**CONFIDENTIAL**

Date Transcribed: 23rd May 2021

Interviewer(s):

Respondent(s):

**INT: Okay so the first question is how long-**

P08: -hang on I’ve got to continue. I’ve got to give you permission to go.

**INT: Okay, you’ve got to give me permission, I didn’t realise you had to do that.**

P08: Well it won’t let me do that. Yes, it has.

**INT: So, yes. So how long have you been recording, how did you start, how did you go from kind of a general interest in natural history to actually making records and species?**

P08: You’d have to read the book.

**INT: Yes.**

P08: -but it says in the book, I started in 1960s when I collected on PG tips cards from my mother’s tea packets. We went through a packet of tea, we were poor, but we drank lots of tea. And I collected 50 butterflies on cards over a year, one a week, and these were the butterflies of Britain and it gave me an interest. And after I got that I started looking around my locality, which was [Village] in [COUNTY] where I was born. And I’d learnt myself by just going and observing and looking in the right sort of places. In those days it was rare to see a comma because they hadn’t changed their food plant really from the hop into the, to match the nettles. But we saw commas and that was just a [s/l realist 00:01:27] thing to look at. And of course, walls were very very common in those days if you walk around your east, sorry in your Whitsun holidays and you go, it’s a wall don’t want to see that let’s go down the woods, [NATURE RESERVE] and let’s find a few speckled woods which were scarce.

And so, things would change and so that interest there and then of course I went through- The interest was gained there, and it wasn’t till 70s after I had gone to college and university and schooling and I was starting to be a young adult that there was a lecture by [wildlife charity] and I went to [TOWN] and there was a guy who put a slideshow up. And that was fine that rekindled my interest and I was living in the south then, hadn’t moved to [COUNTY] and then of course I got married, had children. That took a huge sort of [UNCLEAR] out of my life because when you’re moving up and down your kids to [CITY] and then from the south, you know because [CITY] as you know empties everybody out every term, or it did in those days. So, I’d had to go up three times a year to bring her back and forwards for home so that was quite interesting. And then eventually when she went off herself to university, I was able to- And I’d moved back down south in the early 90 in the late 1980s, late 1980s into the early 1990s I began to start recording and I was living in [Town] at that time. The locality of [Name] when I started doing some work with [NAME] who’s a long [s/l hailed 00:03:01] friend of mine and we a- I would do the north [Town] and he would do the south. So, he’d be recording at [NATURE RESERVE] and [Town] and I’d be recording at [Park] and [Nature reserve] and places on the edge of [Name]. And we put together, it was just a little [s/l branch 00:03:16], befriends the local [county] branch of BC. And that’s when I started, and then as I got more and more time in my life as the children grew up, I then started recording properly on, [Park] was my main site then.

**INT: As in doing a transect?**

P08: Yes, doing a transect. It started, it was just as a random survey going five or six times a year at the peak, you know May, June, August, September. Just to catch the species when they flew, that was the early 1990s but then into the mid-1990s I was starting to do, create proper records of visiting the site 20-26 times a year, between 20 and 26. And I got a greater knowledge of the site over the next 20 years and I saw quite-

**INT: So was it really-**

P08: - I saw the decline of the wall and the spread of the dark green fritillary, which are the two key things. And working with the [CONSERVATION ORGANISATION], very closely with the [CONSERVATION ORGANISATION] because it’s a marvellous site that’s got room for long sward. We did sward height measurements and things like that and we managed for the dukes, sorry not dukes, we managed for the dark greens, we managed for the chalk hill blues that live there, and the small blue. We scarified some areas for small blue because we found where the kidney vetch was and things like that. And we kept the sward higher for the dark greens where they tend to breed on the other side of the, the side, the place on the hillside that faces [VILLAGE], where the sun doesn’t desiccate the bar. And the other-

**INT: -so-**

P08: -place we cut to keep it short cause the chalk hill blue like, and the horseshoe vetch which the chalk hill blue feeds on likes a shorter sward, and [s/l corish you know 00:05:06]. So, kept mowing it and not putting the mowing’s back when you put the mowing’s onto a heap and dispose them that way. So, we were managing that site because I was local, I could record it and I recorded avidly through there until 1999-sorry till 2019, I couldn’t record there last year because I’m now living in, cause I- About 2004 my wife decided to leave me, probably because I was butterflying too much, or whatever. You know, you see the programs on the television, treasure, what do they call them, the people that go treasure hunting? It doesn’t matter you know what I mean.

