

EDITORIAL

Welcome to a bumper edition of the Bulletin – bumper in more ways than one!

In 2018 we will be celebrating an amazing 50 years of woodlice recording. Back in 1968, members of the then British Isopod Study Group, decided that not only would they record the distribution of woodlice but that they would, in addition, endeavour gather ecological data, resulting in a record card where there were “boxes” for habitat information as well. This led, in due course, to the 1970 record card in a design shared, thanks to the involvement of Colin Fairhurst, with those for millipedes and centipedes under the auspices of the British Myriapod Group founded that same year. Hence this Bulletin issue contains an article by Paul Harding who reminisces about those early days and reflects how much has changed (he no longer has to cycle to the jam factory to work for example!). It is truly incredible to think how a simple idea to record where woodlice were found has grown into the complex recording scheme systems that we have today along with the quality of atlases and other publications to disseminate the information. Other isopod articles deal with UV fluorescence in *Pseudolaureola atlantica* and two woodlice new to Britain.

The newly published European atlas of Julid millipedes is a monumental piece of work that has built on those early ideas and has captured data from across Europe. That the UK is so well recorded for Julids, as this atlas shows, is testament to the impact of the initial woodlouse recording scheme. Today it is possible to take photographs and send them to experts to check identification and to record where and when species were found on personal phones – a level of instant recording that Paul and his colleagues cannot have even dreamt of in 1968.

Looking back at 2017 it was a notable year for congresses, with the 17th International Myriapod Congress in Asia for the first time in Thailand and the 10th International Isopod meeting in Hungary. Hungary is proving a popular place for Myriapod and Isopod meetings, I remember attending a previous Isopod congress there many years ago, also organised by Liz Hornung who tells us here about the 2017 meeting. The next Myriapod Congress will also be in Hungary in 2019, organised by Zoltán Korsós, another good friend to BMIG who hosted our field trip there in 1994. Sadly, the contingent of UK people to both these was much reduced from previous years – here’s hoping for a better turn out in 2019!

In this Bulletin, as well as the two new woodlice, we record a staggering four species of millipede new to the UK – truly a bumper crop! No less than three of these millipedes were found in the Welsh Valleys, an area so exciting myriapodologically that we are planning the next field meeting at Easter 2018 to see what else we can find!

We are lucky in the UK to have a long continuity of people associated with biological recording and we need to celebrate their experience and foresight as well as that of the schemes which they set in motion. Somehow we also need to capture their loyalty and perseverance with our particular groups of invertebrates and try to bottle some of that for the next generation. Will we have such fidelity in the future? If not, it is difficult to see how our small group will continue in the long term. For this reason, it is vital for the group to maintain a high profile in both publicising our work and becoming involved in both national and local recording and in schemes such as iSpot and iRecord but also in encouraging others to become interested. Those of us who have been looking at these animals for some years may recall their own “early days” and the ways in which experienced workers such as Gordon Blower and Ted Eason (in the case of myriapods) and Stephen Sutton (woodlice) not only shared their knowledge and experience and supported us in our interest but, so importantly, encouraged us in what we were doing.