

Bio.fells Project Feedback Summary

*An analysis of the on-line feedback of participants in the Biodiversity
Fellowship Project in 2013*



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2 Introduction, methods & headlines

The Biodiversity Fellowship Project (Bio.fells) was funded the Defra Fund for Biodiversity in the Voluntary Sector (administered by Natural England) and run by the Field Studies Council over the course of 2013.

450 People signed up with the FSC to be 'FSC biodiversity fellows' and 250 of these attended one or more of 75 courses run for the project. Most of the courses were on taxonomic identification skills for under-recorded taxa, but there was also an emphasis on record submission. There were a mixture of one and two-three day courses. Networking, support and mentoring were also important facets of the project. 120 Biodiversity Fellows Joined a closed facebook group especially for FSC Biodiversity Fellows.

Towards the end of the project, the FSC requested all registered Biodiversity Fellows (by email) to respond to an online questionnaire hosted on the FSC Tomorrow's Biodiversity scratchpad (<http://tombio.myspecies.info/content/biodiversity-fellowship-feedback>). Between 24th September and 26th November, 153 Biodiversity Fellows responded to the questionnaire (34% of all registered fellows). This report collates and analyses their responses.

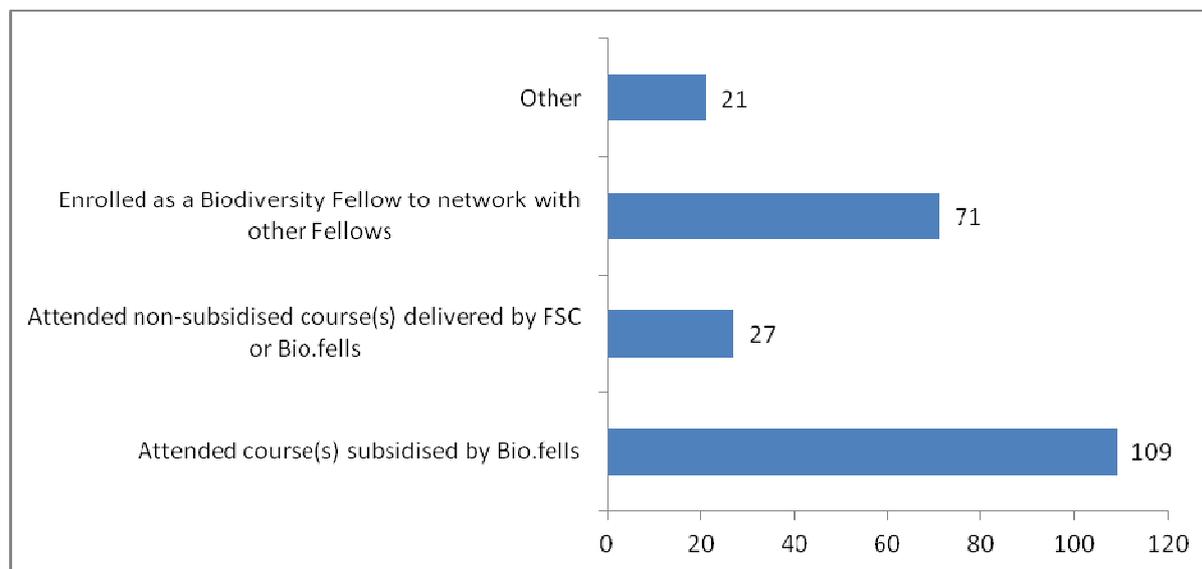
The headlines from this analysis are summarised below.

- 116 of the respondents attended at least one course (46% of the 250 fellows who attended at least one course).
- Overwhelmingly, respondents believed that confidence in identification skills and ability to make and submit records improved considerably as a result of the project.
- 56% of respondents who attended a Biodiversity Fellowship course had already increased the number of records submitted by the time they responded to the questionnaire and a further 40% predicted that they would do.
- Respondents estimated that they had submitted 13,573 records as a direct result of the project. This is an average of 169 records per person for each of the 80 respondents that submitted records (110 records per person for all 123 respondents).
- Many respondents indicated that access to someone with a higher skill level than their own was a major requirement in enabling their biological recording.
- Submission of records to County Recorders, LRCs, National Schemes & Societies and via iRecord were the most important ways in which Biodiversity Fellows submit records.
- Attending courses was consistently highly ranked as something that enables submission of more records. Pressure on time was repeatedly identified as a barrier to record submission.

3 Questions 1 & 2

How have you been involved in the Biodiversity Fellowship project (Bio.fells)?

Question one simply asked respondents to state their names. Question two is shown above. There were four non-exclusive possible answers to this question (i.e. respondents could select more than one option). All of the 153 respondents to the online questionnaire selected at least one of the options. The responses to this question are summarised below.



116 of the 153 respondents (76%) attended at least one course (subsidised or non-subsidised). 109 (71%) attended a subsidised course and 27 (18%) attended a non-subsidised course.

