**CONFIDENTIAL**

Date Transcribed: 24th May 2021

Interviewer(s):

Respondent(s):

**INT: So my first question is how long have you been doing any biological recording and how did you start?**

P21: Um, I think this is the fourth year. So I started 2018. I mean basically I’ve always been interested in wildlife and butterflies, in particular, especially when I was a child. And sort of tried to continue it into adulthood. In 2018 I took a career break from work because I wanted to do- do other things that I was interested in rather than working full time. And that included volunteering for various wildlife organisations. I think I’d been a member of [wildlife charity] for a while before that. But then at that point I then got in touch with the local branch, so in [REGION] branch [unclear 0:01:08.3] and- and then got involved in transect- walking a transect- well designing and walking a transect because the- it hadn’t been established, the one that I was doing. And yes, doing other- other butterfly monitoring from that point on really. So that’s- that’s what-

**INT: So it’s one transect that you do, and then do you do more kind of the casual recording? So kind of, submitting lists and sightings and species as well?**

P21: Yes. Yes, I’m actually taking on another one this year. So I walk at [common] in [county]. Which I share with one other person. So I do that fortnightly. And then from this year I will be taking on another transect which I’ll be walking weekly at [nature reserve]. And I also do a- There’s this system of butterfly squares, WCBS squares which are the- their kilometre squares that get walked sort of, periodically through the year. So four to five times- four, five, six times. And I do- I do one there at [common]. And then also when I’m out and about walking in [county] or anywhere I use the app. So if I see something interesting, I will pop it on the app. So that that- it gets recorded that way as well.

**INT: So very frequent in terms of doing any sort of recording the. So at least weekly, but more than that really.**

P21: Yes. With using the app, if I see one in a garden you know, if I see something suddenly. Like I saw the first Holly Blue of the year the other day. So I popped that on the app so, you know. Anything like that I will put it on.

**INT: Okay. And is it just butterflies that you record? Or do you record other species groups?**

P21: I don’t submit any data on others- you know. I do like to keep an eye out for dragonflies and other- other animals. But I don’t submit those anywhere.

**INT: Okay. Yes. What sort of geographical area do you cover then with your recording? Is it kind of quite local? Or is it across the county? Or wider than that?**

P21: Um, we go walking quite often, especially with lockdown and with Covid not being able to go quite as far afield as previously. So I’ll walk round- certainly round the local area, if we go for a walk round [place], [common] you know, we’re aware of the local area. I’ll do it there. My walks- transect walks are a little bit further away. So it becomes probably about a [unclear 0:03:45.9] you know, 15 minute drive or a bit longer on the train. And then [0:03:51.2] is a bit further afield. So it’s- it’s within the county mostly. Obviously, if I’m on holiday I will also do it if I spot something there, I’ll put that on the app as well. But it’s mostly probably in [county] and my local area.

**INT: Okay. So I guess thinking about the more sort of the recording that you do via the app. Do you- Is that kind of alongside other things that you’re doing? Of do you plan visits to see particular species or go to particular sites because you might see some butterflies there? Or is it more that you’re going for a walk and you- you’ll record if you see something?**

P21: It’s a bit of both actually. We will- If we’re going out for a walk and we see something, then I will- I will put it on the app. But also occasionally we’ve got some great sights in [county]. From- especially for like the blue butterflies. So we will go down to [Hill] or round [HILL] walking parts of [county] that are chalk. And so they’ve got a lot of the like Adonis Blues, Common Blues, Chalkhill Blues and so, we’ll have a few trips out there to look out for them. And I, you know- And then obviously if I do see them, I’ll put them on the app. I mainly go out because I want to see them, rather than- I suppose recording them is incidental to that because I know it will be useful. But, yes. We- we do go out occasionally, specifically looking for a particular species.

**INT: Okay. So do you- do you sort of have a plan at the beginning of the year, as to the species that you want to see? Or does it- Is it a bit more week by week than that?**

P21: It’s a bit more- It’s a bit more ad hoc. But I will think- I like to see a new few species every year as well and add them to the you know, what I’ve seen overall. I’m not [Name], I couldn’t see them all in a year. But you know, I do like to sort of keep a look out for new ones. So a few- A couple of years ago we went to Norfolk and I managed to see a Swallowtail. So I- if I think- if I’m thinking I want to see a particular type this one year. Then obviously you have to plan it a little bit because they’re only around for a few weeks, or a couple months at most and you have to then think, where can you go to see them. So I do- I do sort of think about it a little bit like that.

**INT: And then when you go to sites like that are you- do you make a full list of anything, any species that you see, butterfly wise? Or is it, just the kind of species that you’d been going to particularly target?**

P21: No I’d record anything if I saw something else interesting or even not that interesting. I would still probably put it- put it on the app so, you know. [Village] last year, when I was walking back to the car after doing the walk. I saw a Clouded Yellow and I hadn’t seen one of them before. So I popped that on the app obviously, so you know anything that happens while I’m out looking for other things. I will still, obviously then still- still record them.

