

Recorders' Forum Saturday 21 March 2009

About 36 of us met at the Water of Leith Visitor Centre in Edinburgh to discuss various aspects of biodiversity data. After an introduction from Alastair Sommerville who outlined some of the work of LWIC, Graeme Wilson from the Midlothian Council spoke about the way that LWIC data are used as part of the planning process. Colin Legg discussed some of the biases associated with biological records, followed by David Angel and Bob Saville talking about data management and the priorities for recording.



After lots of useful discussion over a sandwich lunch we split into two groups. Adrian Sumner guided us through the process of making a biological record and we all practised on the various plants and animals to be found just outside the Water of Leith Visitor Centre.

Bob Saville then introduced us to some of the challenges of taking on a new group of organisms for the first time. We tried our hand collecting springtails from the leaf litter of a small woodland on the edge of the Water of Leith walkway.





Interesting finds of the day included several species of moss growing in the unlikely habitat of beneath the wooden slats of the bench just outside the Water of Leith Visitor Centre. An early peacock butterfly flapping its wings hard but getting nowhere was found to be trapped by its wing tips to the hooked hairs of a seedling of cleavers (*Galium aparine*). The butterfly was released with some difficulty, but lost part of its wing tip in the process!

The early spring sunshine picked out the bright colours of the lichens (*Xanthoria parietina*) and the lurid green shoots of the aggressive, alien invader, few-flowered garlic (*Allium paradoxum*).



If anyone has a name for this little solitary bee please send it to me at webmaster@wildlifeinformation.co.uk. The spine at the end of the front tibia and notch at the base of the metatarsus look very distinctive. It was flying beneath the trees just to the north side of the Visitor Centre.



If you were there then please send me any comments, interesting records or photographs to webmaster@wildlifeinformation.co.uk.