



National BioBlitz Conference 2013

7th November 2013, Bristol

Conference report compiled and annotated by Maddy Bartlett
Bristol Natural History Consortium



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Contents

Delegate List.....	2
Conference Programme.....	8
Introduction and Research.....	9
Session One: Challenging the BioBlitz Story.....	10
Session Two: The Recording Story.....	12
Delegate Showcase.....	14
Workshop One: Selling your Story – Marketing and PR.....	15
Workshop Two: Engaging Schools.....	16
Session Three: Future Stories.....	17
Useful Links.....	18

Delegate List

Fatemah Abidi *General Assistant, BIAZA - ga@biaza.org.uk*

BIAZA, the British and Irish Association of Zoos and Aquariums, work alongside their Native Species Working Group to encourage our member collections and the visiting public to participate and conduct BioBlitz events across the country and reveal the importance of zoos and aquariums to native species.

Jane Adams *Garden BioBlitz Team - janevadams@gmail.com*

I am a self-confessed social media and web junky, I'm also passionate about photographing wild bees (in my rather overgrown garden), and love learning about the wildlife in my local patch. When I'm not helping to organise the Garden BioBlitz I'm a self-employed internet marketing consultant for environmental and conservation charities such as The Soil Association and The Wildlife Trusts.

Ray Barnett *Collections Manager, Bristol Museum, Galleries and Archives - ray.barnett@bristol.gov.uk*

Over 20 years of experience as a biologist working in a major regional museum, communicating via exhibitions and events. Responsible for local environmental recording centre, instigator of wildlife recording schemes and author of local distribution guides.

Bic Beaumont *Communications Assistant, Worcestershire Wildlife Trust - bic@worcestershirewildlifetrust.org*

I am the Communications Assistant at Worcestershire Wildlife Trust and my role includes working with The Trust's nine Local Groups (Health and Safety, newsletters and other publications), organising Wildlife Discovery Courses, and events etc. Worcestershire Wildlife Trust wants to run a BioBlitz event in July 2014 and I am looking for ideas, inspiration and best practice.

Max Boon *Account Manager, Spirit Public Relations - mboon@spiritpublicrelations.co.uk*

I have managed the PR for the Bristol Festival of Nature & Bristol99 this summer, planning and delivering a media strategy that resulted in strong regional coverage that helped ensure good attendance across the range of events.

Morgan Bowers *Senior Countryside Ranger, Walsall Council - bowersm@walsall.gov.uk*

I am Senior Countryside Ranger for Walsall Council, and a committee member of the Black Country & Staffordshire Naturalists and the Birmingham and Black Country Bat Group.

Patrick Brannon *Volunteer, Walsall Countryside Services - p.brannon@btinternet.com*

Volunteer with Walsall countryside services helping the local rangers with wildlife surveys/ events

Linda Brice *Press and PR Officer, Hawk and Owl Trust - lin.murray@hawkandowl.org*

I am the Press, PR, Website and Social Media Officer for The Hawk and Owl Trust. To celebrate the 10th Anniversary of our Sculthorpe Moor Nature Reserve we decided to organise a BioBlitz to highlight the increased biodiversity that our 10 years of habitat management had created. This would help us conduct a thorough survey of the place and act as a great publicity event to attract people who hadn't previously used the reserve. They could come and meet lots of experts. It would also be a very useful networking exercise with our conservation colleagues.

Sarah Brooks *Conservation Management Officer, Warwickshire Wildlife Trust -**sarah.brooks@wkwat.org.uk*

I look after the surveying and monitoring of our nature reserves in Warwickshire and coordinate the management plans. BioBlitz would be a great way to for us to survey sites and increase public involvement.

David Brown *Volunteer, Bristol BioBlitzes - david@brownfamilymail.co.uk*

I help deliver bat walks and bat talks to organisations at their request. I help support my local otter group and my wife's dormouse monitoring.

Gill Brown *Volunteer, Various Bristol BioBlitzes - gill@brownfamilymail.co.uk*

I am a licensed dormouse worker and coordinate YACWAG Otter Group which covers the North Somerset Area. I am also a volunteer at The North Somerset Butterfly House. I have been involved with BioBlitz, first as a guide and then as a naturalist, every year since the first National BioBlitz at Ashton Court. I also took part in the Garden BioBlitz. I am a qualified teacher and enjoy engaging with members of the public of all ages.

Catherine Burton *Project Officer, Surrey Biodiversity Information Centre -**catherine.burton@surreywt.org.uk*

As Project Officer for Surrey Biodiversity Information Centre I have facilitated and actively participated in 3 BioBlitzes so far for Surrey Wildlife Trust and the National Trust.

Kerry Burton *Lecturer in Human Geography, UWE Bristol - kerry.burton@uwe.ac.uk*

I teach and research on water security and I'm currently involved in an international project exploring the communication of science, citizen science and public participation.