**INT: And what type of places do you get information about sites to visits from?**

P21: Um. I suppose it’s- BC are very good. So Butterfly Conversation and the local group as well. And they do- they’ll do walks and work parties and that sort of thing. And say, oh you can see Small Blues here, or you can go here for Green Hairstreaks or- or whatever you know. So I will keep an eye on those. I can’t often join them because they’re usually during the day. Sort of during the week when I’m working. But they you know; they do obviously give out good information about good places to see them. So- Which I can then store up and go off and- and do a weekend or when I can fit it in. So that’s probably the main- the main source of information really. Yes, I think so.

**INT: And then is there anything else that you consider when you are like choosing a place to go? Do you ever- Are you every like kind of asked to go to a particular place to see if there are butterflies there? Or is it more- it’s more targeted around seeing a particular species?**

P21: Um. I haven’t done that up to now. But there are gonna be- There’s some surveying that’s gonna go on this year at the local [county] group are doing. Looking for Black Hairstreaks on [common]. So I’m gonna go along and take part in that. So- so generally it’s off my own back, you know I’m doing it, sort of in my own time and sort of you know, for my own interest. But occasionally if something like that comes up, then I would- I would do it.

**INT: And is that part of a group that you’ll go and do that recording? Or is it-**

P21: Yes. Yes. It’s being coordinated by somebody within the local group and I heard about it and so I dropped them an email and they’ve added me to the group of people that are gonna go and do it. So they’re gonna fix up a few days. Has to be fairly, not ad hoc, but quite short notice because you can- you can never rely on the weather. So you’ve gotta sort of- they’ve gotta pick times when the butterflies are flying. And when the weather’s good [laughs].

**INT: When you might be wanting to go and visit- visit your transect [laugh] I think.**

P21: Yes. Well that’s right. And then you’ve gotta balance it with that and [laughs] everything as well. Yes. Absolutely. Yes.

**INT: How do you find kind of, finding the time for your transects alongside work and weather and [laughs] things like that.**

**[0:09:46.6]**

P21: [Laughs] It’s a constant balancing actually. And I find myself constantly looking at the BBC or other webs- you know weather sites to- to check when the weather’s in the right- you know reaches the right conditions. And obviously when I started it, I was- I wasn’t working for a while. So it was- it was reasonably easy to fit it in. Now I’m working four days out of seven so I have to fit it in mostly in to the other three days, so Friday, Saturday, Sunday. I do work- I have arranged it so that I can be a bit more flexible and take a bit of time off in the summer. Work less, I tend to work more in the winter and then have a bit more time off in the summer. So if the odd [audio cut out 0:10:30.5 - 0:10:34.7] weather was good and I thought I might not get out another time. Then I could go- you know, I’ve got sufficiently flexible employers that I can go out- I could just take a few hours and go out and do that. But it is a balance and it is a challenge because- especially, because you know, you can’t always rely on the weather [laughs]. So yes. So you have to be able to try and fit it in when the weather is good in a- in a week. Which doesn’t always fit the times when you’re free you know?

**INT: And you can’t always rely on the forecast either, can you?**

P21: No you can’t. And it’s so changeable you know, it can- you know I can be looking and it can say, oh Sunday’s gonna be nice. And then the following day you and look at it and it says Sunday’s not gonna be very nice [laughs]. So it’s like, it’s quite tricky really.

**INT: Yes. You kind of don’t want to rely on the last day of the week do you [laughs]? [unclear 0:11:22.9]**

P21: No. You don’t, no. And it- and it you know; it goes from Thursday to Wednesdays this year. So it we’re having to sort of think, when- when do I have to go to fit it into that particular week with the walking, you know? I mean I’m very- I am, now that I’ve committed to doing it. I am very- I’m committed, I want to do them. And so I will always, you know unless it’s completely impossible, I will always make the effort to do it. It’s like you know, as long there is the right weather conditions within the week.

**INT: Yes. What about you know, and if there’s not then there’s no point in going is there?**

P21: No. Well we couldn’t go last week- this, the, um-

**INT: Just not warm enough is it yet?**

P21: Because it hasn’t reached the- it hasn’t reached 13 degrees. So it’s like there’s no point going and it, it doesn’t meet the conditions that [wildlife charity] set. So we just have to accept that week’s- that week’s gone really. And- and have your fingers crossed ready for the next one [laughs].

**INT: Yes [laughs]. Probably easier for you down in the [REGION] than it is for most places in the country [laughs]?**

P21: Yes. Well that’s true. Yes. Yes. No we are quite lucky with that really [laughs].

