

# GBIF

## + Recording Schemes Overseas

A presentation for the BRC 2025 National Recording Schemes Meeting

### Recording abroad

Undoubtedly all Recording Schemes have some sort of overseas remit. My copy of Lucas' British Dragonflies from 1900 lists consultations in Europe and UK authors such as Askew were studying them abroad a century later. In doing so authors are now able to rapidly recognise new arrivals to these shores (Steve Cham, British Wildlife.)

Move to the lower end of the popularity scale however and many Recording Schemes are still in the process of exploring foreign lands much as Wallace was doing all those years ago, relying on naturalists in the field, scouring museum collections and hunting down obscure European papers in order to figure out what's out there. An influx from abroad of records from our lowliest Recording Scheme, the Oestridae (bot flies) would cause concern and although vets know bots this is not true of a huge number of other taxonomic groups such as ichneumonids, many Diptera and other understudied groups. For this reason Dipterists Forum has a remit to pay attention to overseas fauna.

Amongst those particularly active in this regard are a handful of the 28 or so Diptera Recording Schemes. They've been able to draw upon recent technology to explore Europe, one such technology being iNaturalist.

### iNaturalist Europe projects

Anyone can set up an exploratory iNaturalist project, simply a matter of specifying taxa and geographical regions. Home in on your target species and that's your overseas field trip destination sorted out.

Once such a project has been set up unfamiliar taxa will begin to appear. Only a few because the range is highly restricted but with research the numbers in a European checklist will rise to roughly double the number you've dealt with in the UK. The greatest value in such a project, in addition to a growing picture gallery is that it offers dialogue. You've now the opportunity to determine the overseas folk who have some level of expertise in a particular subject area and to make contact and collaborate with them. It's rather uplifting too to get the occasional "thanks a lot" from folk you've helped in Austria or wherever.

#### Europe iNat projects by UK Recording Schemes

There are numerous Europe projects covering Vascular Plants, Fungi, Moths, Birds, Diptera, Lichens, Bryophytes, Coleoptera, Bees, Butterflies, Snails, Arachnids, Dragonflies, Plant Galls etc as revealed by [this simple search](#)

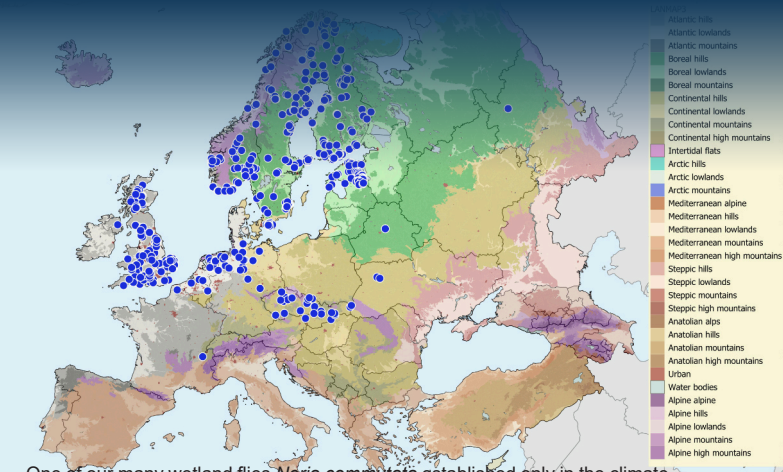
Actively managed projects by UK schemes in that list can be located:

- **European Micropezids & Tanypezids** <https://tinyurl.com/mu2wr843>
- **European Sciomyzids** <https://tinyurl.com/4vnh8kpm>
- **Snails of Europe** <https://tinyurl.com/yc23yps2>
- **Bryophytes of Europe** <https://tinyurl.com/4tcjuksk>

and it's a fair guess that other UK naturalists have set up some of their own or are following ones set up elsewhere such as:

- **European Fungi** (Saxony) <https://tinyurl.com/2vd9c56c>
- **European Native bees** (Belgium) <https://tinyurl.com/2ccsyedp>

Be sure to show your support by joining any you find.



One of our many wetland flies *Neria commutata* established only in the climate zones (Brummitt) in which its ditch habitat won't seasonally dry out

### A path to GBIF

Though displayed records in iNat projects are not comprehensive they represent a huge active community and ResearchGrade iNat records go directly to GBIF as Mike Prince showed in his 2024 presentation. Add data via other countries and initiatives and a fuller picture emerges on GBIF. If a UK scheme augments this by adding datasets extracted from foreign historic and current papers directly to GBIF and additionally keeps on top of iRecord verification they've now a comprehensive European Recording Scheme and the potential for studying UK taxa within that broader geographical context. Download the GBIF data and construct Europe maps and in true Wallace style you've tales to tell as the map shows. And perhaps a nice picture of something that's scarce or extinct here now.

There's a surprising amount of international interest in such maps, a European Atlas on ResearchGate, even for my tiny obscure group has had 439 reads and 4 citations since 2018

#### Filling some gaps

Whilst many of those iNat project records find their way directly to Open Data on GBIF, a Recording Scheme's strongest influence is on the UK records via the interlinked iRecord + verifier system. Some other European countries are as engaged as us regarding uploading to GBIF via their equivalent systems but by no means all of them.

Data extraction using DwC standards from historical foreign papers is a good means of mobilising Open Data, there may be many such backlogs abroad. Contact NBNt in their role as GBIF node and they will implement their system to send a dataset directly to GBIF. Achieve that and the GBIF maps will become much more informative.

### GBIF volunteers

If your scheme is one of the many with fingers in the European pie then it's well worth responding to their latest appeal for more volunteers (<https://bit.ly/gbif-volunteer-form>) in roles of mentors, reviewers, trainers and ambassadors. Of the latter, the UK has just 6/100 at present <https://www.gbif.org/ambassadors>. Awards were presented at the end of 2024 for the efforts of those most active and [detailed on their forum](#) at <https://tinyurl.com/mwu2nczd>

Register for their forum too, many an interesting tale there.

In his introduction to the 2024 conference David Roy indicated several of BRC's European collaborative projects, Recording Schemes too are collaborating with GBIF. Do have a crack at it.

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## Open Data advocacy

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[Organiser of three tiny Recording Schemes]

