

Non-Marine Recorder's Report 2025

5 February 2025

Ben Rowson

According to the Met Office, in 2025 the UK experienced the warmest and sunniest year yet recorded. One effect remarked upon by several members was that number of mollusc sightings or enquiries remained noticeably lower than usual between March and October. Low numbers of slugs were reported in both wild and cultivated settings, including by Rosemary Hill when searching for *Malacolimax* in the Wyre Forest, and Suleiman Mustapha (a Rothamsted Research PhD student) while studying *Deroceras* in Hertfordshire and South Wales. In Ireland, 2025 was the second warmest year on record, but in contrast was far wetter than average (Met Éireann). Those who took part in the Society's field meeting in County Waterford were therefore lucky to have enjoyed a week between storms, without significant rain.

New data received

In 2025, over 11,400 new records were imported into the Society's database. As usual these represented a very wide range of species and regions. Around 2,300 (roughly 20%) of the records were submitted or entered directly, with 8,100 (70%) via iRecord, and 1000 (10%) via iNaturalist in iRecord. As ever, thanks are due to Chris du Feu for dealing with the vast majority of slugs on iRecord, and this year for some of the backlog of common snails from iNaturalist. Chris was in fact the verifier for nearly 2,200 (20%) of the records in our 2025 dataset. We were delighted to see him awarded "Highly Commended" in the Verifier's category at the NBN Conference in November 2025.

New vice-county records

34 new VC records were recognised for the Census this year, as listed below. Records received via iRecord are marked with *, and those from iNaturalist with **.

North Devon (4): *Tandonia* cf. *cristata*, Landkey, 14/12/2020, JE / I. Cavadino (RHS Slugs Count project).

East Kent (15): *Pleurodiscus balmei*, Bekesbourne, Canterbury, 13/12/1979, N. F. McMillan (living in the open in winter, a record not previously in the database; see McMillan, 1980 and Walker, 2025).

Surrey (17): *Corbicula* cf. *largillierti* (see below), Battersea Park, London 23/1/2025, P. Maculan**; *Rumina decollata*, Thames Path, London, 31/12/2024, quinn kuiken** (likely an adventive occurrence).

South Essex (18): *Corbicula* cf. *largillierti* (see below), River Lea, London, 18/12/2024, J. Carr**.

Middlesex (21): *Corbicula* cf. *largillerti* (see below), The Towpath, Chelsea, London, 29/12/2024, kcmn**.

Berkshire (22): *Dreissena rostriformis bugensis*, Farmoor Reservoir, Cumnor, 20/1/2025, killerrexy1**.

Oxfordshire (23): *Helix lucorum*, Cowley, near Oxford, 1/3/2025, L. Burnham.

West Norfolk (28): *Spermodea lamellata*, Great Snoring Road, near Walsingham, 1898, R. Ashington Bullen.

Cambridgeshire (29): *Radix rubiginosa*, Cambridge Botanic Garden, 28/10/2025, D. Cormack (hothouse).

West Gloucestershire (34): *Balea (Alinda) biplicata*, Frampton Cotterell, 6/11/2023, J. Concannon**.

Worcestershire (37): *Tandonia* cf. *crystata*, Malvern, 8/11/2020, NR / I. Cavadino (RHS Slugs Count project).

Glamorganshire (41): *Semilimax pyrenaicus*, Pwll Waun Cynon, 15/1/2019, G. Watkeys*.

Carmarthenshire (44): *Paralaoma servilis*, MoD Pendine, 14/9/2024, M. J. Willing & B. Rowson; *Cochlicella barbara*, Llanelli, 19/8/2025, N. Bell**.

Merionethshire (48): *Semilimax pyrenaicus*, Ceunant Cynfal, 7/4/2024, K. Dinsdale & H. Adams*.

Flintshire (51): *Dreissena polymorpha*, Papermill Pool, Oakholt, 12/9/2025, R. Pierce*.

Anglesey (52): *Ferrissia californica*, Newborough, 28/5/2025, C. Owen*; *Selenochlamys ysbrya*, near Mariandyrys, 1/2/2024, shaynes92**.

Derbyshire (57): *Ferrissia californica*, Markeaton Brook, 24/4/2025, R. Mackay-Austin*.

West Lancashire (60): *Helix pomatia*, Lancaster, 7/7/2024; roxschinas**.

North-east Yorkshire (62): *Dreissena polymorpha*, Stockton-on-Tees, 24/9/2025, A. Waine*.

Cumberland (70): *Hygromia cinctella*, Wastwater Head, 19/3/2023, T. Clarke.

Fife (85): *Succinea putris*, Stenhouse Reservoir, Burntisland, 23/8/2025, C. du Feu (conf. A. T. Sumner by jaw).

West Perthshire (87): *Physella acuta*, Oclochy Pond, Dunblane, 13/6/2025, A. T. Sumner; *Monacha cantiana*, Springbank Crescent, Dunblane, 13/6/2025, A. Sumner.

