

BRISC (Biological Recording in Scotland) is a voluntary body with Scottish Charity status. Our stated objectives are to advance the education of the public about biological diversity and to promote for the benefit of the public the conservation of the environment.

Specific objectives are

- *To promote the effective gathering and use of biological data and other related information as a means to develop an understanding of Scotland's biodiversity and contribute to the conservation of the natural heritage of Scotland.*
- *To stimulate biological recording in Scotland through promotion of a network of area-based local records centres and recording groups.*
- *To represent the interests of those records centres, recording groups and individual recorders to other organisations.*
- *To promote co-ordination/co-operation between and training of individuals and organisations with an interest in biological recording.*
- *To promote the adoption of good practice and minimum standards of biological recording and the accreditation of records centres.*

The lovely Balgavies Loch was the focus of one of the excursions © Andy Wakelin



ANNUAL REPORT

For
2010



From the 2010 Excursions:



The historic tsunami site at Montrose Basin with a close-up below © Andy Wakelin



Murdo Macdonald *co-opted 2006*
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Samantha Ranscombe *elected 2010*
Countryside Education Ranger
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Glenn Roberts *elected 2010*
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Claire Seymour *SNH representative*
SNH. External Data Partnerships Advisory Officer
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Mark Simmons, *elected 2008*
Principle Officer, Natural History
Perth Museum and Art Gallery,
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Prof Peter Slater *elected 2010*
Emeritus Professor, St Andrews University
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Richard Weddle *elected 2007*
Glasgow Museum Biological Records Centre
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Jonathan Willet *co-opted 2010*
Chair Highland Biological Recording Group
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BRISC Committee Members as of January 2011

Patrick Milne Home, Chair

re-elected 2007

Craigow, Milnathort, Kinross shire, KY13 ORP
Tel 01577 863758 fax 01577 863007
chair@brisc.org.uk

Duncan Davidson, Treasurer and Membership Secretary *re-elected 2010*

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Louisa Maddison, Minutes Secretary

re-elected 2010

Countryside Ranger, Countryside and Greenspace Service,
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Andy Wakelin, Website Manager

re-elected 2007

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Anne-Marie Smout, Newsletter Editor

Ex Officio

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Gill Dowse (Calder)

SWT rep - co-opted 2003

SWT Survey & Monitoring Data Manager, Cramond House,
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David Lampard

elected 2007

McManus Galleries & Museum
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Craig Macadam

re-elected 2007

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**BRISC Annual General Meeting for 2010
To be held on Thursday 10th March 2011
In Lecture Theatre One
At The Graham Kerr Building, Glasgow University
AT 6.00 pm**

Agenda:

- 1. Apologies for absence**
- 2. Minutes of Annual General Meeting held on 27th March 2010 at The George Hotel, Montrose**
- 3. Chairman's Report for 2010**
- 4. Annual Accounts and Treasurer's Report for 2010**
- 5. Membership**
- 6. Election of New Chairman**
- 7. Election of Honorary Officers and Council for 2011/2012**
- 8. Any other business**

Minutes of BRISC Annual General Meeting for 2009
Held on Saturday 27 March 2010 at 12.40
At The George Hotel, Montrose

Present. Chairman, 20 Committee and other Members.

1. Apologies

Apologies were received from Craig Macadam, Brian Boag, Louisa Hancock, Mark Simmons, Anne-Marie Smout, Barbara Ballinger and Brian Ballinger.

2. Minutes of 2009 AGM

These had been circulated previously and copies were also tabled. Their adoption was proposed by Duncan Davidson and seconded by Richard Weddle and were approved by the meeting without corrections.

3. Matters arising

There were none.

4. Chairman's Report

The Chairman's Report for 2009 had been circulated previously and no questions were raised.

5. Annual Accounts

The Annual Accounts had been circulated with the Annual Report. The Treasurer, Duncan Davidson, amplified on some points raised and the accounts were approved by those present.

No proposal was made for any change to the annual subscription. Mr Kenn Watt asked if a list of paid up members could be made available so that members knew whether or not they had paid their annual subscription. The Treasurer explained that he did contact late payers, so there was no need for members to fear that they would be struck off without due warning.

6. Membership

Membership remains similar to last year at 98 individual and 32 corporate.

7. Projects Update

E-Petition. The Chairman explained that the Science Group to the Scottish Parliament had considered the matters raised by the Petitions Committee and had called for evidence from BRISC, SNH, NBN and COSLA.