**INT: [Laughs] Yes.**

P21: But even then, yes. It’s- And it- obviously it also helps working mostly from home as I am at the moment. I’m not sort of travelling into work and everything. So I can- I can just sort of get out if- if the time is suddenly right for it. Whereas you know, when I- if I’m travelling into [CITY] to work, I can’t obviously if- I can’t then, as easily, sort of make the time to do it. You know, particular dates and-

**INT: Yes. So can you kind of pinpoint what it was that motivated you to start actually recording? And what kind of motivates you to continue doing that?**

P21: Um. As I said I was really into butterflies a child and I used to- I used to look at my parents guides and dream of seeing Purple Emperors and that sort of thing. So I was always looking at them as a kind. I think it probably then dropped off a bit you know, when you- when you’re sort of you work, you know studying and then working and whatever. You don’t get the time. And then there’s as I say, I got this- got to this point a few years ago where I wanted to make time specifically for conservation activities and that’s where I took the career break. I- I think the [Name] book Butterfly Isle then also inspired me because, he was talking about seeing them all in a year and the- this process he went through. And that- that maybe what made me join [wildlife charity]I think after you know, I’d been interested in them before. And then when I took this career break that’s- Actually I went on a- they had an induction day for new members. And I went along to that and chatted to [Name] and to some other people who were there. And they talked about transect walking and I thought, that sounds really- really sounds like the sort of thing I’d like to do. And so I stored that in my head and then when I got to the point of- of taking the break, I then thought, this is when I- It’s now or never. I’m gonna do it- If I’m gonna do it then this is a good time and that’s when I- I reached out to [Name]. I mean I do volunteer for other charities as well. I’m- I work in a wildlife hospital in [Town]. Doing animal care and looking after the wildlife that- that comes into that. I’m a trustee of the [CONSERVATION CHARITY]. So it’s not just butterflies. But that’s- that’s the one where I do- I mostly do the getting out and about and doing the monitoring and you know, feeling like it all goes into a proper you know- it’s properly scientific and it goes into a- I sort of feel like it’s making a you know, admittedly small, but a contribution to knowledge about butterflies and their distribution and that then helps with- with their conservation. You know it’s important to know that, I feel. And-

**INT: Is that what appealed about the transects in particular then, do you think? Was it that kind of scientific method that appealed to you?**

P21: That appealed but also just the getting out and about and doing something practical. You know because as I say I’m a Trustee as well, but that’s mostly- that’s more government- governance and administration and you know, but that type of thing. Whereas this is- this is actually doing, getting out and about, and doing something practical in support of butterflies and their conservation. But I like- I do like- As I say I work in higher education and research support and I- it that. So I understand the importance of good science and you know, having proper knowledge to be able to make decisions about the conversation and strategies and that sort of thing, and.

**INT: So do you- When you submit your records either via the app or the transect, the WCBS records. Do you get feedback then on what those data are used for? Of do you get any sort of feedback?**

P21: Um. Y- Not specifically on my- my transects and squares. But really- Obviously BC produce annual reports on what- which butterflies are doing well, which ones are doing less well. Where they’re gonna focus efforts and what are the priority species. And so in south west [CITY] produce an annual report as well. They- they show exactly how many transects have been walked, how many records have been submitted on the app. So they- it shows all the information that’s been collated in the country, over the past year. So I- I do see how my bit of it contributes to the whole. So I have sometimes- Well I have partly intended to [inaudible 0:17:26.7] the system and try and pull out my own data and see- you know see for example what’s changed over the years you know. If I see more- more Essex Skippers one year than another, or something. But I haven’t actually got round to trying to do that [laughs].

**INT: Yes. So do you- do you keep you records all yourself, or is it all just put on the system?**

P21: I’ve kept them up to now. I’d probably- Because you know there’s the form that you can fill in you know, with the list of all the butterflies and you put the numbers on. I don’t tend to use those when I’m out and about. I- I use my phone and I just record what I see. So I sort of record the time and date and weather and all the rest of it. And then I- we do the intersection and I’ll say I’ve seen one Large White, one you know, whatever. And then I transcribe it when I get home. I find it a bit of a pain walking around with a you know, like clipboard and stuff [laughs]. Trying to write you know. And also if you see- see 20 or 30 Meadow Browns in one- one section. You can’t really fit it on the form because [laughs] you know. So just practicalities as well you know, it’s easier just to say, oh I’ve seen, you know- just to say what I see within each section. And then transcribe it afterwards. Sometimes I put it straight on the system and sometimes I write it up and really do it. So I have got all those records I do keep them. I haven’t really-

**INT: So you’ve got them all on your phone still?**

P21: [Laughs] I’ve got them all on my phone. I’ve had to save them to a separate section because it was, it was getting a bit fuller [laughs]. To prevent- I probably will keep them for a few years and then delete them because I think it’ll- it’ll just fill up my phone memory [laughs]. But it’s quite a good way of doing it actually because you know.