Wendy Carter *Communications Manager, Worcestershire Wildlife Trust -**wendy@worcestershirowildlifetrust.org*

Our Trust will be running our first BioBlitz in 2014 so I'm looking for great hints, tips and ideas on how to make the most from the event - for us and all participants.

Emma Clare *Public Engagement Officer, Science Oxford - emma.clare@scienceoxford.com*

I work for Science Oxford, a science education charity based in Oxford. Our role is to engage the public with science, and under this remit we ran the Oxford BioBlitz pilot event in 2012, and the Oxford Festival of Nature and BioBlitz in 2013. Both of these events took place in city parks, and aimed to engage local communities with the wildlife of their neighbourhoods, and to survey the wildlife in these urban areas. We are currently planning another BioBlitz event for 2014.

Dave Coles *Curator, Beale Park - dave.coles@bealepark.co.uk*

Organiser at Beale Park

Jane Craven *People Engagement Officer, Woodland Trust - janecraven@woodlandtrust.org.uk*

My role is to engage with people to introduce them to or enhance their knowledge and appreciation of woodlands. The BioBlitz that I ran this year was principally to introduce local people to look at different types of plants and animals found in our woodland. This involved looking at basic identification and recording. We were also able to bring together expert recorders to share their experiences and to learn from one another about their specialties.

Madeline Davey *Intern (Surveyor/ Project Assistant,) Exmoor Mires Project/ Moorland Classroom -**madeline_davey@yahoo.co.uk*

We are a partnership organisation, and hold an annual education event on Exmoor, Bogtastic day! In 2014 we hope to incorporate a BioBlitz into it.

Ben Devine *Wildlife Engagement Officer, Warwickshire Wildlife Trust - ben.devine@wkwat.org.uk*

The Wildlife Trust's community engagement officer, who aims to inspire individuals to interact with the wildlife on their doorstep. Position requires the planning, organisation and delivery of a wide range of interpretation projects, events, and promotional activities relating to all aspects of the Trust's work.

Samantha Finn *WildWatch Project Coordinator, North Pennines AONB Partnership -**samantha@northpenninesaonb.org.uk*

WildWatch North Pennines is a project to encourage and help people to record wildlife and is an initiative of the North Pennines AONB Partnership. My role as WildWatch Project Coordinator is helping us to encourage participants to conserve biodiversity in our rich upland landscape. We provide training and events to motivate and educate volunteers. This year we ran our first 'Great Public Biohunt' which brought together beginners, amateurs and experts to explore a unique limestone quarry in Weardale. Wildlife groups that have formed through networks developed through the project are now starting their own events. We hope that our work with the National BioBlitz network will support them in widening their resources in recording wildlife and sharing skills in their communities.

Jennie Garrod *Volunteer/ Countryside Ranger, Weardale Wildlife/ Durham County Council - jennie.garrod@durham.gov.uk*

As part of the North Pennines AONB Wildwatch project I have become part of the Weardale Wildlife group but I am also employed by Durham County Council as a Countryside Ranger and through this a BioBlitz may be organised in the future.

Katy Glazer *STEM Ambassador Programme, Graphic Science - katy@graphicscience.co.uk*

I have attended a number of the Bristol BioBlitzes and through the STEM Ambassador programme I have helped with getting schools and volunteers involved (STEM = science, technology, engineering & maths).

Katy Gower *Promotions and Events Manager, Surrey Wildlife Trust - katy.gower@surreywt.org.uk*

I am the Events Manager at Surrey Wildlife Trust and have now run two successful BioBlitz events in 2011 and 2012. I hope to run a BioBlitz as an annual event on a different nature reserve each year.

Neil Green *Avon Invasive Weeds Project Officer, Bristol Zoo Gardens – ngreen@bristolzoo.org.uk*

The Avon Invasive Weeds Forum is an independent forum in partnership with Bristol Zoo, Bristol City Council and the Environment Agency. It is funded by Defra. The overall project aim is to establish the status of Non-Native Invasive plant species and prevent, control and reduce their negative impact in the River Avon catchment. We wish to halt the deterioration of the natural ecosystems and protect local biological diversity of plants and invertebrates. The target species for this project are Japanese Knotweed, Giant Hogweed and Himalayan Balsam. We have managed 22 pulling events this summer with around 890 volunteer hours, utilising existing conservation groups and corporate groups such as the Environment Agency, Lloyds Bank and Eurovia.

Zaria Greenhill *Education for Sustainable Development Consultant, Self-employed - info@zariagreenhill.co.uk*

I work with schools and organisations delivering Education for Sustainable Development, and I'm interested in doing a BioBlitz on my local park as it's weak in biodiversity and has little local engagement with biodiversity directly. I would be working as a volunteer for this.

Matt Harcourt *Communities and Nature Project Officer, Avon Wildlife Trust - mattharcourt@avonwildlifetrust.org.uk*

Works as project officer on Avon Wildlife Trusts Communities and Nature project and organised last year's BioBlitz at Arnos Vale as part of BNHC team.

