

Centipede, Millipede & Woodlouse Course

On the 17th October 2010 Cofnod ran an identification course on Centipedes, Millipedes and Woodlice at Treborth Botanic Gardens, Bangor. The course was led by Tony Barber (British Myriapod and Isopod Group) who gave the 18 attendees a general overview of these ubiquitous invertebrate groups.

Fine weather provided excellent opportunity for fieldwork and the attendees took full advantage of this, sampling various habitats within walking distance of the laboratory.

The gardens themselves yielded an interesting variety of species, including the centipedes *Stigmatogaster subterranea*, *Geophilus flavus* and *Cryptops hortensis*, and the Pill Millipede *Glomeris marginata* with its shiny black plate armour. Land hoppers *Arcitalitrus dorrieni*, an introduced terrestrial crustacean from Australia, provided a challenge for those keen to catch specimens for examination!



The recording party descended down a steep flight of wooden steps to sample the coastal fauna of the Menai Straits, encountering the salt-tolerant centipede *Strigamia maritima* and woodlouse *Ligia oceanica*. Woodland leaf litter and logs were also searched on the way back to the lab.

With Tony's guidance attendees worked with keys and microscopes to identify their catches, learning useful practical tips in the process. A quick investigation of the glasshouses produced some interesting exotic centipedes and millipedes, with

Oxidus gracilis being a particularly memorable, fast moving millipede.

Towards the end of the day the group's records were collated comprising 68 records: 7 centipede species, 11 millipede species, 5 woodlice species and a few other incidentals. This enjoyable course was well-attended and left everybody with a much greater understanding and appreciation of these interesting invertebrates.

Cofnod intend to run a range of similar identification courses in the future, so please visit our website regularly for more information.