**INT: How do you- do you do the tally on your phone then? Do you just keep on pressing one for each butterfly that you see?**

P21: I do it by- it’s voice recording. So I just say- I just say it into the phone. Keep it on the you know, use a- use a voice recorder and pause it when I you know- just pause it when I’m not seeing anything and then put it on and say what I see, and then pause it again.

**INT: Okay. And did somebody recommend that method to you? Or did you work that out yourself, that that was the best way to do it for you?**

P21: It was my other half actually. He was like, you know why are you messing about with all these bits of clipboards and papers, that would then blow away and all that. Why don’t you just use your phone and that. So I started doing that and it was- it was a lot easier. I surprised though that other people haven’t really mentioned doing that. And I was surprised actually because it is a lot easier than- than having a clipboard and messing about with all that.

**[0:20:02.5]**

**INT: I think everyone’s kind of developed their own-**

P21: Yes. We all get ways of working, don’t they [laughs].

**INT: Yes [laughs]. And then the records that are kind of more ad hoc records, presumably that you submit them on the spot via the app?**

P21: Yes. Usually I’ll fill it in, you know I’ll get the- the species and the time and the ordnance survey reference and then I’ll- I don’t always submit it then and there. Sometimes I’ll sort of gather a few and then submit them all at once a bit later on. But yes, I will always record them as I see them, normally. Yes.

**INT: Yes. And then do you have support from anyone in terms of identification or something like- if there- if there was something that you weren’t sure about, would you have people that you could go to, to help with that?**

P21: Yes. I would normally- I had a bit of training before I started, so that was- that was helpful, that [Name] [unclear 0:21:07.6] and a few of us went on that. And we actually- we had a- a bit of a session inside where he went through the types of butterflies that we would normally see, in this area. And then we went out and did a practice walk in the afternoon. So- so I had that training before. But If I see something I’m not sure about I would normally- if I can I’ll take a picture. And then I would normally send it to [Name] or to [Name], the other- the guy that I share [Village] transect with [inaudible 0:21:38.3]. Because I did- I found that I had one a couple of years ago that was an aberrant colour, so it was- it was a small Copper but it wasn’t the normal colour. And so we managed to get a picture of that I sent it to [Name] and he- he confirmed that that’s what it was you know. He was quite excited about it actually [laughs] it was a sort of pale, pretty sort of not albino, but a pale coloured one you know, did not have the orange colouring and so, it was quite exciting. But that’s what I do if I’m not sure.

**INT: Were you quite confident in terms of identifying the species you would be likely to see before you started doing the transect? Or have you kind of learnt as you’ve- as you’ve been doing the transect?**

P21: It’s a bit of both really. I- I was reasonably confident of most of the, certainly the more common species. Some of the less common ones, I’ve sort of known as I’ve gone you know. So like with small and Essex Skippers and large Skippers because they can be quite similar when you’re seeing them flying around. You gradually- you know you have to look- go into the detail like, what colour’s the antenna and all that sort of thing and so I- I would- Each year you tend to have to slightly relearn it again because you have six months off [laugh]. And then you go back out there and you’re like, which one is that again? You know. And It’s like you have to then sort of relearn. The same with Adonis Blues and Common Blues, they’re very similar but they have slight differences with the edges of the wings. And sort of so you- You get your eye in again gradually as you start doing it again. And so I think I’m- you know I’m reasonably confident with most. Obviously, the White’s are then always a bit of challenge as well, in terms of spotting the difference, especially if they- especially if they don’t settle. If they don’t land anywhere, it’s very difficult just to see from them flying you know. Even with that, you gradually learn in different flight patterns and the speeds and the powerful flights versus sort of fluttery, you know all that sort of thing, and gradually start to learn it.

**INT: And do you think you- that’s come to you just from the experience, rather than necessarily being taught? It’s just that familiarity?**

P21: I think it’s- a lot of it is familiarity. Yes. Yes. We- Obviously they had the- the training at the start was useful. But after that it’s- it’s been the experience of doing it. Plus then looking up, going home and checking afterwards and thinking well I saw that and it flew like this, or it did something in particular. And then you can look it up and there’s- there’s a lot of information available that will just help you. Or even YouTube videos. You can watch them to see how- like White Hairstreaks, how they fly- flutter, you know spiral up from a- top of a tree, and that sort of thing.