Martin Harvey *iSpot Project, The Open University - Martin.Harvey@open.ac.uk*

I work on the iSpot project, where my roles include liaison with the wider biological recording community, user support, project development and social media links.

Gary Hedges *Recording Officer, Cumbria Biodiversity Data Centre recordingofficer@cbdc.org.uk*

I am the Recording Officer for CBDC. I encourage and support biological recording in the county of Cumbria. I also manage incoming biological data. I helped to Organise 2 BioBlitz events in 2013 - At Arnside Knott SSSI and Finglandrigg NNR.

Matthew Hickman *Schools Partnership Co-ordinator, University of Bristol - mat.hickman@bristol.ac.uk*

My role is to build relationships between the University of Bristol and local state schools, extending existing public engagement activities. We aim to raise young people's aspirations and encourage them to consider university study, as well as increasing their awareness of and engagement with research. The University already contributes to the Bristol BioBlitz and we are interested in exploring how we might use this approach to engage more of our researchers with school students.

Katy Hooper *Community Development Officer - Green Spaces, Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council*

- *Katy.Hooper@basingstoke.gov.uk*

Engaging communities and making environmental improvements.

Tom Hunt *National Coordinator, Association of Local Environmental Records Centres - tom.hunt@alerc.org.uk*

ALERC represents local environmental records centres across the UK. Many of the centres we represent have been involved in the organisation and data collection of BioBlitzes.

Mary Jeavans *Policy Officer, DEFRA - mary.jeavans@defra.gsi.gov.uk*

I have spent over 15 years working in Defra and its agencies in a wide variety of roles including agri-environment scheme delivery in the uplands and national policy work in London. I currently lead Defra's policy work on Outcome 4 of our biodiversity strategy that "By 2020, significantly more people will be engaged in biodiversity issues, aware of its value and

taking positive action" and that's what BioBlitz is all about so it'll be great to hear everyone's BioBlitz experiences at the conference this year.

Angela Jones *Community Adviser, Suffolk Wildlife Trust - angela.jones@suffolkwildlifetrust.org.uk*

I am a Community Conservation Adviser, I do outreach work helping local communities to "Take Action for Wildlife" in their local area so finding out more about BioBlitz sounds perfect. My role is part conservation part people engagement.

Mary Kinver-Rowney *Complaints Officer, Durham Council - enquiries@weardalewildlifegroup.co.uk*

I am part of a new steering group which is on the back of the Wildwatch project in Weardale.

Fiona Knox *Education and Events Officer, WildWatch project, North Pennines AONB Partnership - fionak@northpenninesaonb.org.uk*

WildWatch North Pennines project engages the residents and visitors to the North Pennines AONB and encourages them to record wildlife and submit records through the WildWatch North Pennines web site which are shared with the two regional record centres. We deliver training to support volunteer's skills and knowledge. We support three new wildlife groups.

Dom McDonald *Head of Public Engagement, Science Oxford - dominic.mcdonald@scienceoxford.com*

I am responsible for Science Oxford's work engaging Oxfordshire's people with science. As part of that I have organised two BioBlitzes in Oxford in the last two years. The first in June 2012 was a qualified failure, the event in July 2013 was a qualified success!

Kate Moore *Course Director, University of Leicester - katemoore123@yahoo.co.uk*

I am one of the Heritage/Tree Wardens for the villages of Woodhouse and Woodhouse Eaves. We organised a successful local BioBlitz in June recording 640 species in 24 hours. I am also Course Director for the University Certificate of Global Ecology and Wildlife Conservation at the University of Leicester. I have research interests in aspects of nature and society and have working in Kenya, Mongolia and Kazakhstan on related projects.

Maggie Morland *Woodland Eaves Heritage Officer*

Rosemary Muir *Hills Project Officer, Belfast Hills Partnership - rose.muir@belfasthills.org*

I am a Project Officer in an environmental charity based in an urban fringe area. We manage community, biodiversity, waste and development based projects and run many events on sites throughout 4,000 ha of the Belfast Hills. I also engage with local planning issues and advise developers about invasive species and planting hedges, wildflowers etc on new housing developments. I organise a site manager's forum where we have worked together on wild fire projects and vandalism prevention. I run training events for species recording such as bats, butterflies and bees and participate in national recording schemes. I produce local newsletters on environmental issues and contribute to local radio, newspapers and TV on a regular basis.

Chantal Noble *Community Projects Officer, Field Studies Council - chantal.jh@field-studies-council.org*

I am the Community Projects Officer for Juniper Hall Field Centre, part of the environmental charity the Field Studies Council. I have volunteered at BioBlitz events before and I am very interested in running a BioBlitz event at Juniper Hall in 2014.

Susanna Perkins *Senior Advisor, Natural England - susanna.perkins@naturalengland.org.uk*

I am responsible for managing Natural England's work to enhance community engagement, volunteering opportunities and visitor facilities at its National Nature Reserves. The reserves are spread across England, so I work closely with our locally based reserve staff to support their work to enable visitors to appreciate and help to protect the natural environment.

