



NatSCA

Natural Sciences Collections Association

<http://www.natsca.org>

NatSCA News

Title: Biological Recording and Natural Science Collection Workshops Yorkshire, Summer 2006

Author(s): Measures, K.

Source: Measures, K. (2006). Biological Recording and Natural Science Collection Workshops Yorkshire, Summer 2006. *NatSCA News, Issue 10*, 22 - 23.

URL: <http://www.natsca.org/article/319>

NatSCA supports open access publication as part of its mission is to promote and support natural science collections. NatSCA uses the Creative Commons Attribution License (CCAL) <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/2.5/> for all works we publish. Under CCAL authors retain ownership of the copyright for their article, but authors allow anyone to download, reuse, reprint, modify, distribute, and/or copy articles in NatSCA publications, so long as the original authors and source are cited.

Biological Recording and Natural Science Collection Workshops
Yorkshire, Summer 2006

- Kate Measures, Heritage Learning Consultant

This summer, Creative Minds, (a Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths project run by MLA Yorkshire and funded by Yorkshire Forward) took a walk on the wild side with a series of wildlife identification workshops for adults. Each workshop equipped delegates with the skills and confidence to identify and record wildlife. They were open to people who are enthusiastic about wildlife and want to pass their skills on to others, for example, museum staff and volunteers, teachers and higher education students.

The workshops were based in local museums and were delivered by an expert from the Yorkshire Naturalist Union, with whom the programme was run in partnership. There was also a workshop specifically about biological recording. Workshop themes included:

- Dragonflies
- British Birds
- Bats
- Bumblebees
- Snails
- Hedgerows



Bumblebee workshop

When people think of museum natural science collections, images of dark rows of dusty taxidermy and ‘things’ in murky spirit often spring to mind. Collections are often seen as the last stronghold of a slightly tasteless, best-forgotten Victorian pastime.

Luckily, we’ve come a long way. Museum collections are inspirational, colourful, invaluable information banks, bursting with possibilities, intrigue and tangible data. The programme gave an excellent opportunity to look at some of Yorkshire’s natural science specimens for reference. This not only enabled delegates to see more species than we would be able to spot in the wild during the workshop but also had the added advantage that the museum specimens don’t move as fast as the ones in the wild!



Dragonfly workshop

But the work doesn’t stop here.....

Every delegate had the opportunity to join the Yorkshire Naturalists Union for a year to help develop their skills further.

The workshops have helped museum, library, heritage and environmental professionals within the region to develop their identification skills. Some have then gone on to pass on their new skills through their work, teaching or volunteering whilst others have started to record wildlife and send the data into the local biological recording centre to be added to the national records.

Investigate Your Natural World toolkit

This September, Creative Minds is launching a brand new toolkit. It provides practical guidance and help on planning and running wildlife identification workshops for museums. Wildlife identification workshops provide an exciting opportunity to use museum natural sciences collections in new ways and to build the skills of adult.

The toolkit includes help on choosing a workshop theme and the best times of year to run workshops, making use of natural science collections, help on finding workshop leaders and equipment and materials and a handy planning checklist. Also included are useful Yorkshire contacts and resources, a list of recommended wildlife identification guides and an information sheet for delegates on museum collecting.

The toolkit is free and is available on CD or can be downloaded from www.creativeminds.org.uk.

There is also a box of equipment available for museums in Yorkshire to borrow if they are intending to run a natural science event. The equipment, available for free, includes bat detectors, field guides, a GPS system, butterfly nets etc.

Contact Cliffe Castle Museum in Keighley (01535 618231) if you're interested.

NatSCA Annual Conference & AGM 2007
Theme: Collections Development

Sheffield Museums and Galleries Trust

Does Collections Development include disposal?

Need to consider:

Collecting

- fieldwork, consultancy and developing partnerships
- relationships with donors
- purchases

Added value

- loans
- research

Developing collections management strategies and policies

De-accession / disposal

Conservation

- the role of conservation in collection development
- how conservation practice uncovers hidden information

Realising the potential of collections – examples of good practice

Anyone wishing to present a paper on any of these, or any areas relevant to the theme, contact Jo Hatton.

Please note: we ask speakers to submit written versions of papers for publication in the conference issue of NatSCA News.

www.natsca.org