**INT: I know what you mean, yes.**

P08: Yes, you turn, I don’t think I’m a geek, but I think sometimes you can do too much of these things. What they call it? Sorry [INT] I’ve had a senior moment. Anyway it’s a good program and it typifies all the sort of people that will go out birding, butterflying, treasure hunting.

**INT: The list makers?**

P08: Anyway, and that meant I met my new wife and I moved here to South East [county] where I took up another transect and I was running two transects at a time. I was going mad, I was, I’ve got a house in [Town], I’ve got a house here and I was still keeping the [Park] transect going until I was locked down last year. I didn’t do it last year, couldn’t do it, probably won’t be able to do it this year because I’m still locked down. And I took on [Nature reserve], which is a nice little south facing, its London clay overlying Beds Bagshot sands, and we’ve got 30, up to 30 species on there and I had up to 30 on [Park]. So, I really found my feet, I’ve got a lovely transitory site where I still get the wall, which is great, I get clouded yellows nearby because we’re on the coast. So, I actually had the cheek recently to within the last 10 years, to actually have a fieldtrip for clouded yellows. I was so reasonably sure that this is really-

**INT: -pretty confident.**

P08: -we’ve found them.

**INT: Excellent.**

P08: They were there.

**INT: So, is somebody going to take on the [Park] transect?**

P08: I’ve got to talk to the committee about that, I think they’d like to. I don’t, I can’t do it. At the moment I’ve got a few people doing, almost what we were doing back in the 1980s, doing 4 or 5 visits a year. But I’m getting old now I’m 67 you know, and it’s a long trek.

**INT: It’s a lot yes.**

P08: And I couldn’t do it last year because of the restrictions, it wasn’t right, I couldn’t just go. But I still, and of course I had to go round to [COUNTY[ from here because my mum was aged, she was failing, her health was failing. So, I was spent a lot of time over the last 10 years commuting between two places. I don’t need to do that, my mum unfortunately passed on but she had a good age. And so yes, I’m concentrating on my [county] and I’ve now got 10 years of records at [Nature reserve] and we’ve got 30 years records from [Park], so I hope somebody takes it on.

**INT: Yes, it would be a shame to lose that.**

P08: The [CONSERVATION ORGANISATION] has actually been cutting back on its staffing at [woodland] and do you know [Name]? Have you heard of [Name]?

**INT: Don’t think so.**

P08: Who was the chief warden there, they made him redundant in October. He was furloughed all during and actually made redundant, he now works for [wildlife charity] so he’s still got a job but that means there’s only sort of temporary wardens there. So, there’s a danger that the [Hills] sites may be, I won’t say be neglected because [CONSERVATION ORGANISATION] is a good employer, but the expertise has been lost by the shedding of the staff.

**INT: Yes, and also your expertise that you’ve built up over 30 years. You know cause that’s very valuable for them isn’t it, in terms of-**

P08: It’s in the book though.

**INT: In the book, they can read the book.**

P08: -it’s in the book. It’s got look sheets from [Name] l, trends over 20 years at the site. I got his permission and that’s the best year, got all the species and over the years, and the fall and the rise of the populations. The records are still there and I made sure that at least well you know if covid got me, I’ve got something there that people can still refer- Well no you don’t know what it’s like to be 60 in this blooming thing. You think- And I’m a bit poorly, you may not see on here but I’m a big guy. So, I’m male, I’m poorly and I’ve got an underlying health condition, I’ve got, I haven’t got a dicky heart but I’ve got one where I’ve got a bit of high blood pressure. So, if I go out there, I get it, I’ve had it, [INT]. And that really is a sobering thing and it stops you from doing these things.

**[00:10:30]**

**INT: Is that why you wrote the book then? Was that, well not-**

P08: Well it-

**INT: -was it your lockdown project?**

P08: Yes, it was. I got it; no I go it before lockdown but I wanted it to be like a legacy. I wanted, I’ve got so much data in there, so much information, I didn’t want it lost. Cause these things get, I find people, yes people, you can put it on the cloud. But I mean recently I give you an example, I had, my phone died and I couldn’t get all my pictures and stuff on my phone because it just wouldn’t live anymore. And it made me think well let’s put this down on a book, an old-fashioned thing and it’s there for posterity. There’s copies in the libraries you know on the National Library, in [county] libraries, [county] libraries. So, it’s there for people to have a look should they want to go and research it.

**INT: Yes, so do you ever do any other recordings that’s not on the transects? Do you go out to other sites and-?**

P08: Yes, for example so yesterday I was birdwatching on [Town]. We, we’re doing our ducks, every year we learn our ducks, [Name] and I. You, well you probably know, ducks are difficult.