**INT: Do you take binoculars with you when you’re doing your transect to try and get a good view when they- when they settled? Hopefully settled?**

P21: Yes. I always take my binoculars with me, yes. Yes, especially you know some of the Hair Streaks or the- Because and also at [Village] we’ve got a Purple Emperor spot. There’s a master oak there, so we’ve got a little route that then leaves us a space where we can look up at this master oak. So you have [laughs] to have your binoculars to try and spot them at the top of a tree as you know. They’re the- they’re the challenging ones, and particularly the ones that like flying at the top of a tree [inaudible 0:25:07.8]. Because they’re not within your eyeline.

**INT: Can you capture those on the transect then? Because it’s- you’ve got to be in a certain box, haven’t you? Are you allowed to look-?**

P21: Yes. The transect was designed so that we were within the sort of, the distancing. But obviously we do- I do tend to stop and have a quick look. You can’t just keep walking, otherwise you wouldn’t see them. But obviously the transect system works better for some species than others and I think they just wanted to give the opportunity to see one. So I would just stop for a few minutes and get the binoculars out and see if there are any flying up there. And then continue on. Obviously, I don’t sort of stop indefinitely and wait to see one. I just stop and look to see if there’s any up there.

**INT: Yes. Sounds like a nice transect.**

P21: Yes. It is. Yes, it’s lovely. Yes. Get some Silver-washed Fritillarys and things as well. So it’s yes. It’s a great- great site actually.

**INT:**  **I know. Yes. So are there any- Is there kind of any feedback on how your data are used that you would like to get that you don’t get at the moment do you think?**

P21: I think it would be quite nice to be able to- And it maybe that it’s possible to do this and I haven’t worked it out. It would be quite nice to- to know how to interrogate the data for myself. So that I could download and have a look at it, or take a report and look through it. That sort of thing. Just to- Just tend to have a look at a specific transect. I mean [Name] might do this already, I don’t know. But you know, obviously this- this [Village] we’ve been doing it for three years. It would be quite nice to see if there’s been any change over that three years, or, you know. Even if there’s any inconsistencies between what [Name] and I do. You know do I see certain things and he sees others or do we- are both fairly consistent, you know? But even just, again, seeing what- what’s changed, what we see or what we’re seeing less of. So I think I’d quite like to be able to do that.

**INT: Yes. And I guess seeing your data in the context of the county and the country. Are species on your transect doing something different or is it following the pattern of the rest of them?**

P21: Yes. It would be quite nice to see it broken down by transect. You know what other people are seeing on theirs and- Yes, what different parts- What’s happening in different parts of the country. Yes. That would be really interesting.

**INT: And then in terms of visiting different places. Is you know, if somebody came to you and said, could you visit this place and see- tell us what you see? Is that something that would appeal to you? Or do you just kind of like to- to do your own thing?**

P21: What you mean if there was something happening about a particular location. Surveying a new location, or- Yes. No. I’d always be happy to do that. You know the only limitation would be finding the time to fit it all in. But yes. No, absolutely. I’d always be happy to do it. Hence this thing that’s happening with Black Hairstreaks you know, I’m quite excited to go over to [common] and see if they’re there. Because that- that’s one that I haven’t seen before. So it would be quite exciting if they are definitely there.

**INT: And are there other barriers in addition to having the time that- that would exist? Would there be, I guess, time to get to a certain place? Or a certain type of site that you wouldn’t necessarily like to visit? Or is it you would be happy to kind of do anything?**

P21: Um. I suppose distance. I wouldn’t want to go miles and miles. You know [audio cut out 0:29:08.6] happy to go off on our 45 minutes to an hour. But I probably won’t want to be driving huge distances to get there. So sort of reasonably local. But apart from that it probably is timing really.

**INT: And would that distance vary on- vary depending on how likely you are to see something of interest [laughs]?**

P21: Quite possibly. Yes [laughs]. I mean this- taking on this [nature reserve] one was a little bit of a stretch because it- as I say it’s a half hour drive. So- Which is a- it’s more of a- it’s more of a commitment than I was anticipating when I mentioned to [Name], I’d be happy to take another one on, but it’s a great site and I think there will be opportunity to see some lovely things. Plus he was- He’d had one or two people dropping out. So it- it you know, they’ve done- they’ve done a lot of conservation work there. So it’s really important to have sort of continued transect records for it really. Because it’ll be a shame not to have those records. It’s not- You know I was- When he mentioned that one was free, I was quite, quite keen to do it really. Even though as I say it was that sort of- it’s that hour, half hour there and half hour back. Which is- [inaudible 0:30:23.3].

**[0:30:22.7]**

**INT: Are they in the same direction so you could do one after the other?**

P21: They are actually. Yes. So- Which does help. So I can stop off and do [Village] on the way [laughs].

**INT: [Laughs] That does help. Yes. And who owns the sites? Are they-**

P21: I think they’re both [heritage conservation] actually. You know, I know some people do sites that are- are on private land. But- but yes, [Village]’s- I’m pretty sure they’re both owned or managed at least, by the [heritage conservation]. There’s a- There’s certainly a [heritage conservation] site and it’s all over [Village] Common. And I think- I think [nature reserve] is as well.