As a supplement to question 2, respondents were instructed 'Please describe any other way you have been involved in Bio.fells'. Six out of 42 respondents mentioned networking through the Facebook group as a benefit and/or way in which they were involved. A selection of interesting comments is presented below.

"I have attended subsidised and non-subsidised training courses and workshops and contributed to the biodiversity recording within Shropshire as a result."

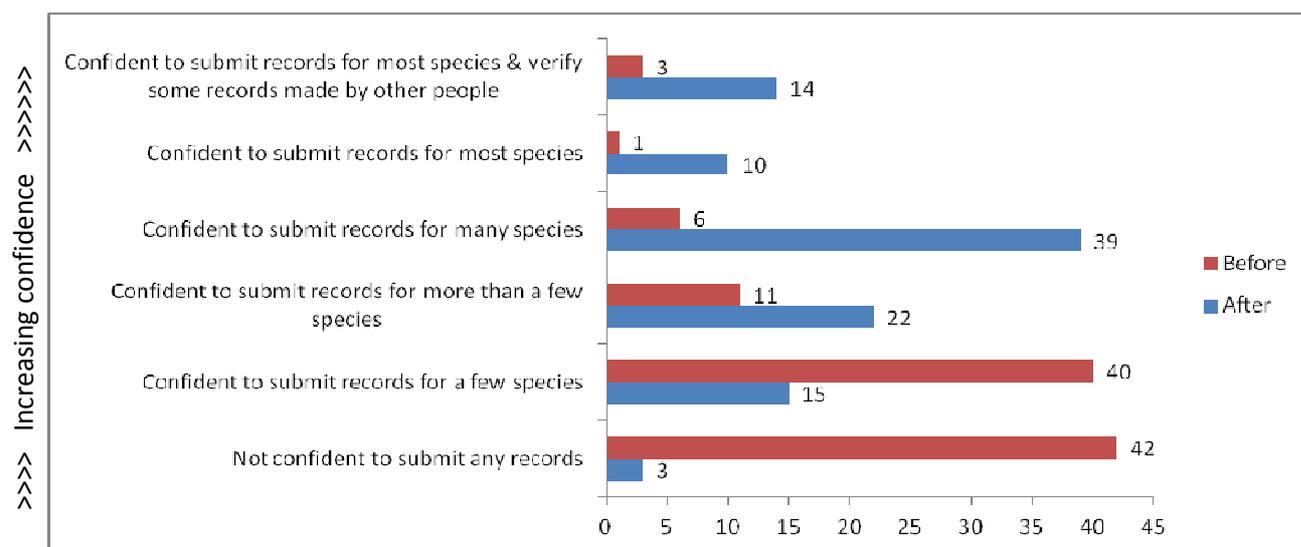
"I did think that there were going to be other activities and perhaps email contact with news etc, but I did not receive anything like this - perhaps this is something that could be added in the future to establish more regular contact (or perhaps I missed something)."

"It's always good to attend courses and workshops to meet other recorders, but there's a limited budget for course fees, travel and accommodation when self-funded."

4 Question 3

Please describe your skill levels, for the species covered by your Bio.fells training, both BEFORE and AFTER the Bio.fells training & support

There were six exclusive answers to this question (plus a 'N/A' response for respondents who did not attend training). Each respondent answered twice – once to indicate their skill levels before training, and once after. A total of 103 respondents answered both these questions (i.e. did not respond N/A to either) and their responses are summarised below.



There is very clear message from the responses to this question: the confidence of the respondents to submit records for the taxa in which they received training showed an extremely marked increase after Biodiversity Fellowship training. The modal response for before training was 'Not confident to submit any records' (closely followed by 'Confident to submit records for a few species') – these two responses account for 80% of the 103 responses. The modal response for after training was 'Confident to submit records for many species' and only 17% of 103 responses were 'Not confident to submit any records' or 'Confident to submit records for a few species'.

As a supplement to question 3, respondents were instructed 'Please use this space if you want to tell us more about how or why your skill levels have changed'. A selection of interesting comments is presented below.

"Attendance has given me the confidence to learn about and identify other species which I hope to record ie hoverflies & freshwater macro invertebrates"

"Biofells provided both training workshops and on-going support which is particularly important for arachnids. Exposure to experts and enthusiasts has meant that the inevitable difficulties and blocks have been overcome and that my technical expertise has increased."

"Having a quality instructor who has explained everything clearly. In the past I have attended half day workshops, but you are left on your own with no support after the event. Biofell has given me backup and the confidence to do thing on my own"

"I believe that the only way to increase one's confidence and success rate with Charophytes is through direct contact with an expert [...]. Even though the Charophyte workshop was very short and really not long enough, I benefitted tremendously. I left the workshop with new confidence."

"I had attended seaweed courses early in my career but had become very rusty and out-of-date. The Biofel course updated me on the current taxonomy, on useful publications and allowed me to refresh identifying skills. I was also introduced to making on-line records which I have now done."

"I had previously bought a key on springtails but was rather overawed by it, attending the Bio.fells course was a great help in using the key and allowed me to meet the national recorder so my confidence in the group as well as identification skill has increased greatly."