**INT: Yes.**

P08: They’re all brown, the females are always brown, and the males have got- I mean you start learning, yes that’s a teal and it’s got a little lemon spot there. That’s a widgeon, yes got a white spot near its tail. And so, over the year, over the winter we go and learn our ducks down on the thing and we go to the other side of [Town] island where we get all our waders, we get oystercatchers and what are those other things? Lapwings and curlews and sanderlings, and all the things. You turn into a birder in these sorts of things, it stops you going mad in the lockdown. And so, I was down there yesterday, we would, we were counting our widgeon, there were three to 400 widgeons on the lake yesterday we were watching, and we were just enjoying the warm sunshine and keeping out of the way of many people as possible.

**INT: So were you-**

P08: -then in three weeks’ time I turn into a butterflyer again and I’ll leave the birds.

**INT: Do you record like do you submit your records of the birds or is it more just going for your own pleasures?**

P08: No that’s just my own pleasure but I do submit my butterflies. I mean for example yesterday at the West [Town] site which is the point I was trying to make, was that I saw a tortoiseshell, my first tortoiseshell of the year and my first peacock of the year. I hadn’t seen anything till yesterday.

**INT: I’m ahead of you then, up here in [COUNTY], about a week ahead of you.**

P08: Well you’re not cause there’s the daffodil thing.

**INT: What’s the daffodil thing?**

P08: Well obviously living at [Nature reserve] and [Town] and with [Name] at [CITY], I could tell when the daffodils come out, how the season was progressing up. And as a rule, the same, I mean different varieties of daffodils tend to, well you can get them in December in [Nature reserve] which is ridiculous. But it’s usually one week between here on the coast where were that one or two degrees warmer then perhaps in land in the [woodland], and then another week to [CITY].

**INT: Yes.**

P08: So, you can almost see the season moving up the year and you know my daffodils are going over here.

**INT: Really?**

P08: Yes.

**INT: Blimey, you’re well ahead of us then.**

P08: This is like the smell of the seasons, I’ve written about it of course, you can smell the spring. And when you’re really in tune with environment as I was in the 1990s and still am to some extent. You know you look for your first orange tip of the year you look. You do these things like oaks before ash in for a splash and stuff like that, and things your parents taught you. Its [Name], that’s [Name], its [Name] in the background there. Sorry [Name]’s my first wife and I’m going to be hit for that aren’t I? Ow she’s hitting me.

So, what I’m trying to say is you get a sense, a sense for the time, the passing of time you know, and you go through the year and you look forward to the first chalk hill blues and you hope they last into September. And you know the second generations of the brown arguses and the chalk, and of course the brown hairstreaks, one of the last to come out. I mean it all went to pot last year cause everything come out so early we were getting things that should be in July appearing in June. But-

**INT: -yes and then we had a horrible summer.**

P08: [unclear 00:14:53] and I think there are many people, many naturalist who do follow the cycles and things and [unclear 00:15:00] if you know if you spoke to [unclear 00:15:02] people like that. And what’s the other one? [Name]? [Name]? [Name] has a sense of that as well if you talk to her.

**INT: So, is that kind of a, or perhaps the other question is what sort of motivates you to record? What motivated you to start recording? And what motivates you -**

P08: -well I told you it’s the tea cards and things like that and then enjoying the country, I’m a country lad essentially. When I was a boy [Village] was quite rural, there were farms and I used to work on the farm and help with the harvest and- I mean images of things like bats over dung heaps. I mean can you picture this, in those days there was so many bats in the environment that if you, with, on the farm we used to pile the dung from the animals into heaps in the corners of the field and then use it on the fields later. But in the evening the bats would come and they would hoover off all the flies off the- And you would get a murmuration of bats in UK. Things like that have gone.

**INT: Yes.**

P08: And I, of course I was sad they’d gone, and that was one motivator. I wanted to document it so people remember these memories like this, of how things were, and to at least try and stem the tide of things being turned into urban sprawls. Keep those green corridors going, keep the species you can, not make it like an outdoor zoo. I’ve been and lived in South Africa for bits of my life when my former wife’s parents went down there. And there are parts of Africa now in South Africa, where they’ve got game reserves, they’re called game reserves, they’re not, they’re just big outdoor zoos. You really got to go to the Lowveld to look in places like Kruger and Umfolozi and Ithala and places like that to see still wild Africa in that country. Not totally wild Africa you know, where the animals are not sort of coming up to the tourist to be fed. I heard of one occasion in Kenya where the lions actually wait for the tourist buses to get fed now. But I’ve gone off on a tangent there but-

P08-2 -he does that a lot.