**INT: So presumably they- they use the data from those transects. Like you say, if they’re doing management and they want to see what impact that’s had on the species that occur there. Then presumably they’re looking at that data as well?**

P21: You would think so. Yes. Yes, you would. I- I don’t- Again I don’t know what- what the local group do with the data or whether BC do that. Whether they provide breakdowns of information to the different organisations? You’d think they’d, as you say, they would find that useful. You know, especially as like I say there’s been work done. Like scrapes made and that sort of thing to encourage food plants for caterpillars and butterflies. You’d think they’d want to see how that was having an effect.

**INT: Yes. Well it’s- Yes, it’s evidence of what they are doing, isn’t it really?**

P21: Yes. That’s right. I know some of them are struggling for funds at the moment so it might be some of this activity might- might be more difficult than it has been over the past few years. I don’t know.

**INT: Yes. They’ve taken a big hit haven’t they, I think in the last [inaudible 0:32:08.0].**

P21: And the wildlife trusts as well. I know they’ve been [inaudible 0:32:14.2] some of the sites that we- we look at as well. They’ve had redundancies and things as well, I think.

**INT: Gosh.**

P21: It is difficult.

**INT: Yes. It is really difficult. Is the kind of social side of things important for you then? In terms of recording as well? Because you mentioned you know the person that you do the transect with and, I know you’re not going out at the same time, but there’s obviously still that interaction there. And going out and doing the Black Hairstreak recording as a group. Is that kind of, meeting people important as well?**

P21: Yes. It is. I’m- It hasn’t- hasn’t happened as much I suppose as it might have done. But I think that’s probably partly been over the last year with everything that’s happened. Yes. And more at the start we would meet up a couple of times to go and walk round the site at the start of the year and that sort of thing. And I did go on one or two of these specific walks arranged by the local association as well. But that was more at the start when I had a bit more free time. When I- Before I was working again. So I’m- But I wouldn’t- you know I have thought if they- of starting to attend some of the actual face to face sessions that the south- the [REGION] Group were putting on. I never quite round to it. And then everything obviously, went on to Zoom and all the rest of it [laughs]. So yes, it is important and I’d- you know it’s nice to- I met [Name] to go round this [nature reserve]. It’s just nice to talk to people who are interested in similar things. And you can- you can be a bit nerdy about it all and you know, go into the [laughs] detail of everything. Which you can’t always do with- with other people because they’re not quite as interested in it as you are really. So yes, you know that is important as well. Yes and- It would be nice to pick some of that up when things hopefully change a bit.

**INT: Yes. Hopefully, maybe second half of [laughs] [unclear 0:34:24.3].**

P21: Yes. That’s right. Yes [laughs].

**INT: So going back to that point about if somebody asks you to go somewhere to do some recording. Are there particular individuals or types of organisation that you would be more receptive to acting on those requests from?**

P21: I mean it’s probably more calls for volunteers rather than me being asked specifically to do it. So- But certainly any you know, anything for the local group and BC you know, I’d- I would always tend to sort of see those things favourably. You know like I do the- I’ll do the national butterfly count and everything as well. It’s part- You know bit well citizen science as well. So anything like that that comes up, then I’m always- I’m always willing to do it. I can’t think who else would actually- who else would actually ask really. So I, you know, um. I can say, although I do things for all sorts so you know, this wildlife hospital that I volunteer for as well. They’re- You know I’ll always do extra bits and [Name]s for them as well, if needed you know. Just- Really, I think when I’ve- when I took my career break it sort of, it just refocused me slightly and made me think, you know originally, I was working long hours and commuting into [CITY] every day. And that really then ends up being the focus of your life. Because it you know, it takes up so much- it’s not even just at the time. It’s actually your mind space and your energy. That’s what I’ve- what I’ve worked out now. I work part time, you know it’s four days, it’s still part time. It just means that you’ve got more- more of your energy and your- your space to think and be creative is- is in the things you’re interested in rather than the things you know, that earn you the money [laughs]. So it’s just a change in focus really. And so- so anything around nature and conservation and wildlife and helping the planet really is- is where I want to focus my energies really. So I tend to be quite positive to anything that relates to that.