Matt Postles *Project Manager, Bristol Natural History Consortium - matt@bnhc.org.uk*

BNHC ran our first BioBlitz in 2009 at Ashton Court in Bristol and have since been working with partners across the UK to promote and develop the concept, coordinating the National BioBlitz Network. Matt took over the lead of the BioBlitz strand at BNHC in 2011 and has been involved in running and supporting several events as well as raising the public profile of BioBlitz nationally.

Deborah Richardson Bull *Education Officer, Worcestershire Wildlife Trust - debs@worcestershirewildlifetrust.org*

We run events for adults and children to engage with Wildlife. My role is to make events family friendly whilst maintaining an educational focus for all the family.

Jessica Robertson *Volunteer, Exmoor Mires Project - jessicaerobertson1991@gmail.com*

The Exmoor Mires Project is trying to organise a big activity day in August, trying to encourage people to go up onto the bogs and learn about the environment and species up there. We're looking to incorporate a BioBlitz into the event to increase interaction with the species and also to create a record of animals on the bogs.

Lucy Robinson *Citizen Science Programme Manager, Natural History Museum - l.robinson@nhm.ac.uk*

I coordinate the Natural History Museum's citizen science programme, supporting people across the UK to participate in our scientific research. I am one of the lead authors of the 'Guide to running a BioBlitz' and have organised a number of BioBlitzes over the past few years ranging from small events for a few hundred people to a large scale BioBlitz catering for 8000 people! I am interested in how BioBlitz and other citizen science activities can engage the public with scientific research and inspire people to spend more time outdoors discovering the nature on their doorstep.

David Rolls *Education and Outreach, Heart of Exmoor - DRolls@exmoor-nationalpark.gov.uk*

Education and Outreach Officer for the 'Heart of Exmoor' which is a Heritage Lottery funded Landscape Partnership Scheme. We are looking to run a number of BioBlitzes across the national park in 2014/ 15.

Helen Roy *Ecologist, Centre for Ecology and Hydrology - hele@ceh.ac.uk*

Helen is an ecologist within Biological Records Centre (part of the Centre for Ecology & Hydrology) where she is responsible for zoological data and research working extensively with volunteer-led zoological schemes and societies. Her research focuses on the effects of environmental change on insect populations and communities. She coordinates the UK Ladybird Survey and is using the large-scale and long-term Coccinellidae datasets (distribution and abundance) to understand and predict the effects of the arrival of the non-native harlequin ladybird (*Harmonia axyridis*) on native species.

Sarah Sawyer *Community Links Officer, Wye Valley AONB - community@wyevalleyaonb.org.uk*

I help people understand the countryside, in a range of ways: rural skills courses, guided walks, volunteering, events, publications, talks, specific projects aimed at young people and through making funds available for projects that conserve and enhance the landscape.

Jack Sewell *Education and Research Officer, The Marine Biological Association - jase@mba.ac.uk*

I have worked in marine research and science communication at the Marine Biological Association for 10 years. This has included the development a range of resources and projects. A primary focus of my work has been linking education and marine life recording. I have organised five marine/ coastal BioBlitz events in the Southwest and been involved in the planning of and participated in several other BioBlitz events in the region.

Elisabeth Shaw *Freelance proof reader, editor and writer - lilla_shaw@yahoo.co.uk*

I have spent the last five years working for ARKive, writing and editing profiles on endangered species, and am now starting up my own freelance proofreading, editing and writing business. As well as helping with the Bristol BioBlitz as a volunteer in recent years, I helped to set up and run the Garden BioBlitz event.

Garry Smith *Volunteer, Sutton Park BioBlitz - garry.annika@gmail.com*

This is my first year on this sector. I am building up knowledge & skills with reptiles and amphibians

Tim Speller *Visitor Services Manager, Hampshire City Council - tim.speller@hants.gov.uk*

I run the Queen Elizabeth Country Park BioBlitz (2nd year)

Cathy Spence - spence.cathy@gmail.com

I have previously volunteered at an environment education centre in Leeds (Skelton Grange) but then went on to become a primary school teacher. More recently I have become a mother. I am interested in running a BioBlitz event in Eastville Park/Frome river valley as this is my local area.

Daniel Squire *Senior Ranger, Birmingham City Council - Danny.squire@birmingham.gov.uk*

Responsible for setting up 1st Sutton Park BioBlitz.

Leanne Thomas *Education Manage, Hawk and Owl Trust - leanne.thomas@hawkandowl.org*

I have been working as education officer for the Hawk and Owl Trust for 13 years firstly in Buckinghamshire and now in Norfolk. I and a colleague established Sculthorpe Moor Community Nature Reserve in 2001 and it was officially opened to the public in 2003. To celebrate the 10th anniversary of the opening of the reserve I organised a Birthday BioBlitz in September to invite members of the public to help us record the wealth and diversity of wildlife on the reserve.

