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Biology Curators Group Newsletter

Title: Letter

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Source: Bloor, K. P. (1984). Letter. *Biology Curators Group Newsletter*, Vol 3 No 8, 443 - 444.

URL: <http://www.natsca.org/article/1337>

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Your ref

Our ref KPB/LW

Date 19th. December 1983.

Dear Mr. Whiteley,

Re: A Survey of Species Recording Schemes in local Biological Record Centres (B.C.G. Newsletter Vol. 3 Part 7 1983).

I read with interest your article on Biological Recording schemes. I am presently supervising an Environmental Survey of Stoke-on-Trent which is sponsored by the Manpower Services Commission. The scheme is aided by the use of a micro-computer, thus speeding data retrieval and increasing the flexibility of presentation. The enclosed copy outlines the Survey's aims, recording structure and data management.

STOKE-ON-TRENT ENVIRONMENTAL SURVEY

The project, which commenced in August 1982, initially employed 13 people to record and interpret the Biological and Geological diversity within the City boundaries. The Geological component was completed in July 1983 with the culmination of 'A Complete Geology of Stoke-on-Trent'; a series of 8 booklets is on sale to the General Public, including a publication on the City's building stones. Site locality cards have been completed from literature reference sources and a collection of building stones amassed.

The biological part of the survey is still being carried out, the aims of which are:-

- 1) To identify and evaluate sites with respect to their educational, recreational and scientific value.
- 2) To catalogue the flora and fauna of the City by:-
 - i) Direct field observation.
 - ii) Data extraction from existing collections at the City Museum.
 - iii) Extracting data from field journals.
- 3) To collect, prepare and store voucher specimens for the City Museum's collection.
- 4) To produce a computer data-base of biological information.
- 5) To complement the geological publications with a series of biological guides to Wildlife in the City.

Recording System and Data Management

All recording is done on a 1 kilometre square basis and is initially kept on standard B.R.C. species cards or the City Museum's own record slips (see B.C.G. Newsletter Vol. 3, Part 7, p. 403, 1983). Records are then entered on to a micro-computer which has the standard screen format shown below:

```
G.REF 10KM - 84  1KM - 72  100M - ?
BRC ABBREV - ALOPE PRA    TAXON - B06
GENUS      - ALOPECURUS
SPECIES    - PRATENSIS
HABITAT    - GLD(LO)
CENTURY    - 19
DATE       - 23-06-83
COLL/REC   - SOTES
DETERMINED - ?
COMMENTS   - ?
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ENTERED - 12-15-83

Each major group is given its own TAXON CODE which enables, for instance, a full list of flowering plants to be obtained. Habitats are coded to facilitate extraction at different levels of detail, e.g. GLD(LO) refers to lowland grassland. As some records predated the twentieth century it was found necessary to incorporate the field CENTURY, i.e. 19 for the 1900's and 18 for the 1800's.

Records are stored in numerical order of a code derived from the Grid Reference (e.g. SK 1234 would become SK 13/24). The data can then be accessed and printed out using existing or newly defined print reports.

Work is currently being carried out to produce distribution maps automatically from the computer data base for inclusion in our forthcoming publications.

I would be very interested to hear from other museums with similar schemes.

Yours sincerely,



K.P.Bloor (Project Leader)