Dunbartonshire (99): *Physella acuta*, RSPB Loch Lomond, 11/6/2024, C. Walton; *Euconulus alderi*, RSPB Loch Lomond, 11/6/2024, C. Walton.

South Ebeudes (102): *Arion rufus*, Islay House Community Garden, 15/9/2018, W. Whitfield.

Mid Ebeudes (103): *Anodonta cygnea*, Tiree, 2/4/2025, J. Bowler; *Vertigo lilljeborgi*, Cnoc Corrach, Tiree, 12/5/2025 (conf. M. J. Willing), C. Walton; *Euconulus alderi*, Totronald, Coll, 22/4/2025, C. Walton.

Waterford (H6): *Anisus vortex*, Cunnigar spit, Dungarvan, 7/10/2025, T. Walker, P. Topley & B. Rowson (old shell); *Ambigolimax parvipenis*, Kilnafrehan West, 6/10/2025, T. Walker, P. Topley & B. Rowson (conf. by dissection).

With the exception of parts of Scotland and Ireland, the new VC records again concern spreading non-native species. The way in which these come to our attention is changing in the era of camera phones and recording apps. The iNaturalist record of *Balea (Alinda) biplicata* in Gloucestershire (**Fig 1**), is from a healthy population in a domestic garden, from which I was later sent specimens, while the *Helix pomatia* from West Lancashire is another outlying, domestic population; it might just be adventive and could even have been a release. Kerney (1999) referred to several such populations of *H. pomatia*, for which we sadly lack digital records. Both species are considered snails of south-east England, but are common European species likely introduced to Britain long ago. Outlying records like these create a bit of a headache for verifiers. Nonetheless, they are among the more noteworthy observations made each year.

Two new VC records are recognized for *Tandonia* cf. *cristata* based on the work of Imogen Cavadino and Hayley Jones (RHS Wisley) for the RHS Slugs Count Project in 2020. These specimens and many others from the Slugs Count collection were checked and/or dissected by Suleiman Mustapha and I during 2025, and work is ongoing into some of the more interesting species.

This year saw the first sightings in Britain of *Semilimax pyrenaicus* (Olds et al., 2025; **Fig 2**). While one might have predicted the eventual appearance of this semi-slug in Britain (arriving from Ireland?), there was no trace of it until 2019, and the place at which it first appeared would have been difficult to guess. In this case, re-examining photographs posted by iRecord users in 2019 and 2024, and visiting the sites in question, allowed us to confirm it living in woodland in two different parts of Wales. I myself had misidentified Graham Watkeys' 2019 photo as being *Phenacolimax major*, and found the 2024 one difficult to pick out among *Vitrina pellucida*. Hindsight always works wonders! Thanks to Liam Olds (Buglife) bringing his additional finds to our attention, this species should no longer escape notice. Live semi-slugs, wherever they are found, are worth a close look!

More controversial may be the attribution of certain populations of *Corbicula* in the lower River Thames to the provisionally identified species *C.* cf. *largillerti* (Philippi, 1844). This is another invader from eastern Asia, very similar to the now familiar *C. fluminea*. At least two invasive *Corbicula* taxa, *C. fluminea* and *C. largillerti*, are recognized in North and South America, and parts of Europe, but are considered very difficult to distinguish and name (e.g., Benson & Williams 2021; de Sousa et al.,

2025). Certain specimens found in London have a bright purple nacreous interior, as confirmed by shells from Cody Dock brought to a meeting of the Society by Gino Brignoli and later checked by Anna Holmes (**Fig 3**). The use of the name *C. largillierti* for these was suggested on iNaturalist by the original recorders. Without DNA comparisons between these and other Thames populations, it is almost impossible to interpret this further. Until then, occurrences of *Corbicula* with a bright purple interior are probably worth recording.

Other noteworthy records

A particular effort was made by some members to track down rarities in the field before the end of 2025, the cut-off date for Red Listing (see below). Terry Crawford and Tony Wardhaugh did much to check and update existing records concerning *Truncatellina cylindrica*, *Vertigo genesii*, *Vitrea subrimata* and *Succinella oblonga* in Yorkshire and neighbouring vice-counties. They visited Brockadale, South-west Yorkshire (VC63) in August with Vicky Wilkins and found a single fresh adult of *T. cylindrica*, confirming that this species survives there (the most recent record being from Adrian Norris in 2010). The dogged efforts of Angus Wilkinson and Helen Read did likewise for *Spermodea lamellata* in Buckinghamshire (VC24), finally finding it at Burnham Beeches in November, where it had not been seen since 2008 (**Fig 4**). Meanwhile Jim Alder not only refound *S. lamellata* in Derbyshire (VC57) for the first time since 1890, but added new sites. Jim also alerted us to an old list including the species from a site in West Norfolk (VC28) (Ashington Bullen, 1899). Given the decline of *S. lamellata* species in the south since the 1890s this is a plausible record, and the site could be interesting to check out. On the rare bivalve side, all recent British records of *Euglesa conventus* have been added to the database. These show that this species survives in North Wales (thanks to the Natur am Byth project) and in the Scottish highlands (thanks to Rachel Mackay-Austin); sadly there are no records from the English Lake District since the 1930s. Mags Cousins and I also encouraged the Environment Agency to commission a survey for the extremely rare *Gyraulus acronicus*. This has begun but has yet to report on whether this species – not seen alive in Britain since 2010 – still survives.