"I need more experience and confirmation of what I have found before I am confident enough to submit records"

"I now submit to I-Record, historically only submitted to BTO."

"Lichens are quite a hard group. We could have done with a pre-workshop task explaining the various key parts used to identify lichens e.g. apothecia. The keys are not always much good. We could have done with help working with keys. We have recently started to practice in a small group but could use a local mentor."

"My skills developed through working with the tutor and having resources provided by him. By the end of the day I was able to move from genus to species level identification and carried this on at home and now have records for my local record centre."

"Practical fieldwork techniques for the various groups have vastly improved. Unclear areas in various keys have been explained and made more user friendly for me. Most tutors have given extremely useful tips on identification, that are not found in books. This has been based on their years of experience with their subject and willingness to pass this information on to us. I now feel I am looking at the subject as a coleopterist and not as an entomologist who is interested in beetles."

"The Bio.fells course provided the support and encouragement to use a range of keys to identify difficult species which has increased confidence in my ability to submit more records."

"The Bio.fells courses gave me a unique opportunity to improve my skill level and confidence in identifying Hymenoptera. It is a very difficult group to get in to and especially hard for beginners to be confident in the use of the keys which can be very overwhelming at first. Without the Bio.fells courses I would not have improved as much as I have done and it would have taken me much longer on my own to build up the confidence to submit more records. The courses are a fantastic way for Fellows to network with each other and help each other."

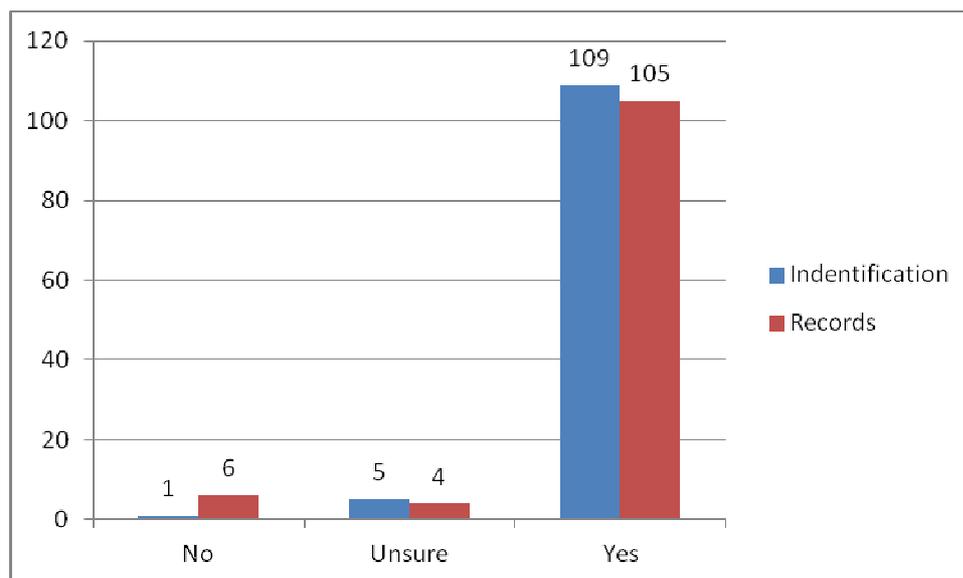
"The training was very good, but Lichens are a particularly hard group I think so it would take more than one day to be able to feel confident to submit more than a few records."

"would not have the skills I gained from the course as I cannot afford other courses, the course I went on gave me the necessary starting information, opened me up to a new area and inspired me to learn more."

5 Question 4

Do you feel more confident to make accurate identifications and records since your involvement in Bio.fells?

There were three exclusive answers to this question (plus a 'N/A' response for respondents who did not attend training). Each respondent answered twice – once to indicate their change of confidence in identification skills and once to indicate their change in confidence for submitting records as a result of training. A total of 115 respondents answered both these questions (i.e. did not respond N/A to either) and their responses are summarised below.



There is clearly an overwhelming feeling that Biodiversity Fellowship training improved confidence both in identification skills and ability to make biological record, backing up the response to question 3.

As a supplement to question 3, respondents were instructed 'Please use this space if you want to tell us more about changes in your confidence levels'. A selection of interesting comments is presented below.

"Following on from the course, I purchased a stereo and a compound microscope. This was as a direct result of using both on the course and this has enabled me to confidently identify some of the more difficult seaweeds I have encountered."

"I am more confident about submitting records for invertebrate families and orders that I was not previously very familiar with. However I will need to follow up the training days attended with further practise - both supported and unsupported ID sessions."

"I am now confident in identifying and actively submitting records on all types of species, I wouldn't have done this before."

"I think the most important/rewarding part about the fellows scheme has been the networking/skill sharing as that really helps build up confidence in species ID."

