

Hypocrites v Scientists

by Martin White, 31-Dec-10 05:14 AM GMT

Over the years I've had very little success with requests for information from Butterfly Conservation, this despite having supplied them with a huge quantity of my personal data. It seems to me that their policy is to steer all butterfly research in Britain and thwart or frustrate any research which is not under their private control. This facet has not gone unnoticed by other groups; hence the sobriquet of "Butterfly Constipation" awarded them by ELG Editor, Paul Batty.

However, Butterfly Conservation doesn't take first prize for having the most constipated or deaf & dumb database" in the British Isles. No, this prize must surely go to Nottinghamshire's Biological Records Centre based at Wollaton Hall. For c.20 years I was steadfastly ignored or refused access any data, including my own, which was previously placed at their disposal together with much else besides. Only with the advent of the Data Protection Act & Freedom of Information Act (which, without paraphrasing, do exist) was I able to gain access to any information. Perhaps not surprisingly, when asked to supply them with yet more information, this time on butterfly releases, I suggested they go take a running jump off the nearest cliff (paraphrased). All this fun, and at the taxpayer's expense!

Fortunately for me the majority of my research concerns butterfly genetics and my fellow geneticists are a different kettle of fish altogether. Their aim has been to allow me to excel. So much that I became the first person to discover "The Holy Grail of butterfly genetics"; Multiple Allelomorphism in a British species. A challenge first laid down by the greatest butterfly geneticist & butterfly scientist of the twentieth century, E.B.Ford, in his seminal work, *Butterflies*, in 1945. My work is in the public domain, accessible to those with the simple intelligence to find it, and therefore open to scrutiny, whether scientific or otherwise. We await with some anticipation more prodigious talents to propel our understanding further. We certainly won't resent them!

Martin White, 3 Grafton Street, Worksop, S80 1UG., Tel: (019090) 808771, email: martincwhite@talktalk.net, 01/01/2011, 05/01/2011