

From August 2023 to March 2025, West Wales Biodiversity Information Centre (WWBIC) staff have been working on "A Toolkit for Community Wildlife Recording" project, funded by the Local Nature Partnerships of Ceredigion and Carmarthenshire councils through the Welsh Government 'Local Places for Nature' funding scheme. This project brought together existing resources on biological recording and species identification, alongside new resources created by WWBIC, into one accessible 'Wildlife Recording Toolkit', hosted on the WWBIC website. The toolkit is designed to help individuals and communities get started with recording the wildlife in their local areas. Accompanying this initiative was a series of 20 training events throughout the two counties, delivering training in both species' identification and biological recording, including outdoor practical components.

Using various approaches to establish connections with groups and individuals to encourage attendance to the training sessions produced a mix of participants, some new to wildlife recording and others with pre-existing knowledge. Some of the events were targeted at established groups, others were targeted towards specific locations and open to all.

Training Events: Engaging Communities

To generate community engagement with the toolkit, WWBIC organised a series of 20 training events including 11 in Ceredigion and 9 in Carmarthenshire, working with 12 groups at 11 locations.

Outcomes of Training Events

As a result of targeted outreach, over 170 individuals attended the training events. Participants ranged from students to retirees, demonstrating a broad interest in nature conservation. Feedback suggested that the participants left the sessions with a better understanding of the natural world around them and how to record their observations effectively. The practical elements, which included outdoor workshops, proved particularly beneficial. By bringing together individuals with a shared interest in wildlife, the events cultivated new connections among residents. Collaborations formed during these training days encouraged ongoing community initiatives centred on wildlife conservation.

WWBIC wildlife recording toolkit webpage: https://www.wwbic.org.uk/wildlife-recording/start_recording/

