

News Release

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West Sussex Naturalists have made the National Shortlist for the 2018 UK Awards for Biological Recording and Information Sharing

Georgia Vessey, 21, from Chichester, has been shortlisted in the “Adult Newcomer Award for recording wildlife” category of the 2018 UK Awards for Biological Recording and Information Sharing, and the 20-year old **Manhood Wildlife and Heritage Group (MWHG)**, from the Manhood Peninsula, has been shortlisted for the “Lynne Farrell Group Award for recording wildlife” category of these national Awards.

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.

Georgia Vessey says:

“I really got into biological recording on my placement year with the Field Studies Council in the Highlands of Scotland. It would have been impossible to live there and not want to learn more about the wildlife which lived so close to us.

“One of the things I love about carrying out biological recording is that it can be an incredibly sociable thing to do, for example, different people (either guests of the field centre or colleagues) would come and set out my moth traps with me each night and I ended up having some brilliant and insightful conversations on those nights.

“I’m also in awe of people who dedicate so much of their time to surveying, especially when it is only a hobby. The records they collect are invaluable and more people should get involved.”

Jane Reeve, Project Manager of the **Manhood Wildlife and Heritage Group**, says:

“Biological recording is exciting for our volunteers as they never know what they are going to find or see and are always excited to show others and share their knowledge.

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“All this information helps to build a picture of a site or the wider area and helps with management. People are generally proud and excited when travelling around the local area to know what is living in our midst and that they have had a chance to see it.

“We work with volunteers and landowners to try and improve wildlife connectivity through hedgerow and ditch improvement work. We are lucky to have a nationally important population of water voles living in the network of ditches, ponds and rivers and this is a huge attractor when engaging the public and new volunteers.”

The **winners** of the 2018 UK Awards for Biological Recording and Information Sharing will be given their prizes at a special ceremony on **Wednesday 21 November** during the National Biodiversity Network's annual conference in Nottingham.

This year we are indebted to five organisations for their support and sponsorship of the prizes:

1. [Opticron](#)
2. [Paramo Directional Clothing](#)
3. [Field Studies Council \(FSC\)](#)
4. [Nature Photographers Ltd](#)
5. [NHBS/British Wildlife](#) /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: **0115-850 0172** or via: **support@nbn.org.uk**

Notes to Editors:

1. The full, national, shortlist is:

Adult Newcomer Award

- Brian Atkinson – from Cheltenham, Gloucestershire.
- John Fergusson – from Tarbolton, Ayrshire.
- George Greiff – from Ventnor on the Isle of Wight.
- Fiona Rock – from Kingswinford, West Midlands.
- Georgia Vessey – from Chichester, West Sussex.

David Robertson Adult Award for marine and coastal wildlife

- Bryony Chapman – working in Maidstone, Kent.
- Hannah Grist – working in Oban, Argyll.

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Gilbert White Adult Award for terrestrial and freshwater wildlife

- Ryan Clark – from Aylesbury, Buckinghamshire.
- Gordon Corbet – from Lundin Links, Fife.
- Andrew Grayson – from Beadlam, North Yorkshire.
- Trevor James – from Ashwell in Hertfordshire.
- Sarah Whild – from Shrewsbury, Shropshire.
- Derek Whiteley – from Wardlow, Derbyshire.

Lynne Farrell Group Award for wildlife recording

- Capturing our Coast – covering all the coasts of England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland.
- LERC Wales – covering the whole of Wales
- Longshaw Fungi and Lichen Survey Team – from the National Trust property in the Peak District, Derbyshire and South Yorkshire.
- Manhood Wildlife and Heritage Group (MWHG) – from the Manhood Peninsula in West Sussex

Youth Awards for wildlife recording

- Mya-Rose Craig – from Compton Martin in Somerset.
- Dylan Jenkins – from Gower, Swansea

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'.