**INT: Okay, it’s all good.**

P08: Well how many of you- Have you been chased by rhinos? I’ve been foolish enough to be chased by rhinos three times.

P08-2 Don’t go off the point and stick to the ladies’ script.

P08: No, I’ve got to stick to the script, sorry [INT].

**INT: It’s okay. So is that part of why you submit records as well? Or why you record, is-**

P08: Yes cause its-

**INT: -cause you hope that some kind of environmental protection.**

P08: It’s what I’ve seen and the joys of the country and the sadness that it’s been diminished.

P08-2 But you want to see the patterns, don’t you?

P08: Yes, I talked to [INT] about the patterns of you know the circles of life.

P08-2 Yes, but you want to see what is, you know what is in danger, what is sort of thriving.

P08: Well that’s what it does. Yes, and I do record I mean I know a lot about the scarcer species, but I also like to see the general ones, and its sometimes useful to look at trends. Last year while in lockdown I was looking, at because I used the internet a lot more with my friends it was interesting to see where, how the small tortoiseshell was doing. Now the small tortoiseshell has got a parasitic wasp on it in the south and it’s depleting the population but when we go to our friends in Wales and the West Country, we see more small tortoiseshells, perhaps the wasp hasn’t reached that part of the country. Or it could be some other effect do you know [NAME]? No not [NAME], chairman of, what’s he called? Chairman of [area], it was on the television.

**INT: [Name], no?**

P08: No he’s not the chairman anymore but he’s the recorder. It was the, it’ll come to me, anyway he’s notice that small tortoiseshells are going into hibernation earlier than they used to be. When I was a kid, they used to get tortoiseshells right the way through until the end of September and then they went into hibernation. Now he’s noted the ones that are not, that are getting through are the ones that go into hibernation in July, really early. So you get a shorter flight season and what it is, the ones that its natural selection in action the- [Name] was his name.

**INT: Okay.**

P08: He was on the telly about this and he’s a good friend of mine and it was brilliant that it worked, the ones that survived and are not getting parasitised, are the ones that go into hibernation early. And so the species is changing to avoid its predator.

[00:20:03]

**INT: And then the predator will catch up that won’t it. It will-**

P08: And it can, it, in the north every, where the predator isn’t there you still, we went on holiday to Wales last year in, what was it August and the place was full of tortoiseshell.

**INT: Wow.**

P08: And then I’m watching round the country, there was this guy who he’s one of these groups, butterfly groups and he was asking people do they still see tortoiseshells. And you know there was this long list of people contributing from round the country and it was fascinating. There’s a complete difference in the South East corner of the country to Wales, Scotland and Northern England.

P08-2 And you saw one yesterday that’s the first butterfly you saw.

P08: That’s right I saw one yesterday in the south here. Which is good. One that survived.

**INT: One that survived, yes.**

P08: And that was my interest and why I still do it. And it gets me out of the house, and it keeps me fit and usually when you’re a butterfly person it’s a nice day. I mean I couldn’t be arsed to be a birder or a [unclear 00:21:11].

**INT: In the cold, early morning.**

P08: Its much nicer to wait till ten o’clock and then take a gentle toodle down to the site and wonder around and see what’s going and you see lots of other things. Now at [Nature reserve] I look forward to hearing the cuckoos, we’ve got nightingales down there as well which is- Never see the little peckers cause they’re brown and they disappear but they’re absolutely wonderful when you’re near them. And we got snakes down there as well, well we had snakes till.

P08-2 Adders.

P08: Adders yes, till they put a cycle, for the Olympics they put a mountain biking thing. It was great to see the Olympics down there, but it drove all the adders out cause of all of the machines. I don’t, we have never seen as many adders as we had before.

**INT: So do you ever record those sort of species that you see?**

P08: I have friends who do.

**INT: Okay.**

P08: And what we do is I just talk to those friends, we have the adder man, we have the snake man, we have the dragonfly man, and we have the what’s the other guy? The flower man, it’s some good flowers-

P08-2 [unclear 00:22:11]

P08: Yes, you know the and the shir-The bumble bee man we have shrill carder bee on [PARISH], which is a fabulous little thing. I can’t no longer hear it because it’s too shrill for my hearing and I’m old but well I’m told it’s a notable species, so were still keeping that going on. And there’s lots there, we got about 20-25 bumble bees of the 35-40 of them on [Nature reserve].

**INT: Wow and so if you see something like that or something unusual, you’ll tell the people that you know, an interesting-**

P08: Yes, I’m in touch with the bumble bee man and they works out. And you know if we saw something rare for the birds there the ornith-What is it the ornitho?

