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## Biology Curators Group Newsletter

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Title: Report on the Symposium on Biological Record Centres held at Oxfordshire County Museum, Woodstock, 25/26th September 1975

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Source: Flood, S. (1975). Report on the Symposium on Biological Record Centres held at Oxfordshire County Museum, Woodstock, 25/26th September 1975. *Biology Curators Group Newsletter, Vol 1 No 1*, 6.

URL: <http://www.natsca.org/article/1482>

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REPORT ON THE SYMPOSIUM ON BIOLOGICAL RECORD CENTRES  
held at Oxfordshire County Museum, Woodstock, 25/26th September 1975.

Stephen Flood, Keeper of Natural History, City Museum, St. Albans.

Session 1. Leader Simon Davey, Hampshire Museum Service.

Following an introduction by Miss L. Ball, Director of the Area Museums Service for South Eastern England (sponsors of the symposium) and a welcome by Mr. R. Foster, Director of the Oxfordshire County Museum Service (hosts) there were contributions from session leaders and delegates outlining their interest in or experience of, running biological record centres.

Session 2. Leader Stephen Flood, St. Albans Museums.

John Campbell of the Woodstock Museum showed slides of Oxfordshire, giving an impression of the wide range of wildlife habitats and potential changes in the countryside. Stephen Flood reviewed the sources of information available to anyone starting a regional record centre.

Session 3. Leader Jill Royston, Bucks County Museum.

Miss Royston outlined filing systems used for storing and retrieving biological data.

Session 4. Leader John Campbell, Oxfordshire County Museum.

Representatives of the Oxfordshire County Council, The Nature Conservancy Council Regional Office, the County Naturalist Trust and local Natural History Societies, discussed their attitudes towards regional record centres, particularly with regard to confidentiality of records and the use of data for planning. The necessity for impartiality in record centres was stressed, and all were agreed that the existence of regional record centres was fundamental to conservation, planning and education.

Session 5. Leader Eric Philp, Maidstone Museum.

This session consisted of short contributions on a number of topics related to the running of record centres. J. Bond of Woodstock Museum explained the filing and retrieval system of the Oxfordshire Monument Record. Jill Royston spoke on collaboration with schools to obtain records and guide field studies. John Ismay gave details of ecological evaluation systems. Simon Davey showed how colour slides could reveal seasonal and long-term changes in habitats.

Session 6. Leader John Ismay, Norwich Museums.

A draft paper was presented to the meeting dealing with Objectives, Terms of Reference and Suggested Duties of Regional Record Centres. Following discussions a final version of the document was produced.

Session 7.

After outlining the work of the Biological Records Centre at Monks Wood, Mr. G. Radford (standing in for Dr. F. Perring) spoke of meetings to be held with the Society of County Museum Officers and other bodies with a view to proposing a case for Regional Record Centres in museums. He also gave details of a booklet being prepared which would be a guide to the operation of a record centre.

The meeting resolved that :-

1. A report of the proceedings should be prepared by the A. M. S. if possible and that a summary of matters discussed should be submitted to the 'Museums Bulletin'.
2. The Museums Association be encouraged to incorporate the running of record centres in its Diploma training schemes.
3. The Biological Curators Group should continue contacts and take up some of the topics raised at this symposium.
4. Every effort should be made to encourage cooperation between record centres and to achieve recognition for regional centres in museums.