

A BioBlitz of “olympic” proportions!

Bodelwyddan Castle Grounds was “bio-blitzed” for the first time on 14 and 15th July, with over 400 species discovered during a 24 hour period. Organised by Bodelyddan Castle Trust in conjunction with Cofnod, British Trust for Conservation Volunteers and Denbighshire County Council, this was also a ‘[Meet the Species](#)’ event, part of Discovering Places - the London 2012 Cultural Olympiad Campaign to inspire the UK to discover their local environment.

The event attracted over twenty local species experts who shared their knowledge and experience with interested members of the public and recorded as many species as they could find within the immediate castle surroundings, adjacent woods and fields. For more than half the species recorded Cofnod did not previously have records on its database for that area, demonstrating how important BioBlitz events are in increasing our knowledge of North Wales wildlife and contributing to its conservation.

Higher plants, mosses, liverworts, fungi, birds, mammals, butterflies, moths, spiders, bumblebees and more! were all well recorded, starting with moth trapping on the night of the 14th and finishing with a bat walk the following evening. Many different tools were used to facilitate the recording process, including both the low tech (a tuning fork used to coax out spiders from the castle walls) and the high tech (camera traps which captured images of badgers, fallow deer and rabbits roaming the grounds overnight).

Identification is still underway for some species which require examination under a microscope. One of the species identified after the event and confirmed by a national expert was a fungus, *Inocybe amethystina*, recorded by Charles Aron and Debbie Evans, which has never been recorded in Wales before! There are very very few records of this species in Britain – is it indeed very rare or perhaps also under-recorded, like many species where considerable expertise in identification is needed?



Inocybe amethystina, Bodelyddan, 15th July 2012. Copyright Charles Aron.

Another interesting record was of *Bombus hypnorum* (the Tree Bee) found by Oliver Prys-Jones. Recorded as new to Britain in 2001, the bee has spread rapidly and has already been found across North Wales as far as Anglesey. Read more about its ongoing spread on the [BWARS](#) website.

Our thanks are due to all the recorders who volunteered their time to make this event possible. Records from the event continue to trickle in, including a recent one of a moth hatched out from a pupa found during the event! View the results of this and other BioBlitz events on the [Cofnod website](#), and register now to ensure you hear about the next one through our regular e-newsletter.