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Lancashire Naturalist's of note -

Mr. Robert Wigglesworth in Lancs Naturalist 1(3); 33-35 (1907)

M. A. Taylor,
Perth Museum and Art Gallery.

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BOLTON'S THIRD SOURCE

Peter Skidmore's article "Tapping the Third Source" in BCG Newsletter No. 9 contains the excellent suggestion that we should analyse the data on specimens in our reference collections. This information on a geographical basis, may be of value to colleagues in other parts of the country who may be unaware that a fair proportion of material exists elsewhere of direct interest to their area. I resolved, therefore, to adopt a similar exercise and using the same parameters for a single "record" (which may be represented by considerably more than one specimen) sampled from the following areas:

1. The Locality Index. This was recently started as a parallel index when the IRGMA system was initiated into the accessioning procedure at Bolton. It contains all recent accessions, the whole of the mammal collection and part of a backlog from the molluscs. This provided 3,321 records.

2. Herbarium - the Cruciferae.

3. Oological collection - the families Sylvanidae and Turdidae.

4. Coleoptera - Carabidae (Cicindela - Loricera inclusive)

5. Hymenoptera - Formicidae.

6. Diptera - Tipulinae (Nephrotoma - Tipula)

7. Aves - genus Passer in the bird skin collections.

These provided a further 1818 records giving a total sample of 5139. What soon became obvious while sampling was that there is a considerable proportion of foreign material incorporated in the collections and indices.

It was decided to include these in the analysis which in gross terms gives the following breakdown.

English records comprise about 65% of the total sample

Scottish	7%
Welsh	5.2%
Irish	1.6%
Island (Channel, Scilly, Man)	1.2%
European	9%
Other Foreign	11%

There is a preponderance of non-British records in the mollusc, bird egg and plant elements of the sample which is common to the whole of these collections. Surprisingly, 49 out of the 148 records from the ant collections were from South America. Undoubtedly, one learns of the potentials and shortfalls of the collections during this sort of project.

The percentage of British records given below is based on the total number of records, including foreign.

ENGLAND

Bolton Metropolitan District	13.6
Greater Manchester County (excl. Bolton)	3.4
Lancashire/Merseyside	8.85
Devon/Cornwall	6.00
Yorkshire	5.5
Cumbria	3.75
Derbyshire; Somerset/Gloucs.	3.00
Kent	2.9
Leics/Notts; Hants (inc. I.o.Wight); Essex	2.00
Cheshire; Surrey; Greater London area; Lincs; Sussex, Cambridge/Hunts;	1-1.99
Shrops/Staffs; Wilts; Herts; Norfolk; Suffolk; Worcs/Warwicks;	0.5-0.99
Oxford; Northumberland/Durham; Northants; Bucks/Berks;	0.01-0.49

SCOTLAND

Lowlands	1.8
Outer and Inner Hebrides	0.3
Perths/Fife	2.8

Inverness/Sutherland/Ross	1.3
Orkneys	0.2
Shetlands	0.5
WALES	
North	4.00
South	1.2
Scilly Isles	0.05
Channel Islands	1.1
Isle of Man	0.16

The number of specimens without data is considerable but they have nil record value. In the extensive coleoptera collection which contains a high proportion of historically interesting specimens as well as considerable primary type material, the number of specimens without data was 692. This is typical of naturalists' collections up to about 1870. Those specimens with data are doubly interesting therefore. For example:

Carabus convexus Fabr. Winstanley Park, Lancs. A. Matthews, Sept. 1836
This species is not in current checklists and Fowler gives this record as "doubtful" for inclusion as indigenous to Britain. It appears to be the only British taken specimen.

Carabus auratus Linn. Battle Field, Hastings, A. Matthews (no date); Deptford, E. C. Rye, May 1872; in a country lane near Derby, E. Chadfield, 1850.

Another species doubtfully indigenous to the British Isles, although these and other records occasionally indicate it may be or have been native.

Carabus cancellatus Ill. Doncaster, A. Matthews, no date; Sandgate, F. le B., April 1865.
Again the British status of this species is in doubt at the present time.

The high percentage of Devon/Cornwall records is the result of long-standing connections with correspondents in that area as well as collecting by staff on holiday! Other idiosyncrasies in the collection can be seen by reference to the previously published accounts of the contents of the collections in BCG Newsletters 3 and 4. For example the C. O. Groom (alias Prince of Mantua and Montserrat) herbarium, contains many Essex records, and the series of British Macrolepidoptera of George E. Hyde's is from the Doncaster area.

I think it took a little more than four hours to count and analyse the figures, one can never tell with all the interruptions. However, the

time taken is well worth the results because although you may think you know your collections, a fresh examination from a slightly different viewpoint is quite interesting and sometimes enlightening. Who would have thought that at Bolton there are 13 White-toothed Shrews from St. Mary, Scillies, 10 of which were killed by the same cat between 1963 and 1972!

E. Geoffrey Hancock,
Bolton Museum and Art Gallery.

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REVIEWS

The identification of remains in Owl Pellets by D. W. Yalden Occasional Publication of the Mammal Society

This little booklet deals admirably with the problems met by the biologist in identifying bones dissected from owl pellets, and includes a key to the identification of skulls, and notes on limb bones and other miscellaneous features often encountered. A must for ornithologists, mammalogists and museums educational staff. Price is 25p plus postage with reductions (10-15 copies 15p; over 50 copies 10p) for bulk orders. Available from Mrs. Norma Chapman, Publications Sales Agent, Larkmead, Barton Mills, Bury St. Edmunds, Suffolk IP28 6AA. The first title in the series - 'Otter Spraint analysis' was published last year and is available from the same address at 60p plus postage.

Manchester University Museum Computer-aided Cataloguing Project. A Report by Charles Pettitt.

In November 1977 Manchester Museum began a project to document the Spence shell collection and produce a catalogue. This was carried out using the powerful computing facilities available to the Museum at the University of Manchester Regional Computing Centre, and Charles Pettit's report outlines the methods and procedures involved. The report is accompanied by a number of examples of print out of various indexes produced using this technique. Copies of the report are available free of charge from Charles Pettit at Manchester Museum (n.b. Essential reading for all members intending to attend the one day seminar in Manchester!)