professional	26	60
Bank charges	183	250
Sundry	0	39
Depreciation	118	207
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,470</b>	<b>2,387</b>
Deficit for the year	4,464	12,437





# ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

The National Biodiversity Network Trust is a charitable company limited by guarantee, incorporated on 3rd April 2000 and registered as a charity on 25th August 2000.

The company was set up under a Memorandum of Association, which established the objectives and powers of the charitable company and is governed under its Articles of Association.

Under those articles, one third of the members of the Board of Trustees must retire at the AGM and may be re-appointed. The Board of Trustees is made up of fifteen people nominated from each member organisation. They meet three times a year and their AGM is in July. No Trustee may serve more than ten years in office in total without the approval of the members given by ordinary resolution.

## DIRECTORS/ TRUSTEES

### For the year ended 31st March 2016

Professor Michael Hassell CBE FRS	Chairman
Mr Mark Diamond	
Mr Andrew Wood	Treasurer
Mr Paul Harding MBE	Resigned 01/07/15
Mr Hugh Lucas	Resigned 01/07/15
Mr Paul Rose	
Mr Ian Owens	
Dr Andrew Clements	
Mr Richard Pywell	
Ms Teresa Frost	Resigned 03/11/15
Mr Roddy Fairley	
Mr T Webb	
Mr J D Bowker	
Ms H Wilkinson	
Ms J Ashworth	
Mr Alan Stewart	Appointed 01/07/16
Mr Tim Hill	Appointed 01/07/16

## OTHER INFORMATION

Chairman	Prof Michael Hassell CBE FRS	
Chief Executive	Mr J Sawyer	Ceased 07/11/15
Interim Chief Executive	Miss R Stroud	Appointed 16/11/15
Secretary	Mr J Sawyer	Ceased 07/11/15
Interim Secretary	Miss R Stroud	Appointed 16/11/15

## REGISTERED OFFICE

NBN Trust  
Broadway Business Centre  
32a Stoney Street  
Lace Market  
Nottingham  
NG1 1LL

## AUDITORS

Brooks Mayfield Audit Limited  
12 Bridgford Road  
West Bridgford  
Nottingham  
NG2 6AB

## SOLICITORS


DLA Piper 1 St Pauls Place Sheffield S1 2JX	Freeth Cumberland Court 80 Mount Street Nottingham NG1 6HH
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## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The NBN Secretariat would like to thank the following people for their contribution to this Annual Report:

Rich Burkmar	Chris Raper
Chris Du Feu	Andrew Salisbury
Tom Hunt	Phil Thomas
Barnaby Letheren	Graham Walley
Sam Neal	Steph West
Keith Porter	Steve Whitbread





## IN MEMORY OF JOHN SAWYER 1968 - 2015

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“

John was an inspirational leader... he has had an enormous impact on the NBN, with his vision, his enthusiasm and energy as well as his hugely motivational leadership of his team at the Secretariat, and all his colleagues across the Network.

“

John had a special way with people which brought out the best in them whilst bringing people along with him and his vision.





“

We will continue to collaborate to embed our collective data and knowledge creation at the heart of biodiversity learning and environmental decision-making.