Receipts and Payments: Accounts Comparison

	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
	£	£	£	£	£	£
<i>1. Receipts</i>						
Membership Subs	2137.00	1821.25	1975.00	2385.00	1640.00	1855.00
Conference Bookings	710.00	621.00	1657.00	3622.63	578.00	588.00
Donations	156.50	340.00	10022.00	15.00	0.00	25.00
Sales	81.25	176.60	25.00	815.00	550.00	20.00
Project Admin / Grants			200.00		2500.00	
Gift Aid			292.86			
Bank Account Interest	221.29	185.30	327.47	216.82	18.29	14.24
	3306.04	3144.15	14499.33	7054.45	5286.29	2502.24
<i>2. Payments</i>						
Conference Costs	449.44	199.63	1142.98	3296.53	814.37	423.00
Subscriptions	127.00	296.00	5.00		5.00	10.00
Newsletter	628.41	504.24	737.67	959.50	1066.97	1431.92
Members Expenses	523.01	466.00	410.76	353.58	547.22	422.78
Website Costs		56.38		56.38		
Data Protection Registration	35.00	35.00	35.00	35.00	35.00	35.00
Miscellaneous	202.45		4109.00	2311.05	3244.75	56.23
Bank Acct Tax deducted	44.21	37.03	65.44	42.75	3.60	2.75
	2009.52	1594.28	6505.85	7054.79	5716.91	2781.68
<i>3. Excess of Receipts over Payments</i>						
	1296.52	1549.87	7993.48	(0.34)	(430.62)	(279.44)

Treasurer's Report for 2010

Treasurer's Report for 2010 (1 January – 31 December)			
Opening Balance at 1 January 2010		£13,967.18	
Income	£	Expenditure	£
Membership Subscriptions	1855.00	Conference	423.00
Conference Bookings	588.00	Subscriptions	10.00
Donations	25.00	Newsletter	1431.92
Sales	20.00	Members Expenses	422.78
Bank Interest	14.24	Tax deducted	2.75
		Website Costs	91.23
		Bursaries & Donations	400.00
Totals	2502.24		2781.68
Closing Balance at 31 December 2010		£13,687.74	

Notes – Bursaries & Donations: two bursaries of £150 each were awarded and £100 was donated to Buglife to help celebrate the life of Bob Saville.

Their report was awaited and it was anticipated that BRISC would have the opportunity to comment on it. The fact that the matter was still active indicated that the e-petition had received general support.

Bursary. Four bursaries had been awarded for 2010, two by BRISC and two by the Glasgow Natural History Society, to:-

- Maureen Potter, Introduction to NVC
- Kirsty-Kennedy Wylie - Introduction to Stoneflies and Mayflies
- Henriette Koubakouenda - Identifying wildflowers
- Ann Morgan - Identifying wildflowers

Data Scoping Project. This was a follow on from the project completed at the end of 2008. The original project was considered to have been too detailed and costly to enable its roll out to be undertaken across Scotland and the new or revised project was to see if a simpler project could deliver the desired result of identifying electronically where all non-computerised records were held throughout Scotland.

8 Committee Members

The Chairman advised that the following names had been put forward for re-election or election to the Committee and he would be happy to take any other names directly from the floor:-

<i>Re-election.</i>	<i>Proposer</i>	<i>Seconder</i>
Duncan Davidson	Mark Simmons	Claire Seymour
Louisa Hancock	Richard Weddle	Andy Wakelin

<i>Election</i>		
Peter Slater	Anne-Marie Smout	Patrick Milne Home
Glenn Roberts	Duncan Davidson	Patrick Milne Home
Samantha Ranscombe	Anne Marie Smout	Richard Weddle

It was also proposed to re-co-opt Gill Dowse, Murdo Macdonald and to co-opt Jonathan Willet.

No other names were put forward from those attending the meeting and all these **proposals were carried** accordingly.

8. AOB

There being no other matters raised the Chairman thanked Andy Wakelin for his organisation of the day, Anne-Marie Smout and Mark Simmons for contacting the speakers for the Conference and the four speakers for their contributions.

The meeting closed at 13.15



One excursion went to Balgavies Loch, where the wildlife observed included the Osprey pictured below © Andy Wakelin



The excursion to Bodin Point near Montrose (above) was led by BSBI VC Recorder Barbara Hogarth (below) © Gordon Corbet



Chairman's Report for 2010

During 2010 the BRISC **Committee** held four meetings. These tend to be held in Perth as being the most central location for all the Committee Members and our thanks to Mark Simmons and Perth Museum and Art Gallery for the availability of the room. A major proportion of our time in the earlier part of the year was taken up on discussing how to take forward BRISC's remit.

In 2006 we drew up a very ambitious Business Plan but, although we have completed a number of the Objectives, it was proving difficult to take everything forward as we had not been able to obtain funding for a Project Officer who would have implemented the individual projects. Whilst we will continue to take forward projects, as the human resources are able and willing, we will work on a less formalised business plan basis, aiming to provide a general, broad and independent view on recording for people with similar interests: providing information on what is happening in different geographical and taxonomic areas; broadly representing the interest of recorders, recording and societies, and to produce briefs on the wider issues that need representation. This is still a very large remit but the Committee felt that there was no other organisation within Scotland who has this overarching view on recording.

