

Two Local Naturalists are on the Shortlist for the 2017 UK Awards for Biological Recording and Information Sharing

Two naturalists from South Wales, **Annie Irving** and **Liam Olds**, have been shortlisted in the Adult Newcomer category of the 2017 UK Awards for Biological Recording and Information Sharing.

These annual awards started in 2015, and have been developed by the National Biodiversity Network, the National Forum for Biological Recording and the Biological Records Centre. Their intention is to recognise and celebrate the outstanding contributions made to biological recording by adults and young people, which is helping to improve our understanding of the UK's wildlife.

Annie Irving, 61, from Penarth, says:

“The one consistent love throughout my life has been for Nature. Though I’ve always appreciated the natural world around me, spent a lot of time outdoors and supported environmental charities, it wasn’t until I moved to Wales two years ago that I became more actively involved in supporting the preservation and conservation of the natural environment.

“I joined the Glamorgan Bird Club and the Glamorgan Fungus Group to meet like-minded people and, through them, I learned of the work of SEWBRcC, the South East Wales Biodiversity Records Centre. I attended one of SEWBRcC’s ‘Introduction to Biological Recording’ courses and was hooked! I was already walking almost daily in my local parks and nature reserves – now I had a purpose for my walks and a use for all the photographs I took. By recording the flora and fauna I see, I am actively helping my local environment.”

Liam Olds, 25, from Coedely, says:

- “What particularly excites me about biological recording is the chance of discovering species previously unknown from my local area, regardless of whether these are common or rare species.

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“What motivates me to get involved is the general lack of appreciation for the South Wales valleys as 'biologically interesting' places. Through my biological recording I hope to highlight the incredible diversity of wildlife found in the valleys, dispelling the myth that there's no wildlife in the valleys.”

The **winners** of the 2017 UK Awards for Biological Recording and Information Sharing will be announced at a special ceremony on **Thursday 16 November** during the National Biodiversity Network's annual conference in Cardiff.

This year we are indebted to three organisations for their support:

1. [Opticron](#) for sponsoring the prizes for the Youth Awards and for the Adult Newcomer Award.
2. [Paramo Directional Clothing](#) for sponsoring the prizes for the Gilbert White Adult Award and the David Robertson Adult Award.
3. [Field Studies Council \(FSC\)](#) for sponsoring the prize for the Lynne Farrell Group Award. **/Ends.**

For more information, to arrange interviews, and for images of the people who have been shortlisted, please contact **Purba Choudhury**, NBN Communications Officer, on: **0115-9247133** or via: p.choudhury@nbn.org.uk

Notes to Editors:

1. The full, national, shortlist is:

Adult Newcomer Award

- Dave Braddock – from Surrey
- Adrian Cooper – from Suffolk
- Annie Irving – from Vale of Glamorgan
- Liam Olds – from Rhondda Cynon Taf
- Hugh Tooby – from Stirlingshire

David Robertson Adult Award for marine and coastal wildlife

- George Catchpole – from Essex
- Paula Lightfoot – from Tyne & Wear
- John Newnham – from West Sussex
- Jack Sewell – from Devon
- Rob Wells – from Cornwall

Gilbert White Adult Award for terrestrial and freshwater wildlife

- George Catchpole – from Essex
- Peter Hodge – from East Sussex
- John Newnham – from West Sussex
- Adrian Norris – from West Yorkshire
- Dan Watson – from Stirlingshire

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Lynne Farrell Group Award for wildlife recording

- Community Science – from Derbyshire
- Dearne Valley Landscape Partnership – from South Yorkshire
- Inner Forth Landscape Partnership – from Falkirk West
- NESBReC Mammal Atlas – from Aberdeenshire
- Sorby Natural History Society – from South Yorkshire

Youth Awards for wildlife recording

- Jann Billker – from Buckinghamshire
- Tyler Ingleheart – from Somerset
- Mhairi McCann – from Inverclyde
- Evan Potter – from Greater Manchester

2. **David Robertson** (1806–1896) was a Scottish naturalist who founded the [University Marine Biological Station at Millport](#), which opened in 1897. Millport Marine Biological Station closed in 2013, but reopened in 2014 as Millport Field Centre thanks to the Field Studies Council.
3. **Gilbert White** (1720 – 1793) is remembered in these awards because his name is synonymous with biological recording. He was one of the first English naturalists to make careful observations of his surroundings and record these observations in a systematic way. He transformed the way we look at the natural world and is recognised as one of the fathers of ecology.
4. **Lynne Farrell** is a well-respected botanical tour, expedition and field meetings leader. She co-authored the first 'British Red Data Book on Vascular Plants' and has produced and illustrated a pocket book 'Wildflower walks on Mull'. Since 1995 Lynne has been the Botanical Society of Britain and Ireland's voluntary recorder for Mull, Coll and Tiree and is working on writing a new 'Flora of Mull and the Mid Ebudes'.