John Van Breda *Biodiversity Systems Manager, Biodiverse IT - john.vanbreda@biodiverseit.co.uk*

Since 1999 I've been primarily involved in developing information systems for wildlife records. In the last 4 years my main focus has been the Indicia online wildlife recording toolkit and iRecord, which were used to support several BioBlitzes and the Garden BioBlitz this year.

Leonie Washington *Suffolk Wildlife Trust*

Simone Webber *Wildlife Equipment Specialist, NHBS, Bursary Sponsor -
swebber@nhbs.com*

I work for NHBS, one of the UK's largest retailers of equipment for wildlife surveying and monitoring. Our role involves advising people on purchasing equipment for BioBlitz surveys and as trained ecologists; we are always keen to be involved in surveying activity.



Gemma Windle *Volunteer, Bristol BioBlitzes - gemmaw@meningitis.org*

I have taken part in two BioBlitz events in Bristol, one in 2011 and one this year. I have really enjoyed engaging members of the public, especially children, with the natural world. I am very passionate about getting children outside and learning beyond the classroom and broadening their educational experience beyond the narrow limits of the national curriculum. I have also enjoyed working alongside experts in the field, building on my own knowledge as well as helping them to express information to the public. I have learnt a lot about my local environment through BioBlitz and Bristol Natural History Consortium.

9:00 – 9:30 Registration

9:30 – 9:45 Welcome on behalf of Bristol Natural History Consortium - **Matt Postles (BNHC)**

9:45 – 10:20 Session 1: Challenging the BioBlitz Story - **Chair: Dom McDonald (Science Oxford)**

BioBlitzes have been working to stimulate and inspire children and adults all over the country for over a decade. However there are always ways to improve the ever-changing model. In this session we will hear three provocations working to question what we have achieved up to this point and why we should continue to put our efforts into BioBlitz. We will also ask why BioBlitz only reaches so far and what we can do to open it up to a wider audience.

10:20 – 10:30 Session 2: The Recording Story – **Chair: Ray Barnett (Bristol Museum, Galleries and Archives)**

Session introduction.

10:30 – 11:00 Coffee

11:00 – 11:55 Session 2 (cont): The Recording Story - **Chair: Ray Barnett (Bristol Museum, Galleries and Archives); Panel Members: Tom Hunt (ALERC), John VanBreda (iRecord), Helen Roy (BRC)**

As a primary aim of BioBlitz, the recording story is an important tale to tell. In this panel led discussion we will be encouraging delegates to examine the importance of a species record and discover how they are used. We will find out ways of maximising data value and sharing our finds with greatest effect. We will ask how BioBlitz fits in to the recording story and find out whether data collection really is a priority for BioBlitz when weighed up against other aims such as public engagement.

11:55 – 12:55 Session 3: Delegate Showcase - **Chair: Mary Jeavans (Defra)**

Each BioBlitz is a unique event, run by different groups and organisations with different priorities and different audiences. This provides a great test bed for innovation with new ideas and fresh approaches cropping up all over. However, sometimes even after following every piece of advice, using every resource available and even having the weather on your side, things just don't work out. In this session we will listen to five five-minute contributions from delegates who branched out and tested their own methods of engaging people at their BioBlitz to great success; and we will hear three five minute contributions from delegates who lost a bet with lady luck and encountered disaster at their BioBlitz, and discover how they handled it.

12:55 – 13:05 BioBlitz Resource Launch

13:05 – 14:00 Lunch

14:00 – 14:45 Workshop 1: Selling your Story - **Workshop leader: Max Boon (Spirit PR)**

Managing to get your event in the public eye can be a challenge. If you succeed there may still be a disappointing turnout at your event. In this workshop we will be exploring ways of not only getting your BioBlitz noticed by the press but also using this publicity to your utmost advantage. We will work to ascertain the best ways to market your events looking at different media formats to identify which are the most effective for different events and audiences.

14:45 – 15:00 Bristol BioBlitz Film

15:00 – 15:45 Workshop 2: Engaging Schools - **Workshop leader: Katy Glazer (STEMnet)**

Having school groups take part in a BioBlitz is an enjoyable experience for all and for the children can sow the seed of curiosity in nature that lasts a lifetime. Therefore engaging schools in your BioBlitz can be both an exciting and gratifying addition. Engaging schools effectively to meet the needs of staff and students whilst getting your message across, however, can be a challenging task to approach. In this workshop we will be identifying the best ways to approach a school and how to make it an easy, educational and enjoyable excursion for all involved. We will discuss the best ways to engage children of all ages in your BioBlitz and make your event accessible for schools.

15:45 – 16:30 Session 4: Future Stories - **Chair: Matt Postles (BNHC)**

The BioBlitz Network has come far in the last three years. But what are the possibilities for the future? Are we able to grow further or is the Network strong enough now to be left as its own entity? In the final session of the day we will discuss the next steps for the network including the new BioBlitz website and new possibilities for inter-event communication. We will take a look at challenges the BioBlitz Network may face in the future, and discuss where we want to be this time next year at the National BioBlitz conference 2014.