Our **2010 AGM** and Conference was held in Montrose at the end of March. We had four speakers for the Conference, on the theme of *Biodiversity – Then and Now*, which provided fascinating insights into what was happening many millions of years ago and also what could be discovered from more recent archaeological biological finds. In the afternoon there was a selection of excursions. We had 20 attendees for the AGM; this was down slightly on previous years. To avoid getting too set in our ways we are trying a new format for the AGM in 2011 by holding it in the evening and in conjunction with Glasgow University Zoological Society talk. Any views on this and other suggestions are always helpful and perhaps comments through the Newsletter will elicit other responses. An Annual Conference will be held in the autumn.

When I became Chairman of BRISC in 2005, we were making considerable efforts to promote a Network of Local Records Centres. In spite of continuing lobbying, it is disappointing that full coverage of Scotland has still not been achieved. Over the last three years we have concentrated our efforts through the **e-petition system of the Scottish Government** where we '*urged the Scottish Government to establish*

Membership Report for 2010.

The membership year runs from 1 April to 31 March so, as in previous years, this is not a full year membership report but a snapshot of the position at the end of the calendar year.

We currently have 97 individual members, having gained six and lost seven during the year. Five of the seven losses had their memberships revoked due to non-payment of subscriptions. We also have 32 corporate members, the number unchanged through 2010.

Since last year, there has been no increase in the number of members paying by standing order. This means that there are 34 of you who pay by cheque, and I urge you once again to take advantage of the standing order facility because, as you can see below, this year I have to write letters to 29 of you to remind you to pay!

At the end of the calendar year, 29 individual members had not paid their subscriptions and reminder letters have now been sent to them all.

Duncan Davidson
Membership Secretary

integrated local and national structures for collecting, analyzing and sharing biological data to inform decision making processes.' Whilst there has been general support of its intent, and we believe that the Scottish Government is now much more aware of the positive benefits that can be derived from encouraging biological recording, I am not convinced that the case is won yet. However, new centres do establish themselves, one being the Hebridean Recording Group, and we wish them every success. Hopefully all areas of Scotland will eventually achieve recognized localised records centres.

As I have stated previously, the organisation that should be best positioned to lobby for full coverage of record centres in Scotland is ALERC (Association of Local Environmental Record Centres) but unfortunately it does not seem to be very well represented in Scotland. BRISC will continue to do what we can to raise their profile and ensure that Scotland is adequately represented.

I reported last year that we intended to refine our **Data Scoping Project**, which had concluded in 2009. The original report was considered to be too detailed to repeat across Scotland and we hoped to trial a slimmed down version to see if that would provide a useful and economic alternative. Unfortunately time pressures have not enabled this project to be fully implemented, although it is still planned to complete the work.

The **Newsletter** has been produced four times over the last year and the colour printing has greatly enhanced the overall appearance. Quite a few of you take the Newsletter in electronic format and this does save BRISC on both printing and posting costs. Our thanks to its Editor, Anne-Marie Smout, for the continuing interesting and high quality articles that it contains.

We provided further **Bursaries** in 2010, in conjunction with **Glasgow Natural History Society**. Between BRISC and GNHS four £150 awards were made. They enable recipients to attend a Natural History course at the Field Studies Council's centre at Kindrogan, Perthshire, or any other FCS centre in the UK. There was competition for these awards in 2010 and BRISC and GNHS will be repeating the Bursaries in 2011. Details and Entry Forms are given on our web site. One of the conditions is that a short article is provided for the Newsletter by each recipient on their course; we hope that this will stimulate interest in both the bursaries and the availability and variety of courses.

The **Treasurer**, Duncan Davidson, has done another year's sterling work on our behalf and his **Report** is attached. We remain in an exceptionally healthy financial position and our intention is to try and use the funds for an identified project that will be of wide use to the Scottish Recording Community; at the moment the Data Scoping Project is earmarked.

These projects can not be progressed without the input of time by the Committee Members and, whilst I know that they consider it very important and worthwhile work, it is also a greatly appreciated commitment.

Our **Membership** has remained relatively static but, as ever, it would be nice to increase our numbers, both individual and corporate, and encouragement by existing members to any potential new members is always much appreciated. The Treasurer and Membership Secretaries Report is attached

I have continued to represent BRISC on the **National Federation for Biological Recording**, (NFBR), and I have attended two of their four 2010 meetings, all held in London. They also have a very good web site and hold an annual conference over two days; the 2011 theme is on '*The Future of Biological Recording in Britain*'. Their work is relevant to us in Scotland as we do need to be able to feed into the country-wide debate on biological recording. I would commend their conference as a place where we could do so and the taking forward of their updated strategy, entitled '*Joining the Dots*'

I became Chairman of BRISC at the AGM in 2005 but, after five years, consider it appropriate to hand onto another. Jonathan Willet, who is a long-standing member of BRISC, has agreed to take on this role, and I hope that this will be agreeable to the Membership. I have not been a *recorder* but have had a keen interest in environmental issues throughout my working career and my time as Chairman of BRISC has been particularly interesting and rewarding and I can safely say that I have greatly enjoyed my time at its helm!

A huge thank you to all the Committee Members who have helped me over the last five years and to all the Members of BRISC who have supported and continue to support our work. .

Patrick Milne Home
Chair of BRISC

January 2011