"It has re-engaged me with recording & the value that I can add. "

“It just helped. It would be almost impossible for me to get to work with the Workshop leaders without the BioFell events”

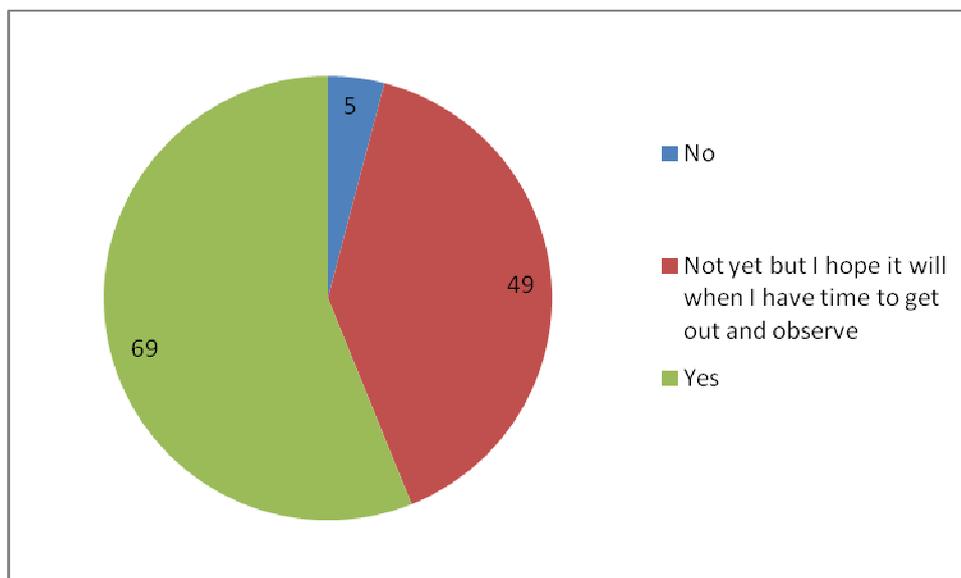
“Since attending the Course I spend more time trying to identify more species for the benefit of making the "record" which is vital to science. I get more enjoyment from achieving the result and making the record whereas prior to the Course many of the specimens would have been dismissed and gone "unrecorded".”

“The group itself is a fantastic resource as the group itself can help each other with ID or sources of info”

6 Question 5

Has the number of biological records that you have submitted increased since your involvement in Bio.fells?

There were three exclusive answers to this question (plus a 'N/A' response for respondents who did not attend training). A total of 123 respondents answered the question (i.e. did not respond N/A) and their responses are summarised below.



56% of respondents who attended a Biodiversity Fellowship course had already increased the number of records submitted by the time they responded to the questionnaire and a further 40% predicted that they would do. Only 4% of respondents did not anticipate an increase in the number of records they submitted would increase as a result of Biodiversity Fellowship training.

7 Question 6

Please estimate how many records you have submitted in 2013 as a result of Bio.fells training

Of the 123 respondents who did not respond 'N/A' to question 5, 80 estimated that they had submitted 1 or more records as a result of Biodiversity Training. Between them, they estimated that they had submitted 13,573 records. This is an average of 169 records per person for each of the 80 people that submitted records (110 records per person for all 123 respondents).

As a supplement to question 6, respondents were instructed 'Please use this space if you would like expand on your previous answer'. A selection of interesting comments is presented below.

"Although I haven't made any records of the group I studied with the free course, the course inspired me to record other groups"

"As a member of the British Lichen Society, their database is my priority as the recipients of the records I submit - I have not get added any records to the "iRecord" website, as I don't think it is appropriate to submit the same records to more than one place. My recording prior to this year, was focussed on botanical records and thus my prior records have also gone straight to the BSBI database"

- an will probably continue to do so. I do intend to use the iRecord site in the future to submit ad hoc records, that I might not otherwise take the time to set up links with the individual interest groups (eg, moths, mammals etc)"

"I only attended two courses and have had little time to go out this year but the courses have been the catalyst for me to get outside and identifying and I plan to do much more the rest of this year and in future years"

"I will submit records at the end of the year."

"I will submit records once the survey period has finished."

"I'm planning to catch up with submitting records in the winter when there isn't much field work activity"

"Prior to my involvement with Bio.Fells I had not submitted any records, now I hope to as part of my work."

"Records are currently collected and submitted at year end to my local record centre when I have received species confirmations and made vouchers."

"This is particularly helpful in my work as the Reserves Manager for Wiltshire Wildlife Trust. Records are submitted into Living Record who verify them and pass to Wiltshire and Swindon Biological Records Centre. "

8 Question 7

What causes you most difficulty in making biological records?

There were nine non-exclusive possible answers to this question (i.e. respondents could select more than one option). All of the 153 respondents to the online questionnaire selected at least one of the options. The responses to this question are summarised below.



No respondents indicated that they had no interest in submitting biological records. 76 respondents (50%) agreed with the statement “I need access to a mentor/someone with more experience in ID” (the biggest response).

As a supplement to question 7, respondents were instructed ‘Please give any additional information necessary to explain your previous answer’. A selection of interesting comments is presented below.