P08-2 Ornithology.

P08: Ornithology, their society [TOWN] who keep track for these things and it helps us to see there’s a hen harrier in the district well perhaps we might see one today.

**INT: Yes, so you-**

P08: -but my prime, my prime love is still the butterflies.

**INT: Butterflies.**

P08: And in three weeks’ time I’ll go butterfly mode, and off I’ll go.

**INT: Yes, your primary interest then for those or throughout the year, but those 26 weeks in particular is going to that site? You’re not-**

P08: -yes I do, I go to [Nature reserve] every week. I do pick the best day I know [Name] told me off about this many times and ‘you go on the same day’, I said well that’s just being scientifically boring, I want to see everything when I go the same day. Well I do go at the same time roughly each, when it’s a good enough day during the recording week and I use BMS for it and I will also record separately on a spreadsheet cause I’m a, I was an accountant when I was up in [unclear 00:24:43].

**INT: Okay.**

P08: Before and its very tedious being an accountant.

P08-2 Have you told her how long your transect is and how many sections?

P08: Well I don’t think she’s had the chance to ask me how long my transect is.

P08-2 No because you’ve been talking.

**INT: How long is your transect?**

P08: About 2 and a half kilometres, is that what you mean?

**INT: Yes.**

P08-2 And how you divide it up.

P08: And the one in [Park] is three and a half kilometres.

**INT: Right so you’ve reduced the length of it?**

P08: No its just I go where the species are and do a walk round. Anyway in [Nature reserve] I’ll go to the bit of the woodland which has got sucker elm but see the white-letter hairstreaks. Which are lovely there, which are one of the few places where they come down and nectar on bramble. The only other one I can bring to mind is [walking wooded area] [00:24:30 you would know] they come down there at the obelisk in [walking wooded area] and you can get a photograph. Unless you were [Name] and he’ll push you out the way to get the photograph.

P08-2 But you also go to [Town], but you don’t record on [Town].

P08: I don’t record on [Town], somebody else records on [Town] but [Town] the great stuff the clouded yellows and walls. I mean you can go round there and go, ah that’s another wall remember. I was, the last time I used to say that I was 12.

**INT: So if you do go there and you see something you won’t record it at all you-**

P08: -yes I do, I do.

**INT: You don’t use the app or-**

P08: I record it on- No I use the website [LOCAL WILDLIFE GROUP] .

**INT: Okay.**

P08: They’ve got a lovely book your sighting, and of course I know the county recorder, if I see something special. I mean I did see an anomaly there recently, one year, a few years ago, it must have been blown over it was a dingy skipper, it doesn’t occur on there normally and it must have been across the [River] from [TOWN] or the [NATIONAL PARK] or something like that. It was a one of I’ve never, I’ve only seen one there and its never seen it since. I know what dingys look like cause I’ve got them on [Park] and its not a case of me being a mad person thinking something that it wasn’t, I knew what I saw. But it was an anomaly. It does happen, I well I mean I’ve got the memory of one really weird thing on, you don’t purple emperors on chalk downs do you. Well I was recording on [Park] in July 2014 or something like that flaming male purple emperor came down and landed at-my feet. He opened his wings and flashed his purpleness at me and I went, what’re you doing here, this is chalk downland. I’d got my phone out. I was fiddling my phone, because you know this the one that gets away, isn’t it?

**INT: Yes, of course.**

P08: And it went up. And then it came down and it- it was- was puddling on something near my feet. You know what they’re like. Their filthy little creatures, they go on- on the- there must have been some fox spray or something down there like that, in fact. But he came down and- and I still couldn’t get the camera going. And then he roared off and over the top of the trees and was gone. And I think he was a dispersal. Because the nearest was [WOOD]- is- the nearest Purple Emperor is [Town], [Village] or possibly [WOOD]. Which is a good 15, 20km. If they have a good year, Purple Emperors will disperse. But I was just in the right place at the right time, for a once in a life sighting on a Chalk Down. But normally, oh I’m getting too excited. [Name] says I’m getting too excited.

**INT: Okay.**

P08-2 Well he doesn’t draw a- Sorry. He doesn’t draw a breath. He needs to calm down sometimes.

P08: [Unclear 0:27:10.9] Exciting that I’ve got some poor person that’s willing to listen to me.

**INT: I am.**

P08: Carry on. So that’s my interest. And that’s why I’m still interested now. Because I have a passion for it.

**INT: So with those kind of ad hoc records, so the- not the ones that are away from your transect. Do you just record unusual things? You won’t necessarily go to a site-**

P08: No. I’ll put the boring stuff as well.