Other significant batches of records received in 2025 included those from western Scotland by Clive Walton, and central Scotland by Adrian Sumner, plus one made at Portsmouth Museum by curator Christine Taylor and a volunteer. This was extracted from the shell collections made in the 1900s-1910s by Ellen A. Benson, again showing that historical data are still welcome in the Recording Scheme.

It can be tricky to engage non-specialists with our less well-recorded, and hence more obscure, mollusc species. It was a pleasant surprise for the Society to be approached in 2025 about a partnership project on the rare “German Hairy Snail” *Pseudotruchia rubiginosa*, led by Citizen Zoo and the Zoological Society of London

(see Newton, 2025). This involved volunteers to help survey several waterside sites in central London in Autumn 2025 (**Fig 5**) and Council voted to award it one of the Society's Project Grants. The volunteer teams produced multiple new records of *P. rubiginosa* living at 7 sites, all verified by the Society from photos via iRecord. Among these was a new site (Duke's Hollow Nature Reserve, Chiswick) from which the Society previously had no records, and which also yielded a bonus record of *Balea (Alinda) biplicata*. Three other sites produced no *P. rubiginosa* records, but importantly with the confidence that the visits were made by trained searchers. Tom Walker, Nina Hundt and I helped with the initial ID training at Syon Park, and took part in some of the field visits. Spurred on by the collaboration Tom and I also extracted records of this species from the literature to ensure our dataset was complete. It is rewarding to see the Society involved in projects of this type, where the target species, landscape, and human resources available come together. The profile of this obscure species was also raised by appearing in a news article (BBC, 2025) that was widely circulated on social media.

Work on the database

In early 2025 the Society's non-marine data was moved to a new custom database in Filemaker Pro (see my last report in Mollusc World 68: 8-10). A backup of the Recorder 6 data, containing all records to the end of 2022, has been kept. A considerable amount of time was spent reorganising and cleaning the data in Filemaker. Fields were added to consistently hold the crucial "subfossil" and "shell only" statuses, VC name and VC number, and removing duplicate records (at least 2,700 have been traced, but there are more). A new taxon list was created from the current UK Species Inventory. The separate Surveys in R6 were combined, with any partitioning information (e.g. GB, NI, ROI, CI, subfossil) now held in fields instead. Correspondence with Will Millard at the NBN Trust allowed a number of other duplicates to be identified and resolved, and we checked that the export format is Darwin Core compliant and compatible with the NBN Atlas.

By early 2026, the records dealt with in 2023, 2024 and 2025 (around 60,000 records in all) were finally imported into the database. This takes us to over 500,000 non-marine records for the first time (although some older duplicates still remain). The ease with which this simpler database can be searched, browsed and manipulated in Filemaker Pro makes NBN updates possible again and makes enquiries far easier to answer. It should make recording more efficient in the coming years (even if a future Hon. Recorder were to decide to change software again). The reorganization also ensures our distributional data are up-to-date, as far as end of December 2025, for the upcoming Red List re-assessments for GB species (see the

Conservation Officer's Report). This one-off work in 2025-2026 was partly funded by a contract from Natural England to my employer, Amgueddfa Cymru – Museum Wales, allowing me to spend a considerable number of extra days working on the database. I thank all those involved for their help with this, not least our many recorders for bearing with me over the last few years.

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Figure 1. *Balea (Alinda) biplicata*, Frampton Cotterell, West Gloucestershire (VC34). (Jane Concannon).



Figure 2. *Semilimax pyrenaicus*, Cwmaman, Glamorganshire (VC41). (Liam Olds).



Figure 3. *Corbicula* cf. *largillierti*, Cody Dock, S. Essex (VC18) (Gino Brignoli).



Figure 4. *Spermodea lamellata*, Burnham Beeches, Buckinghamshire (VC24). (Angus Wilkinson).



Figure 5. Searching for *Pseudotrichia rubiginosa* at Syon Park, Middlesex (VC21). (Ben Rowson).

 The screenshot shows a web-based database interface for the CSBG Non-marine Recording Scheme. The header includes the logo of The Entomological Society of the United Kingdom and the title 'CSBG Non-marine Recording Scheme Database'. Below the header, there are several input fields and buttons for managing records. The main content area displays a record for the species 'Unio tumidus'. The record includes fields for Taxon, Locality, VC name, Grid ref., Habitat, Date, Recorder(s), and Determiner. The record is for a specimen found on the River Frome at Stapleton, West Gloucestershire, on 12/10/1876, recorded by Miss F. M. Hale and determined by W. D. Roebuck. The record is marked as 'Present' in abundance and 'Subfossil' in habitat. The interface also shows options for adding comments and a search bar at the top.

Figure 6. Screenshot of the new Filemaker Pro database. (Ben Rowson).