“As a beginner looking at Hymenoptera, the keys are very complicated and overwhelming. Having someone to check my identifications is essential as this allows me to see where I have gone wrong and learn from it, as well as gain confidence from having correct identifications verified. It is also very difficult getting hold of the keys to start with, especially for solitary bee and wasp species.”

“Group ID with someone who knows more than you is the best way for me to personally learn.”

“I can only attempt to identify a species if I have an up to date understandable key. (There are many keys available that are gobbledegook to the enthusiastic amateur, species from these groups are ignored!). For Terrestrial Hemiptera the key is over 50 years old - although there are more recent keys for some of the families - but you have to know where to find them. There are times when it is helpful to discuss difficult or surprising identifications with an expert. Although electronic communication has come along leaps and bounds, face to face is still best. As an amateur it is difficult to keep on top of name changes, new species, revisions to keys etc. as often these occur in academic papers, foreign journals or other publications to which I do not have ready access; a mentor should be able to keep me informed.”

"I wish I had more time. Because of my inexperience, identification takes time. Thanks to the course, this is improving as I am beginning to know the type of things to look for in identification"

"I wish training was more affordable"

"Identification is often such a lonely winter task and the opportunity to bounce ideas off people and share experience would be great. As a dipterist I am quite specialised in what I do. It is good to meet up with people to do the field work but often the opportunity to meet and go over a few tricky things or maybe start looking at a new family with someone who has more expertise than me and I do not necessarily mean an "expert" would be good. There are lots of spin offs in terms of expanding my knowledge and experience and then sharing it with others. Keys are a real problem when you start looking at a new group. Many are difficult to get hold of and are usually out of sync with the nomenclature. I just wish they were easily available online."

"Lack of keys, understandably, to ID many Diptera."

"Not having a higher magnification microscope is certainly an issue (I have a x20 currently); and making the time to submit records, after ID - something that I am working on currently in conjunction with the Kent Wildlife Trust. For some groups, lack of keys or similar is significant."

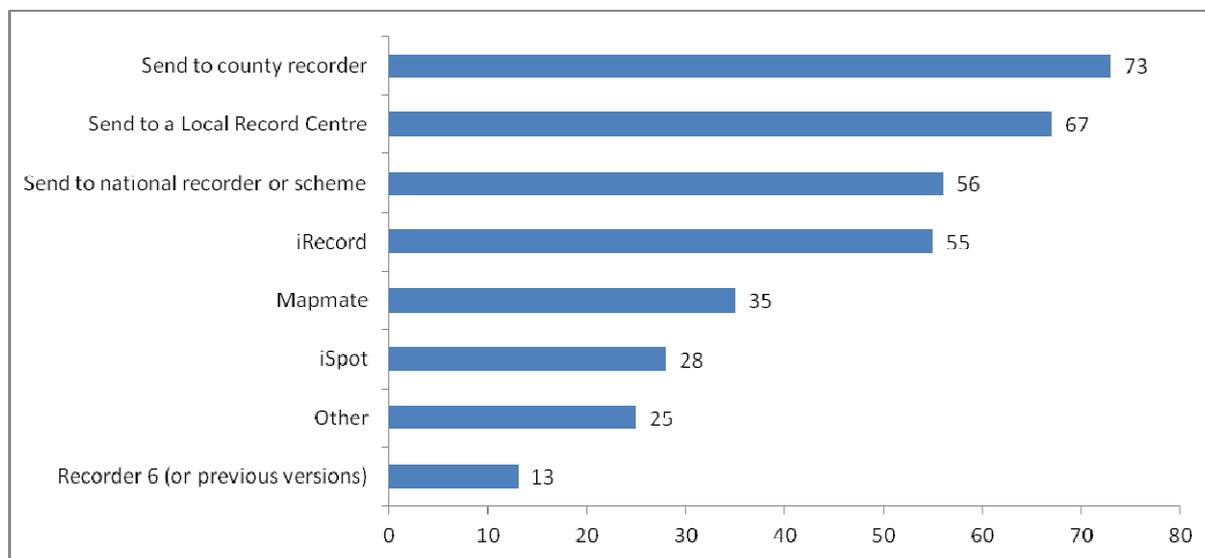
"some tutors and some other course attendees can make beginners feel stupid"

"Trying to self-teach the use of a key can be difficult. There may be parts of the key that just don't make sense and it's easy to keep making the same mistakes. A one-day workshop helps a great deal, but there's a limit to how much it can cover. What's needed is ongoing help to check id's made on your own and to provide further help with parts of the key that couldn't be covered in the initial workshop or weren't appropriate for your level of competence at the time of the course. Sometimes keys are out-of-print and not available."

9 Question 8

What methods of submitting biological records are most useful for you?

There were eight non-exclusive possible answers to this question (i.e. respondents could select more than one option). All of the 153 respondents to the online questionnaire selected at least one of the options. The responses to this question are summarised below.