16:30 – 16:35 Closing Summary

Session One: Challenging the BioBlitz Story

Dom McDonald from Science Oxford asks whether we are actually achieving the outcomes which BioBlitzes set out to achieve. He seeks to find some qualitative data from delegates to prove that these aims are achievable. The following points were notes taken by delegates during the group exercise.

Individual Outcomes

1. Enjoyment, inspiration and creativity:
 - Local celebrities.
 - Getting parents outside with their kids.
 - 'Hooking' disinterested inner-city kids.
 - Young lad spent all day/ evening/ into night making homemade poster.
 - Camping at event enabled people to enjoy learning outdoors.
 - Enjoying being out in the dark and seeing things never known before – e.g. bat detectors.
 - Have range of activities to attract a diverse audience.
2. Knowledge and understanding:
 - Locals will now look at village in a new way after 35 years in village. (Leics.)
 - A learning process, people working together and learning from each other.
 - Experts often want to just go off and do their own thing – perhaps an intermediary communicator may help in these instances.
 - Recording is not everything – inspiration and being outdoors as important – engagement is key!
 - Everyone learns from the experts.
3. Skills development:
 - Continued submission of records is hard to measure.
 - Need to involve a lot of people to achieve this.
 - It will take years to assess this.
4. Progression:
 - Events can be used to encourage people to take what they've learnt and apply it in the future.
 - Recording forms have been used subsequently. (Hampshire.)
 - We are encouraging people to use Local Recording websites at and after BioBlitz (Leics).
5. Extra note:
 - The year we had funding to get inner-city BME groups (buses) to BioBlitz were the most successful. (Bristol)

Community Outcomes

- Style of BioBlitz determines audience.
- Cross-generation communications.
- Villagers getting together needs to be more regular.
- Knowledge exchange.
- Bringing private land owner together with those who don't normally have access to that land.
- It will take more than a BioBlitz to reach 'hard to reach groups' – need more outreach.
- Need to get schools involved in order to reach all kids and extended families.

Business and Economic Outcomes

- Local catering companies = local business gain.
- Food improves revenue = % income gain for organisers.
- Local providers of activity = local business gain.
- Local photographers.
- Networking opportunities for business.
- BES sponsorship for events in 2013 (Hawk and Owl Trust, Norfolk)
- Local charity – RSPB – bird box building.

- Awareness raising with local businesses – opportunities to increase visitor footfall.
- Ideas for future – corporate sponsorship.
- Potential tension between volunteer experts and commercial gain and publicity for corporate sponsors.
- No one charged for their events.

Environmental Outcomes

- There is disconnect between Local Record Centres and National Record Centres
- Use a BioBlitz to show how the management of the area is affecting biodiversity in a positive way.
- Support management by showing link with biodiversity.
- Baseline data to show future changes.
- Highlight protected species and inform authorities.
- Expert sign off of records allows them to be used.
- Provides initial record leading into further research and investigation.
- Non-native species alerts – linked to GB’NNS strategy.
- Distribution data of important species (e.g. badgers) used to support management.
- Demonstrated value of making space for native species to public.
- Any record makes a contribution.

Session Two: The Recording Story

Ray Barnett from Bristol Museum, Galleries and Archives

An environmental record must include the following information:

- The date of when you saw it.
- Where it was.
- Who identified/ recorded it.
- What it was.

What we tend to end up with is a variation on what level of detail of a record is acceptable. Is it sufficient to be engaging the public or should we be putting more emphasis on getting valuable data?

POSITIVES

- BioBlitzes allow us to get a better knowledge of the flora and fauna of an area.
- If experts in specific areas turn up to a BioBlitz, they may be able to identify species of an area, which no one previously has had the knowledge to do. Plus rarer species.
- The information collected should be useful after the event to the landowner, the conservationist, the ecologist, the planner, the environmental communicator and sometimes even to developers.

NEGATIVES

- Some LRCs sometimes have a problem with BioBlitzes due to the quality of data. Correctly identified?
- There's a lot of concern that people who send in records are aware that these records may be used in the future – the handling of that data may be sold on for commercial gain.
- After event - how is it submitted and to who?
- Are there a sufficient amount of young people getting stimulated to become taxonomists in the future?
- There doesn't seem to be much evaluation of how data is used, does it benefit conservationists?

It would be good if specimens are submitted to Local Museums after they have been identified, where they will be available for people to look at them, research them and check their identification in years to come.