**INT: Okay.**

P08: You know. Boring stuff.

**INT: And is that just [Town] that you do that? Or is it- is it other places?**

P08: No. No, all the parts of [COUNTY] where I- where we go. We travel around and we do things. We really don’t just do butterflying. Well we used to. And we’re going to do again. We’ve been imprisoned in [district] for 12 odd months. And as [Name] said yesterday, I’m bored going to the same sites. Are you bored?

P08-2 Yes.

P08: Yes, she’s bored.

**INT: We’re all bored I think, aren’t we?**

P08-2 I felt- well I feel like I don’t want to see another pochard.

P08: [Unclear 0:28:04.8] People would die to see pochards, wouldn’t they?

P08-2 Nah. I love em really. But every day, it’s a pochard.

**INT: Yes. It’s a bit much, isn’t it?**

P08: You saw Pintails yesterday.

P08-2 Yes. That was the only thing that was different.

P08: [Unclear 0:28:20.0]

**INT: So is it about you kind of- when you’re kind of planning those trips. Is it you want to go a nice place?**

P08: Yes. We like- we’ll take a flask of coffee and a cake or something like that. We’ll eat in the car. We keep the windows shut because all the people, the dog walkers, can give you Covid. We’re para- I’m paranoid about getting Covid, [INT]. I really am. It’s- And then when it’s safe we’ll- we’ll nip out and do a quick bird spot and then we’ll sort of sneak back.

P08-2 We’ve got two places we go bird watching.

P08: Yes. [NATURE RESERVE]-

P08-2 One of them is from the car. And the other one is from a hide.

P08: Yes. So I do record when I see something. For example if we saw a Mediterranean Gull which does occur down here. Or a Cattle Egret as opposed to a Large Egret or something. We would record- I’d send a message to the [TOWN] Bird Club. But I wouldn’t send in records all the time. Because there’s lots of birders doing that anyway.

**INT: But with the butterflies, if you were going for a visit to a particular site then, you would make a list of everything that you see? And submit those records on the branch website?**

P08: Yes, I would. But I only record on BMS, UK BMS properly for my transect sites.

**INT: And so, would you be receptive to somebody saying, could you go and do like a full list of butterflies at a particular site? And would there be like a particular group or person that you would be receptive to hearing that from? And would there have to be a particular reason?**

**[0:30:01.4]**

P08: I do that for- for people. I do it as a one off thing. I’ve got one project at the moment with my cousin [Name], who lives not too far from you at- Where does she live? Oh, it just north of [Town], but it’s in [COUNTY]. And her parish council have got a bit of wild land and they think they’ve got some stuff on. And I promised that I’d go up there and do a survey for her. And I was gonna do the, two surveys, one in the summer and one in the spring, last year. But of course Covid stopped all that. So yes, I do it for people. And I did one for [TOWN] Borough Council, in one of the parks. When they were doing some work in the park and they wanted to know if it was valuable. So I do ecological assessments as the expert. And I did one in [Town] for the- the council because they were talking of developing the area around the football ground and around the junction station. And so being local there, I was able to tell them what I’d seen in the locality. So yes, I take each one on its merit. And if it can fit within my life, without too much interference I will travel and do ecological assessments. But it’s- it’s not something I do regularly.

**INT: No, it wouldn’t- you would want it to be like the main thing that you do in terms of your recording.**

P08: No. No my life’s full already. I mean [Name] wants to go restaurants. We want to go to the theatre again. We want to travel abroad again. I want to go to the Caribbean again [INT].

**INT: Yes. Maybe 2022.**

P08: We’re booked. We’re going in 2022.

**INT: Have you?**

P08-2 Don’t [unclear 0:31:41.2].

P08: Don’t tell [INT] we’re going to the Caribbean in 2022.

P08-2 [unclear 0:31:45.2] the point.

P08: I’m going to Mexico.

**INT: Are you?**

P08: I’m going to Jamaica. I’m going down the Panama Canal.

**INT: Oh, nice.**

P08: Just imagine what’s gonna be flapping down there.

**INT: Yes. That’ll be nice.**

P08: 2022.

P08-2 More- more importantly we’re going to Costa Rica which there’s more wildlife there than anywhere.

P08: That’s for me. [Unclear 0:32:06.8] this year. We’re going to Wales.

**INT: [Laughs] [Town] Island.**

P08: [Unclear 0:32:11.6] careful.

P08-2 Yes. Yes, we might go to [Town] Island too.

P08: No we’ve- [Name] is Welsh so we have to go to Wales and get wet.

