



ANNUAL REPORT

March 2022

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This is the 18th annual report of Coetir Mynydd and covers the period 7 March 2021 to 3 March 2022.

During the period of this report the business of the company was directed by the Board which comprised: Gwen Griffiths (Vice-chair), Jenny Wong (Secretary), Bryan Dickinson (Treasurer), Bryn Harris, Martin Daws, Sharon Sweeny, Gabe Wyn, Mike Vitkovitch and Lyn Coulsting.

Footpath wear & tear

Last year it was reported that increased use of the footpath during lockdown coupled with winter flooding had left the footpaths in urgent need of repair. Numbers using the footpaths has continued to increase and the prolonged wet weather has worn the footpath down to expose bedrock and major tree roots. Parc yr Ocar is designated as 'ancient semi-natural woodland' and 'restored ancient woodland' and all the larger trees are veterans and should be protected from trampling within 15 m of the trunk. Footpath wear is now seriously compromising the health of the trees and remedial works are even more urgently needed.



Late in 2021 Coetir Mynydd received a request from the Slate Trail to re-route the main trail through Parc yr Ocar. The Board decided that this would likely further increase wear and with the footpath in its present state and with only an offer of being able to draw on a "small fund" to contribute to trail maintenance we decided it would be best to decline. In response the Slate Trail have said they will "continue to pursue this; this time with a little more vigour than in the past" by which they mean to direct people through the woods regardless and to attempt to have the permissive

section of the path adopted by the Council as a public footpath.

Regardless of the Slate Trail, over the next year we will need to make repairs to the surface of the main footpath and consider formalisation of the permissive section so we can at least retain some control over it. Some of this can be done by volunteers but much of it is best done by a contractor and will need funding.

Biodiversity

Big garden bird watch: we've been asking people to send us their records for the RSPB garden bird watch since 2008. In 2022 we had data from 7 gardens and as in 2021 the total numbers of birds recorded was on the low side though the number of species recorded remained relatively high. Some charts for the more common species seen in Mynydd are at the end of this report. It is gratifying to see that generally species seem to be relatively stable though the change from Greenfinch to Chaffinch looks like a real trend.

If you would be willing to share your garden bird watch counts in 2023 then please send them to coetirmynydd@aol.com and look for reminders.

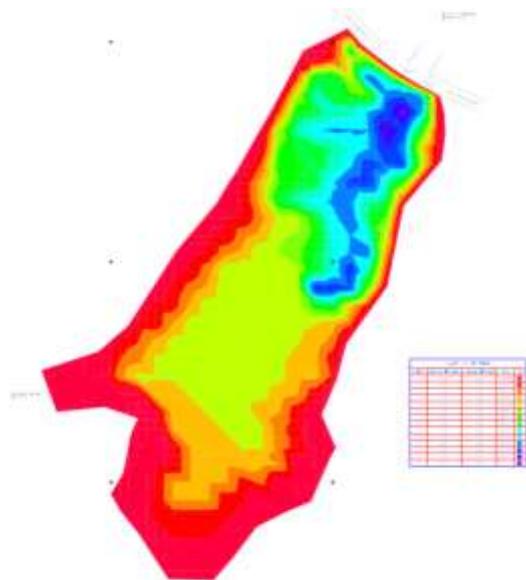
Himalayan balsam: we've now been systematically clearing this invasive weed since 2009. Bryan and Chris did three 'picks' throughout the summer and now concentrating mainly on 2 adjacent gardens - one of which has just changed owners, so not sure what will happen for this year. All other location, Himalayan Balsam still reducing or now gone. Chris has also been tackling Japanese Knotweed all by herself - so thanks to her. Volunteers for HB picking always needed.

Pied Flycatchers: monitoring in Parc yr Ocar continued during 2021. Unfortunately, only two nests were observed compared with four in both 2019 and 2020. One nest was in a nest box and one in a tree hole. Visits were made on 21 days between 4 April and 3 June. The weather was very wet and cold for much of this time, so the visits were much shorter than the usual two hours or more. As a result, it is possible that nests were missed, although all the known previous nesting

locations were checked. Alternatively, it is possible that less birds than usual arrived and/or made nesting attempts due to the bad weather. It was too wet to take a camera, so no photos were taken.

Coed y Parc dam

On the 9th November a team commissioned by NRW undertook a detailed bathymetric survey of the reservoir. This was to determine if the volume of impounded water was over the 10,000 m³ threshold for registration as a 'large raised reservoir' which would need to be registered under the Reservoirs Act 1975. The volume of the reservoir is 12,187 m³ which is clearly over threshold and we were served with a request to register the dam which required payment of a £510 fee. We made a request to the Community Council for assistance with this but were advised to first try other sources of funding. There was a penalty for late registration so we have had to proceed and from the 3 March the reservoir is on the register. NRW will now assess whether the dam is *high risk*. Having had a Panel engineer report on the dam in 2019 we anticipate that the dam is not high risk.