48% of respondents indicated that they submit records to county recorders. This could reflect the fact that the Biodiversity Fellowship attracted a large number of established recorders who were interested in expanding their skills into new taxonomic groups. High numbers also indicated that they submit records to LRCs and national schemes & societies. There was encouraging news for iRecord too with 36% of respondents indicating that they make use of it to submit records.

As a supplement to question 8, respondents were instructed 'Please give any additional information necessary to explain your previous answer'. A selection of interesting comments is presented below.

"Although I use iSpot, NHM, Flickr, MapMate and in some cases County and National recorders or schemes, because I make records covering various taxa I submit to COFNOD and they manage distribution to the appropriate schemes/experts."

"Any of these will be OK, but as with all recording its important the county recorder is informed and that records are not duplicated."

"I also use RODIS to submit records to the Cheshire LRC -rECOrd. I await with eagerness when all the record centres and recording bodies exchange information. As a County Recorder for Macro-moths and Orthoptera, I spend a great deal of time sourcing records from NBN (for example) when it would be easier if records were automatically pushed through to those who need them on a county basis."

"I am happy to send records separately to recorders, but in practice this sounds even more time consuming, and as such I much prefer to lump records together onto iRecord. My concern is that the number of verifiers is currently low-ish and a great number of records I've submitted haven't been looked at yet, and are stuck in limbo. I hope this will not always be the case! "

"I have not as yet used iRecord, but intend to do so. I would send more records to my Local Records Centre if there was then some way of seeing the how I have contributed to knowledge of distribution, but they largely disappear into a black hole, or are hidden so that the Centre can use them to their commercial advantage."

"I know MapMate because I've had to use it for my MSc. Submitting a MapMate sync file to my LRC is by far the simplest way for me to submit data on a wide variety of taxa."

"I submit records for common species to irecord but protected species and other sensitive records go to the LRC or recorder."

"I use a purpose-written program called Mycorec. (I am the recorder for our local fungus group, and as such submit records to the 2 national fungi databases). I currently do not submit my own personal records unless they have been verified by someone else."

"I want my records to be freely available to anyone with a legitimate interest in them and to appear quickly in the maps on the NBN Gateway. I'm not confident that this happens with records submitted to my local ERC and have heard this from fellow recorders in other areas. iRecord claims that it will (soon) accept my records in bulk in the form of Excel spreadsheets and for valid records will then incorporate them in the NBN maps and cascade them down through the system to Recording Schemes, local ERCs etc. IF this claim is delivered on iRecord will be my preferred method of submitting records."

"I would like to be able to use iRecord for all of my records as I find it easy and convenient however some National recording schemes ask for the data to be submitted separately. Also I'm still not sure whether my data is making it to the relevant LRCs, county recorders etc. if I am submitting it via irecord."

"I would rather create a relationship with the county or national recorder, for record submitting and checking. This seems more efficient than iRecord etc."

"It will be important to ensure that records are not duplicated by sending in by more than one route. I am experiencing some difficulties getting my head round how a record I send in via i-Record will easily get to my local record centre so that they can benefit from it. Depending on who you talk to there seems to be differing confidence levels in relation to how easy this will be. Perhaps a working conference bringing together local record centres and NBN people to thrash out a cast iron process would be a good idea."

"Previously because I record several groups I found it time consuming to find contact details for each recorder and confusing whether I should submit to my LRC or national/county recorders so too often I didn't bother, iRecord is making the process much simpler."

"Prior to the Biofells courses, I tended to use MapMate or Excel spreadsheets (for those national recording schemes that cannot handle MapMate records). However, since taking the Bio.fells courses I have become more aware and more interested in submitting records on-line, especially using iRecord."

“Sending the record to the county recorder is the most useful as you get feedback and verification. IRecord is also useful however, it can be frustrating as records, apart from ladybirds, are not verified.”

“There shouldn't be too many options as to where to send data otherwise people will get overwhelmed and there's a danger all the methods won't update/share the information.”

“They all have their place in the mish mash that is the current recording world. You missed out land managing conservation charities such as RSPB, NT, NTS, WTs, WWT, John Muir Trust etc. As things stand, for me, it is probably a case of which method is of most use to other people, followed by what is most convenient.”