**INT: Ah, okay. Nice.**

P08-2 We are very lucky in here in the south east. This little corner is such a like micro climate down here. We do have exceedingly good weather. Most of the time. So going back to your butterflies, the Wall and that has [unclear 0:32:37.1]. Is it three broods?

P08: It’s three brooded here. The Wall is three brooded where- which may be why it’s extinct, becoming scarce in the- in the centre of Britain because it’s still two brooded. So it’s got to- got to become three brooded to survive. So the Wall will come back to central England again. This is very similar to what the- your Brown Argus’ were doing. The three brooded Wall which you also get on the continental Europe. In Greece, they’re three brooded. And other such places in Italy, will come as global warming takes and they’ll move back up again and- and complete three lifecycles in the summer. They can complete the three lifecycles in [Town].

**INT: Yes. And in other parts they’re trying but their failing. And so they’re-**

RES: We get [unclear 0:33:19.2] Wall. That’s why you get extinctions. You get two and a half. And two and a half’s not good enough. You need to get three- three broods. Well we’ve got- we’ve got three down here. So I get Walls.

P08-2 We’re getting some European migrants aren’t we. We were getting those Long-tailed-

P08: We get- we get those Long-tailed Blues coming in to [county]. And I think a few Short-tailed Blues have been seen as well. And we get- we get Queen of Spain sometimes on the- on the [COUNTY] coast. From Belgium and north- the Queen of Spain is mainly a bit further south. I mean they’re quite common from about the [Loire 0:33:57.5] and into Brittany. But I don’t know whether they’d fly that far north unless they really had to. They’re lovely little butterflies. Nice square- square wings at the bottom. With lovely mirrors underneath which you- you’ve ever seen. Have you seen them? No? They flash as they fly. Because they’ve got slivers- big silver patches underneath. They’re really, really quite spectacular. They’re only as big as Peacock though.

**INT: Are they? You’re almost making me want to move down to [COUNTY] to have a bit more warm weather and variety.**

P08: Well you wanna go and live in France really. That’s what- I mean if I had a free choice and I wasn’t tied, I’d probably go-

P08-2 But you wouldn’t get the vaccination in France.

P08: No. I wouldn’t get vaccinated. They got it all wrong down there. But that’s that politics and you’ve gotta stay up on it.

**INT: Yes.**

P08: But South [Loire 0:34:46.8] is lovely. But the best place and I mean you will- we won’t be able to [unclear 0:34:53.7] book camera after this. The best place is Bulgaria and Romania. I mean I went there and I went on a walk with my friends down in the Pirin mountains and we started at the top at the ski lodge and we walked down. And I saw 30 types of Blue. 30 different Blues in 3km. Alpine Blue, Amanda’s Blue, Reverend’s Blue, Anomalous Blue’s, Green Underside Blues, Sliver-studded Blues, Adonis Blues. On one butterfly walk.

**INT: Yes. You just hope that they don’t make the same mistakes that we’ve made in terms of, losing it all.**

P08: Well they are. Yes. I’ve told people about that. They’ve- They were- There was a bit sign. This development of [unclear 0:35:41.5] has been sponsored by the EEC with EEC monies. And if they’re not careful they’ll lose all their wildlife. It’s wonderful at the moment. The people are still having a- a rustic sort of outlook to life and then they still have a feudal economy. I saw donkey carts and ass carts and oxen pulling. And a lot of stuff in the field was, they were managing their fields like we did in the 1950s. And everywhere you looked were butterflies and birds, bee eaters and storks and you’re going, wow. But of course they’re crushing bored, [INT]. And they want to be able to develop. And now their part of the EEC that money will come in and perhaps wildlife- and perhaps they will make the mistake that we’ve made. And remember it all started with DDT and spraying things out. And now today with that nicotinoids or whatever they are. I mean there’s all sorts of things-

P08-2 And H2.

P08: H2O?

P08-2 No, H2 the bloomin train. That’s destroying so many areas of wildlife. [Unclear]

P08: Yes. Well that’s a government infrastructure project and we’ve always had problems with government infrastructure, haven’t we?

**INT: Yes. They take priority over everything, don’t they? Nothing’s gonna stop them, when they’ve made up their mind, that that’s-**

P08: But all I’m saying is. If we can get the message out to these Europer’s and even get some money to them. To protect those areas. People like myself and naturalists will- will flock to their areas. It’s the same problem we had in South Africa.

P08-2 We want ecotourism.