Silt depths in Coed y Parc reservoir

The datalogger installed to record water depths at the dam is working well.

Parc y Bwlch

Through May and June 2021 NRW conducted a public consultation on a new Resources Plan for Parc y Bwlch. This attracted a lot of interest locally with 75 submissions sent to NRW – which is the largest number NRW have had on a plan anywhere in Wales! In response to inputs from the community (including a lengthy submission from

Coetir Mynydd) the plans were refined – mostly to make the clear fell blocks smaller.

The plan is available on:

<https://naturalresources.wales/about-us/strategies-and-plans/forest-resource-plans/bethesda-and-aberygwynn-gregyn-forest-resource-plan/?lang=en>

In the report of the consultation NRW acknowledged "that these woodlands are often thought of as belonging to the community, and once this consultation process has ended dialogue between NRW and the local public needs to continue" and the NRW North West Forest Operations team "has decided to run one day of on site consultation each year to inform the public on upcoming operations but also to listen to the public's concerns, around the site."

Hydro development

Detailed design, permissions and legal preparatory work on the Galedffrwd hydro project continued through 2021. As part of this work an Option to lease the land for the turbine house has been drawn up between Coetir Mynydd and Egni Mynydd. It was hoped that finance would be in place by the end of 2021 so the scheme could be built within the (covid) extended FIT incentive deadline. This proved to be over ambitious and in the present economic climate and without the FIT incentive Egni Mynydd are struggling to finance the scheme. It may yet be possible to secure finance but will take some determination and innovation.

All enquiries concerning the development of the hydro should be directed to Egni Mynydd <https://egnimynydd.co.uk/>.

Volunteering with Coetir Mynydd

Parc yr Ocar belongs to the local community and is managed by volunteers. If you enjoy using the woodland please consider offering some time to help manage it.

If you are able to volunteer to help with practical work, or are interested in helping us make decisions about the woodland and dam by being on the Coetir Mynydd Board, please contact any current committee member or send an email to coetirmynydd@aol.com.

THANKS!

Big Garden Bird Watch results for Mynydd Llandygai 2008-2022

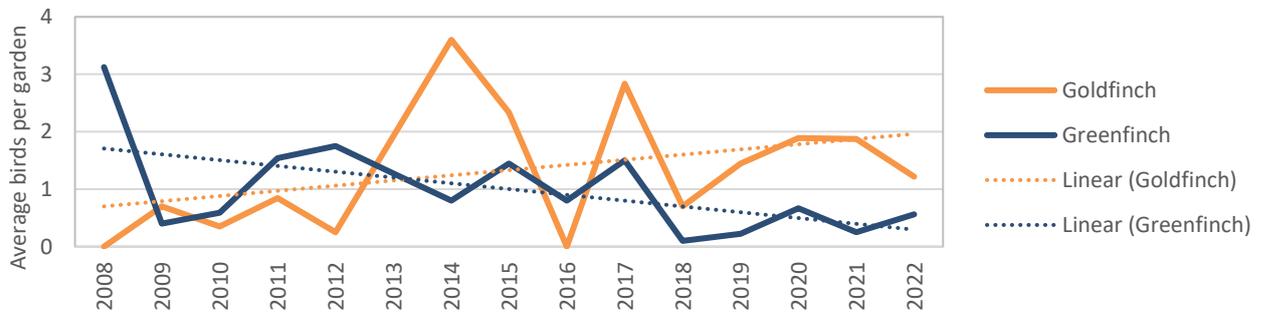
Average number of birds counted in each garden (approx. 8 gardens each year)

Most abundant birds seen on the count: House sparrow, Chaffinch and Blue tit

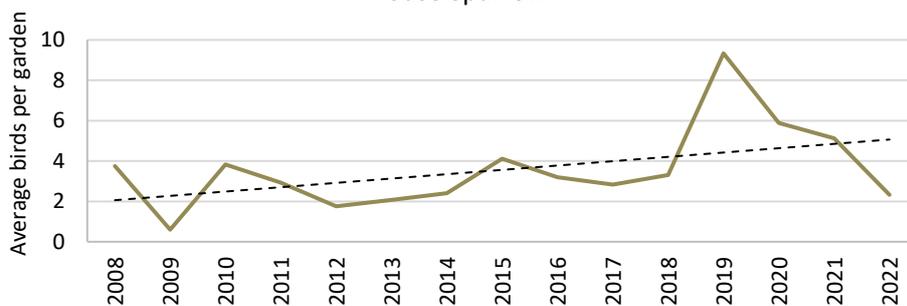
Blue, Great and Coal tits



Finches



House Sparrow



Starling