**INT: Yes. I think I’ve asked all of my questions. I’m just gonna have a look through my list and see if there’s anything we’ve missed. [Long pause] I think that’s everything. So is there anything that you want to say about your recording? Or why you record? Or what keeps you going that you haven’t said?**

P21: I suppose one thing I would say is because I know it’s all being recorded and it’s all contributing to knowledge and everything. It makes me quite careful. And I- I you know especially, when I was starting out. I was quite nervous about- I didn’t want to put something on that was wrong you know. So I- you know I’d be- I would be sort of slightly worrying about have I put too many in here, or have I not- It- Was that a Small White rather than a Large White or whatever, you know. Because I didn’t want it to be- to be wrong. And I- I mean I know there will be sort of account taken of human- you know, we’re all humans and we’re all gonna make mistakes occasionally. But I think that- just that knowledge just makes- makes you that bit more careful about making sure you get it right. Because it is contributing to this- this whole database of information. And not- not exaggerating as well. You know there was one time when I had a really disappointing walk, didn’t really see very much [laughs]. You know and then- So it’s like- it’s when things happen round the edges and I think, oh can I squeeze that one in [laughs]? And it’s silly in the end because you know, in the end it’s about the integrity of the data as well. And so I never did it but you know, it’s that slight annoyance when you haven’t- when you haven’t seen very much you know. And that temptation but I did- I did always resist it because you know, there’s no point in the end. If you don’t follow the parameters and do the you know, follow the five meter view that you’re looking at and only include things that- that fall within the- in the requirements. Then there’s no point doing it because it’s not gonna be- it’s not gonna be accurate. So that’s one thing I would say really.

**INT: And do you think that was when you did that training that. Do you think that message came across quite strongly then, about following the protocols?**

P21: Yes. It did. Yes. Whereas obviously if you were doing it more for yourself. Just monitoring and looking at the- and just thinking well it’s just for me. Then that wouldn’t matter so much. And for the app obviously it doesn’t matter where you see them or how. You can just see it and record anything you see.

**INT: At least that gives you a chance if you do see something just outside your transect [laughs].**

**[0:39:58.6]**

P21: Yes. That’s right. Yes [laughs]. Or I can- If I see some- I see the odd one and I think, oh I might go back and then at the end of the transect I can go back you know like if I’ve seen a Purple Hairstreak I can go back and check whether I can see anymore. And sort of stand there for 20 minutes and look at it. Rather than you know, do the keep walking and do the transect. So that you know- I’ve got a [unclear 0:40:26.1] because I’ve got good research integrity and you know, good practice and so [unclear 0:40:30.3]. There was me thinking, oh can I squeeze in an extra you know.

**INT: [Laughs]**

P21: It’s not- That’s terrible. I’m spend my life telling people how to do good research and here I am tryna [laughs]-

**INT: [Laughs] At least you resisted the temptation.**

P21: I did. At least I- yes, I you know didn’t fall by the wayside.

**INT: [Laughs]**

P21: It helps you [unclear 0:40:54.0] the temptations you know, that-

**INT: [Laughs] So we have a mailing list that people can sign up to. Which is just to hear more about the project. But there are other opportunities potentially to get involved with kind of, trialling and testing the systems that we’re producing over the summer- over this summer and next summer. So if you’re interested, I can send you the link via email and you can add your contact details and sign up there. And then you’ll get mailings about what’s going on and opportunities to get involved.**

P21: Yes. That would be great. Because wasn’t there- Isn’t there another part to the- Was that- Is that the second part of the study? Because I remember it said there was an opportunity to be involved further.

**INT: Yes. So what we’re doing at the moment is we’re developing an app where- which will make recommendations to people of places to visit. And it’s gonna be very much a kind of initial prototype that goes out first of all. And the idea is that it will be- there will be opportunity for the users to give feedback on what they like and what they don’t like about the app. That will then allow us to kind of update and go through these iterations of improving the app for what people want. And then we’ll have a kind of a more final version launched next year. But again for people to kind of test out. So yes, they’re the kind of opportunities to get involved in trialling it and evaluating it. So all the opportunities about getting involved in that will come, like I say through that mailing list.**

P21: Yes. No. That will be- You know I’ll definitely join that. Yes, that would be good.

**INT: Great. I shall send you the link now then and it’s been lovely to talk to you.**

P21: Yes. Yes. Likewise actually. It’s been nice. You don’t always- You do things you don’t always think through why you do those things. So it’s quite nice to reflect a bit on it all.

**INT: Good.**

P21: So yes. No that was enjoyable.

**INT: And fingers crossed for some warmer weather.**

P21: That’s right. Yes.

**INT: [Laughs]**

P21: I want to get out and get started this- we haven’t really properly got started. So it will be good to do that.

**INT: And good luck with managing the two transects.**

P21: Yes. It will be interesting, I think. Exciting.

**INT: Yes. I hope it all goes well.**

P21: Brilliant. Thank you and good luck with the study. I hope it all goes well and you get to talk to various people and get what- get the information you need anyway.