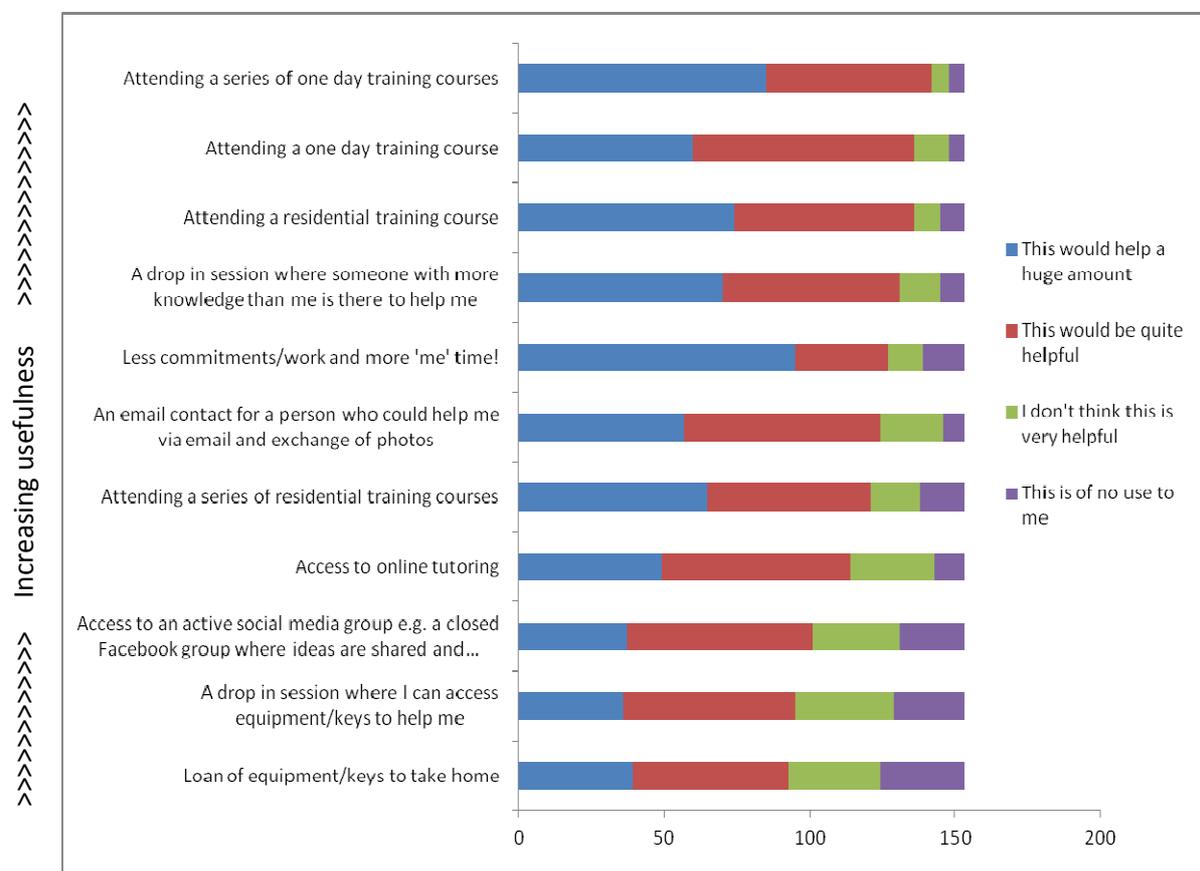
10 Question 9

What would help you to make and submit more records?

Respondents were asked to score 11 ideas that could help recorders on an ordinal scale of four options:

1. This would help a huge amount
2. This would be quite helpful
3. I don't think that this is very helpful
4. This is of no use to me

The first two of these can be considered as 'positive responses' and the last two as 'negative responses'. All 153 respondents rated all 11 ideas. The responses are presented below with the ideas ranked so that those with most positive responses are near the top and those with most negative near the bottom.



Even the idea with the lowest positive response – 'Loan of equipment/keys to take home' – still met with more positive (61%) than negative (39%) responses. The top three positive responses were all ideas that involved attendance at training courses, with the most positive response (93%) for 'Attending a series of one day training courses'. Both top two responses were for ideas involving one-day training courses. The idea that got the biggest top response was 'Less commitments/work and more 'me' time' for which 62% of respondents said 'This would help a huge amount'. Indeed the time required to conduct recording, attend training sessions and submit records, is highlighted time

and time again as a problem in the additional comments supplied by respondents to many questions.

As a supplement to question 9, respondents were instructed 'Please feel free to give any additional information to supplement your previous answer'. A selection of interesting comments is presented below.

"The availability of a an accessible library and reference collection would be extremely useful. "

"A much longer term programme is needed in order to produce a real improvement in id skills resulting in improved recording of unrecorded groups."

"Access to expertise through training courses and accompanied field visits. This support needs to be provided over a period of time as one-off courses are rarely sufficient on their own."

"Having access to a network of recorders, or being able to access online resources would be useful, and online tutoring training would be excellent. The 'total immersion' or residential courses is great for learning, but difficult to fit in and tend to be too expensive."

"As a specialist in some groups but a novice in others I would value the opportunity to pick someone's brains when I get stuck. A local hub for identification might be worth exploring, say coordinated by the local BRC."

"Developing local mentoring groups. "

"I am quite lucky in that i run a record centre and have access to equipment and keys. I have also offered to any Bio.fells members that they are welcome to use the LRC resources and equipment (computers, survey equipment, microscopes, keys and guides) any time (free of charge). This might be something that can be considered as part of a wider national support network for Bio.fells members? There is after all an LRC of some kind in almost every part of the UK, and as far as i am aware, all are at least in part publicly funded through DEFRA? Just an idea."

"I have all the equipment and keys but could do with mentoring and support from a more knowledgeable person near me."