Panel Discussion

Helen Roy (BRC); Tom Hunt (ALERC); John VanBreda (iSpot/Garden BioBlitz)

- People should feel the records they are collecting are being valued; however these records aren't necessarily of quality. Does this mean that everyone must be accompanied by a naturalist in which case it's the naturalist's records – so is getting the public involved even necessary?
- Splitting the BioBlitz up into two parts has been successful (Belfast Hills) – firstly the experts go out and identify species, then they meet up with the public and take them out to show them what they've found. Results in valuable records as well as good public engagement.
- Further depth of engagement is important.
- Inspiring children is important.
- Training experts to talk to public.
- New technologies have been put in place to help identify anomalous records (already submitted) which need further investigation – this helps to get through identifying submitted records faster.
- By making data submission part of the event, people will understand why it is important and be more likely to want to go off to do it for themselves.
- Must be realistic about how far we can raise people's level of understanding.
- Making the process of identification visible within the event is a great way to inspire and get people interested. Show dissections/ microscopes.
- Naming things is important and knowing what they are is important but the crucial thing is finding out about the inter-relationships between different species and the whole ecology of an area.

- Recognising target species which could be environmental indicators/ related to one another is a great way to get people (especially children) to identify.
- It could be valuable to get other local wildlife charities and LRCs involved after the event to help continue to fuel the people who were inspired by the BioBlitz.
- Creating a network for recruiting naturalists may encourage people to come forward (PHD students as well as other experts).
- Just because someone is an expert doesn't mean they are an expert communicator as well. They may not want to come to these events. Also great communicators may not be experts.
- Event organisers can do certain things to encourage experts to come along. For example choosing a site of particular interest; place emphasis on data collection at the event; and make sure the expert's personal aspirations of wanting to collect valuable data are met.
- What is the definition of an expert? Perhaps we should say 'more experienced' and 'less experienced'.
- People's perception of what an expert is may be a barrier to them coming to an event to volunteer.
- People are fearful of submitting records in case they make mistakes.
- Museums are useful for checking you have correctly identified a species.
- What is the aim of collecting records and how can we let people know what the data they collected at BioBlitzes is used for?
- People are fascinated to know that their records can contribute to the understanding of the ecology of the area they live in.
- There's a slight crisis of identity surrounding BioBlitz.
- BioBlitz is a fantastic opportunity to promote nature conservation, engagement in the natural world. In terms of a real contribution to science, this is still questionable. We need to emphasise how that information is used post event.
- Hopefully a new generation of taxonomists and ecologists will be inspired by BioBlitz events.

Delegate Showcase

Mary Jeavans, Chair: We don't necessarily need to worry about whether we are getting the right balance of objectives with our events because each one is unique and has its own individual aims. Learning by doing and seeing what works for each event is more important than looking at the overall aims of the BioBlitz Network.

Dave Coles: Zoos are starting to focus more on native species and BioBlitzes are being used to do this and find out what native species are within zoo grounds. Dave is working on collating the individual zoos' BioBlitz records. Zoos have a lot of experts on hand for identification.

Kate Moore discussed how she successfully managed a wide range of events – various walks, talks, survey activities and indoor activities, including a talk by a local photographer.

Dom McDonald spent 75p each on 200 pan traps for people to take home, trap bugs and bring them to the BioBlitz to get identified. There was a total lack of interest from the public. One possible reason that people didn't get involved is because children don't want to kill the bugs, but the fundamental barrier: 'people just aren't that bothered'.

Emma Clare partnered with another better established event for her BioBlitz which proved very successful. They complemented each other well and attracted more people; however it meant missing out on total control and sometimes slowed decisions down.

Jack Sewell: 'You can't change the weather, but you can prepare for it!'

Catherine Burton: make sure you have lots of different activities to attract a diverse audience and create a buzz around basecamp. Get as many recorder groups involved as possible to inspire people to sign up for them and join in other events.

Katy Hooper advised delegates to prepare beforehand when it comes to safety. Alert safety officers and police that the event is going to take place.

Leanne Thomas used grant money to invest in bug pots for each family to use at the BioBlitz. These turned out to be really useful tools on the day to get people engaged in a simple but effective way. They allowed continued engagement as people were allowed to take them away and could then continue to use them at home. Great use of equipment to 'facilitate and enable communication'.

Workshop One: Selling your Story – Marketing and PR

Max Boon from Spirit PR

- Ask yourself: What are your objectives? Who’s your audience? What publications does your audience read?
- When contacting radio station – think about what time of day & what shows?
- Plan, plan, plan – write yourself a schedule and give yourself realistic goals. You may need a few months to wait before hearing back from some magazines. Create a PR plan including Activity, Target Press, Target Coverage.
- Decide what *type* of press release you want to use – news article or feature?

PRESS RELEASES

- Make sure you include who you are? What you’re doing? When are you doing it? Where is it? why are you doing it? How will it run?
- When writing your press release ask yourself, what are my key messages? Give your press release the GRANNY TEST – how would I put it to my granny so she can understand?
- Hints and tips: Strong headline; tell story in first sentence; prioritise messages; find an angle; use quotations; include call to action; don’t make mistakes; include contact information at the end.