**INT: Thank you very much.**

P21: Yes. Have you got a lot- Are you talking to lots of people all over the country? Sort of in similar-

**INT: Just [COUNTY] and [CITY]. But [CITY]’s been quite interesting there’s so many different branches that actually cover [CITY]. So there’s been [COUNTY], [COUNTY], [COUNTY], [COUNTY] all kind of cover that [CITY] area. So I have spoken to some people that are more- Because [CITY] was kind of selected as an urban area to compare with [COUNTY] as an urban area- as a rural area. But actually some of the people in that kind of [CITY] group have been quite rural because they’re out in [COUNTY] or [COUNTY], but- Some have been quite you know, in the- at least the kind of outer [CITY] areas. So yes. It’s been interesting to hear about kind of actually differences in challenges between [CITY] and [COUNTY] actually. Its- You know with so rural-**

P21: Especially with such huge counties.

**INT: -that you know the challenges up here are kind of persuading people to [laughs] go do this.**

P21: Yes [laughs].

**INT: You know it’s not just like the hour drive to get somewhere. It’s then the hour walk to get to the top of the-**

P21: Yes. Well that’s right. Yes, I know I shouldn’t really be complaining about that my half hour drive [laughs]. Because it’s like some people will go and yes, they’ve then got time to go a lot further you know and I- but I know some areas of Scotland and Cumbria where you know, to get good transects, it’s quite a commitment to get to them isn’t it really? [Laughs]

**INT: And- and like I said before like, meeting the weather criteria [laughs]. Up here is a rarer event. And I think people have- Because people have a bit of a longer journey, I guess. And the weather is probably a bit more localised up here. Then you can kind of look out your window and its nice weather where you are. And then by the time you’ve actually got to your transect it’s pouring with rain [laughs].**

P21: Yes. Absolutely. When I- I have been known to go out sometimes and then it starts raining so you have to stop and wait until the sun comes out [laughs] again you know. Standing in rain and you know just wait for the weather to clear up [laughs].

**INT: It’s all worth it though.**

P21: It is absolutely worth it. Yes. No I- It was one of the things over lockdown last year. It was just fantastic really [unclear 0:46:01.9]. It was one of the things you could just go out and do. And I would be looking forward to that all [unclear 0:46:06.5] sort of. It’s a reason to get out into nature and get some exercise you know. Look around you. It makes you look around you really, which you know even when you go out for walks you don’t always do that, do you? So it’s sort of just gives you that you know, an extra impetus really.

**INT: Yes. Having that- Even the kind of basic knowledge of, like mine, of like natural history. It, like you say, it gives you something extra whenever you go out. You- Or even just looking out the window. It gives you something extra, doesn’t it?**

P21: Yes. Yes, it absolutely does. Yes. We’ve got wildlife cameras in the garden now. So we see what comes at night you know. And it’s [laughs]- it’s quite fun really.

**INT: Do you get much?**

P21: We do, yes. We get foxes and hedgehogs. And occasionally we get a badger visiting which is very exciting.

**INT: Really?**

P21: Because we- we’re quite suburban. We’re not in the middle of nowhere. But obviously there are- must be badger sets around because these badgers come occasionally. So it’s quite fun.

**INT: Did you know that they came before you had the camera?**

P21: No. Not at all. No. The first time were like, wow! This is just amazing you know.

**INT: It is amazing.**

P21: We- We’d seen hedgehogs before but not for a while. Foxes we knew you know, because they’re always around and about. But the- Yes, the badger was very exciting to [unclear 0:47:25.8].

**INT: [Laughs] I might get one of those my sister because she’s in [CITY] and they’re in [BOROUGH]. And they often like send photos of like a fox on their you know- on the garden fence or something like that. But yes, I wonder what they get that they don’t know about.**

P21: That’s right. You just don’t know. I would never- I would have never in a million years have said, we’ve got badgers. You know I would have thought we were too- too suburban and not you know, not got the space or the you know, countryside but- Yes. So they- you can get them at quite reasonable prices and they are very good you know. It’s very exciting to see what we- we get.

**INT: That’s given me an idea for my nephew’s birthday present [laughs]. Because he loves the wildlife, so-**

P21: Absolutely. Yes. Because I- we put a few pictures on our- we’ve got a neighbourhood watch WhatsApp group now, again with Covid and everything. And I put some pictures on there and all the- the local- neighbours were excited to find out as well. And they were saying, oh we’ll get the kids involved and everything [laughs]. Anything that gets everyone else involved and interested in nature as well really helps.

**INT: Lovely. Well lovely to talk to you.**

P21: Yes. Lovely to talk to you as well, and-

**INT: Yes, and I’ll send you that link.**

P21: [Unclear 0:48:49.0] That’ll be great. Excellent.

**INT: Okay. Thank you for your time.**

P21: Okay. Thanks a lot. No problem. Good to meet you.

**INT: Bye.**

P21: Bye.

**Audio ends: [0:48:59.0]**