

SOMERSET INVERTEBRATES GROUP

The Somerset Invertebrates Group (SIG) was founded in 1991. Members' interests are wide-ranging across the large number of taxa of invertebrate animals. Each year a programme of field meetings is carried out, providing valuable information for land owners, conversation groups and the Somerset Environmental Records Centre (SERC). Workshops provide specialised training in individual taxa and are open to all enthusiasts. All individuals who sign a code of conduct are accepted as members.

A project is being launched to map Somerset molluscs on a tetrad basis. Since E.W. Swanton's *Mollusca of Somerset* was published by the Somerset Archaeological and Natural History Society, little has been done on a systematic scale and there is a great

Bithynia tentaculata

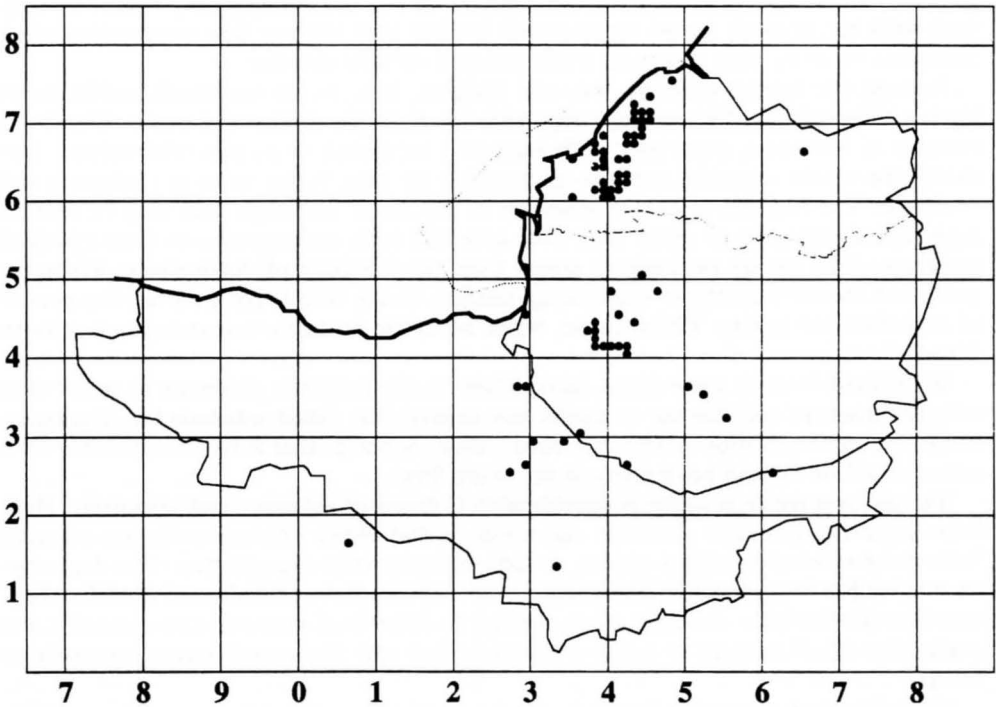


Fig. 1

need to provide a base line of information about the distribution of all our invertebrate species.

The Group will produce an atlas of computer-generated distribution maps (using DMAP) of all aquatic, terrestrial and marine mollusca, each species to be accompanied by a brief description, ecological notes and conservation status, paying due regard to Red Data Book and locally rare species. An example of what the maps will look like is shown here (Fig. 1). The steering committee is co-ordinating the work and producing suitable recording cards to enable a computer database to be set up in conjunction with recording schemes used by SERC and Bristol Regional Environmental Records Centre (BRERC). As with the Somerset Flora Project, interim newsletters to inform participants of progress and highlight problem areas will be published. It is likely that the survey work will take a minimum of five years, probably longer.

All this cannot be achieved without the help of Somerset naturalists; please, please help us. If you have molluscan records dating from 1990 for the atlas, but also pre-1990 records which would give an indication of population trends, we want to hear from you.

You can obtain copies of the proposal, together with information about recording for the Mollusc Atlas project, from the Hon. Secretary of SIG, Mrs P. Hill-Cottingham, Mill House, 18 High Lane, Shapwick, Bridgwater TA7 9NB.

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