"I have answered 'I don't think this is very helpful' to several questions - this is because I already have access to those services/equipment - and find them very, very helpful. So they are just not helpful to me in my current situation."

"I think that a series of shorter events would be much more useful than one longer event. One could build on the knowledge, and do work individually between sessions, using the sessions to check what one has done. I do appreciate the logistical problems, but I thought the one day bolete course at the AMC was excellent, and to have such sessions every few weeks in the autumn (in the case of fungi) would be really useful. I think this would be do-able in large population centres like London."

"I'm fortunate in that I already have the required equipment and am able to afford sufficient books and keys (if still in print), but this must be a big hurdle for younger people with young families and more limited budgets etc. However, I'm a great fan of electronic keys that can be kept up-to-date with feedback/new discoveries etc, remain available (no limited print runs etc) and ought to be

cheaper than hardcopy ones, especially if there are lots of colour photos which can help greatly with the individual couplets and with "does my specimen at least look like the species I got to?". A one-off training event is good, but a series of increasing complexity over a period as you develop is even better. I like the idea of drop in sessions, but will they be close enough and at a convenient time for enough people? So, I think the online option, while not so good, will be the most practical solution to ongoing mentoring, which is a must."

"It's the interaction with people that the clincher for me not the kit."

"Main thing is to have availability (in whatever form) to an expert to help in the verification process."

"On going support is crucial. The journey to understanding difficult invert groups is a long one and access to expert tuition is vital."

"The need for more time in the day is probably the biggest issue!"

11 Question 10

Has Bio.fells helped you to expand your identification skills and/or biological recording to a new taxonomic group, or will it help you to do so in the future?

135 respondents answered this question. The overwhelming response was positive with only a handful saying that the Biodiversity Fellowship had not helped them expand their skills and/or recording (mostly because they didn't attend a course). A selection of interesting responses is presented below.

"As a result of doing Bio.Fells course I now feel confident in submitting records for two new difficult taxa, and a third taxa I am now learning about but would not yet submit records, as I would need to practice and have some identifications confirmed first. Personally I have been highly impressed by the range and quality of the training on offer, the knowledge of the trainers and the professional way the scheme has been facilitated, and have encouraged several people to become involved on the basis of this."

"Bio.fells has been enormously helpful in providing experts on tap and other participants to share experience with. I have made great strides in certain groups that would not have been possible in such a short time without Bio.fells being there to support me. I am involved in setting up a group to monitor the biodiversity and collate records for the Avalon Marshes area in Somerset and the things I have learned in Bio.fells groups and on their courses will be passed on to the others in this group so that we can begin to really get to grips with what is out there and enable the local reserve managers to gain a better picture of their management tasks and priorities."

"Bio.fells has helped me but it should not be just a one-year project. They say it takes ten years to become a competent bryologist and I am sure the same is true of most 'difficult' taxonomic groups. for this reason it is important that initiatives such as Bio.fells should be on a long-term basis and help people who are intermediate and not just beginners."

"I think it would have done if I had been able to attend some training courses but due to time, money and the location of most of the courses (too far for me to travel from Plymouth) I did not attend."

"It is hard to put into few words how immensely valuable being am member of The Biodiversity Fellowship will continue to be. Whilst the actuality of its existence may have to end, what it has opened my mind up to and allowed me to taste is incalculable. "

"Most definitely yes. I can see me recording some of the new groups I've attended, but I can also see these courses improving my recording of groups that I already do. I'll be able to record the fungus a beetle was found in, and/or I'll be able to target a beetle by being able to go out and look for the fungus it is found in."

"The Bio.fells courses that I attended have encouraged me to branch out within the group that I am interested in. At the start I was really only interested in bees within the Hymenoptera groups, but being able to also attend courses on solitary wasps and ants has increased my interest and my confidence in looking at these as well as bees. I am keen to continue to improve my knowledge of Hymenoptera as a whole and not just be limited to bees. "

"Yes, absolutely, worms, spiders, terrestrial molluscs & hoverflies. If keys were easily available bees would be included as well. I am also more comfortable tackling groups I have not done courses on due to the fact that I have used & understand how to use keys to several different groups. However I would jump at the chance of further Bio.fells courses, there are still lots of groups I would like to understand better!"

"Yes, massively, and I'd like to say THANK YOU :)"

"YES. I've never tried to id wasps or ants before. I'd never really got very far with bees either. I'd never think of trying to id a fly unless it was a hoverfly. BioFells has greatly increased my id skills for: beetles, flies, bees, ants and wasps. The intensity of the training, i.e. number of courses, has also been very useful. Rather than drips and drabs I've been able to make continuous improvements which really helps with confidence and retaining knowledge. I feel very lucky to have had the time and opportunity to participate. I'm twice the entomologist I was a year ago thanks to BioFells. Well done Sue, Pete and all the tutors. Fantastic!"

"Yes. I have learned about Dung Flies and Crane Flies (Diptera is completely new to me). The Wildlife in the Cloud course was also fantastic and I think complements ALL the identification courses as it provides so much information that is useful to all biological recorders."