FEATURES

- Think around the story, you could cause intrigue or inspire opinion.
- Invite a journalist to take part in your BioBlitz.
- When pitching your feature, the opening line is essential; do your homework; timing early or mid-morning; work *with* the media – suit their needs.

EXTRA INFORMATION

- When interviewing - preparation is key; decide on your messages but never more than three! Be animated, give anecdotes and enthusiasm.
- Pictures say a thousand words. Make sure you use relevant and attention-grabbing images.
- Use Social Media.

Feature Angles

Think around the story

- ‘Top five hidden sites for nature in your city’
- BioBlitz organiser says: ‘We must get children to experience nature’
- Invite a journalist to take part in a BioBlitz





Top Tips

- Use a strong headline
- Tell the story in the first sentence
- Prioritise messages
- Find an angle
- Make copy objective, quotations can be used for subjective views
- Include a call to action
- Don't make mistakes
- Include contact info



Workshop Two: Engaging Schools

Katy Glazer from STEMnet

- It can be difficult to get schools to come to your BioBlitz, whether this is due to timings, teacher’s confidence (or lack of), staff cover, lack of transport or schools being overly cautious about children handling certain objects.
- To overcome this it helps to give teachers all risk assessments and information. If possible (and if they ask for it) you can try and borrow or (if funds allow) buy appropriate equipment such as gloves or goggles.
- Good ways to communicate with schools to tell them about your BioBlitz are flyers (give them personally to teachers), phone calls (follow up only), emails, online, through any networks and and friends, teachers and PTA.
- Give them notice, keep it short and sweet and let them know what to expect from you.

Planning a ‘school friendly’ Bioblitz

When?

Date - Academic year (exams, school holidays)
Timings – School day & timetables

Where?

Transport & parking
Risk Assessment?
EduBase website– search for schools in a region

Who?

Age range – Primary/Secondary/More specific
Number of students – In total/from each school (transport capacity and class sizes)



Planning the day

How do school groups differ to other attendees?

What changes/additions to the day might you want to make?

Staffing and organisation
Parking/arrivals
Information sent out prior to the day
Putting students in groups (stickers?)
Links to curriculum?
Competition?
Pre/Post Bioblitz work?

Telling schools about your Bioblitz

Other considerations...

- Timing of your communication
- Content of your communication - Key reasons for a school to get involved
- How do schools find out more and register their interest?
- Benefit of named contacts and targeted approaches
- How will you keep in touch with schools and send information?
- Make the most of existing networks (www.stemnet.org.uk!)



Session Three: Future Stories

Overview

- Having a national register of naturalists and volunteers who want to get involved with BioBlitzes would be helpful.
- Creating a policy to unify BioBlitzes a bit better would be good. Perhaps this could work as an opt-in badging scheme which signifies the aims and provisions of your BioBlitz and denotes useful records.
- Having a way of coordinating events to stop overlapping of events could be useful.
- It was agreed that more interaction within the network in general would be great.
- There are online forums already available, for the National BioBlitz Network forum <http://www.bnhc.pixillionserver.co.uk/home/bioblitz/run-your-own/national-bioblitz-conference-forum.html>
- Creating a 'web' to get people talking amongst themselves and help each other with their events.
- *Some organisers mentioned that having the ability to upload events themselves onto the BioBlitz website would be helpful to give them more control over how their event is publicised.*

Notes from discussions

START DOING:

- Actively target 'hard to reach' audiences.
- Connect/ partner with other projects.
- Set up regional coordinators or specialised coordinators, for example by habitat.
- Database of natural history experts, organisations and enthusiasts; directory; register as naturalists. Centralised contact list (by geographical area).
- Feature in Newsletter of people or organisations offering their help and expertise.
- Remote experts.
- Brand management and ethical guidelines.
- Badging scheme.
- Opt in policy.
- Develop existing network to encourage more people to feed into it.
- More user friendly website.
- Local content management on website (local groups able to access and update).
- Nurture new naturalists.
- Widening participation beyond event and experts.
- Better coordination for recorders.
- Providing banners (perhaps for hire).
- Forum for recording species found.
- BioBlitz 101 basics (e.g. how to send/ format records to submit).

STOP DOING:

- Don't stop!
- Overlapping dates for local events
- Worrying about whether BioBlitzes need to fit into a standard format, it can fit into whatever you want it to achieve.

CONTINUE WITH:

- (And work on) sign posting to organisers/ people/ societies.
- Providing logo and other BioBlitz branded stuff – this has saved lots of time and look very professional.
- Really good guidance materials.
- Good free online resources.
- Conferences which give people the opportunity to chat/share ideas/ showcase.
- Tool kits/ handbook.

Useful Links

BNHC National BioBlitz Network: www.bioblitzuk.org.uk

National BioBlitz Blog: <http://nationalbioblitzconf.wordpress.com/>

iSpot: <http://www.ispot.org.uk/>

iRecord: <http://www.brc.ac.uk/iRecord/>