P08: They didn’t- When the Rainbow Nation came, the power shifted to the Inkatha Freedom Party and the ANC. And that was great. And people were free and it became at meritocracy and it was a wonderful story. But they didn’t- They neglected the parks shall we say. The wild places. And they allowed people- I mean the rhino poaching. If you talked to [Name] about rhino poaching, even in South Africa now. They’ve got programs there now; they’ve cut all their horns off to save them. But what happened was they developed and they didn’t keep the parks. And the parks are what brought the tourists in. And of course the parks then went in decline and then the species disappeared and the people went to other places to see the big game. You can still see the big game there. And they’re trying to recover it now. But it’s- it’s very difficult when the politics gets in the way and they can’t see the bigger picture that actually rather than turn, you know turn the woodlands into agricultural land. Keep some of the wildlife because they will be big, you know hard currency money coming in from people who want to stay and see the rhinos and the elephants and the buffaloes and the leopards and the big five. Because it’s like if-

**INT: Yes. So then in terms of-**

P08: -if you remember the rand. If you look at the rand it’s got elephants on it. It’s got- Hasn’t it. It’s got the big five on their currency. Yet they’ve forgot about the animals themselves. Oh, calm down, calm down, gotta calm down. We better get back on track otherwise you won’t get any lunch.

**INT: Well in terms of your data then, is that like, have you seen it being used? Or do you hope that it’s used in terms of environmental protection?**

P08: No. I’ve- only the cases where I’ve been asked as a consultant. To feed into planning projects, I think. I’ve seen it used there.

P08-2 You do see it though. Because it goes onto the national data.

P08: Well it does. It goes into google-

P08-2 [Unclear 0:39:20.4] and then-

P08: -and things like that in [CITY].

P08-2 -and then that books produced with all the maps, with all the different things in.

P08: Yes. We do that. It is used there.

P08-2 It is used.

P08: But I don’t think the recorders, from my experience, data has been used as well as it could have been.

**INT: Right. And-**

P08: It’s just a personal feel.

**INT: Yes. And so are there ways in which you can- kind of think it should have been used differently, or? Or is there different data, or additional data that would be needed to kind of strengthen that decision making?**

**[0:39:58.3]**

P08: No, I think the data’s there. It’s just that it’s- now this politics remember, part of our conservation. It’s become- Since I joined when it was a group of local interest people who had the interest in their county. It’s become a big corporate entity. Now I used to work or a corporation. I used to work for a big oil company. And I- I’ve seen parallels with- with charities where they’ve started to behave more like corporates and conservation charities. And this is because they want to grow their membership. And of course as you grow the membership you dilute the proportion of people who are actually really active and can have the knowledge. Because there are many, many people now on the BC database, members, who just want to pay their money and just, and they don’t want to get actively involved. So it’s something that you can’t really change if- if you find that the people that are managing the company, it’s like a public limited company, have- looking in a different direction. Because they are looking about growing and on the back of the growth, trying to do more work for themselves. But in the- in that sense they dilute the original idea of the- of the society. And this causes a conflict within [wildlife charity] between the branches and head office. And head office has become more and more, we’ve become more and more centralised. For example, we don’t have autonomy of our money and how we spend our money in the branches anymore. It’s all central control. But this might be a good thing. But it, it’s just a different way of doing things and so I think you will lose the passion of the people at the coal face by becoming bigger and more corporate. Just a view.

**INT: Yes. And so do you think they could more with the data that are collected then? In terms of-**

P08: I think there are people there like [Name], who still do a really good job on the data. And [Name] and people like that, who are really you know quite good. But no, I think they could do more with the politicians. I think politicians have had their own agendas. And very few of them- I’ve met several as part- through my working with [wildlife charity] over the years. And they’re not there long enough, and of course politicians nowadays, and I’m gonna try not to be [unclear 0:42:43.6] about this. There are more career politicians these days than people who have gone into politics for the passion of looking after the people, and caring about the environment. And it’s become a career. Like, oh I’ve studied accountancy, oh I’m gonna study politics. And so I remember we went to- to [wildlife charity] headquarters and in those days. [Name], remember him? [UNCLEAR] man. He was down there. He was at the time a junior minister in the environment team. And he had lots of passion from it and we thought he was gonna do great things with education and things and he’d- not saying he doesn’t care. But using him as an example. He’s gone off and done other things now. And we sort of-

P08-2 I just wanna feather their own nests, basically.

P08: Some of them do.

P08-2 They just want to build their own careers and they’re not [unclear 0:43:37.3].

P08: And sometimes they pick the wrong patrons I think as well. I mean they’re- some of our trustees are people that may never have actually fundraised. Or never seen a butterfly in their life and things like that. So yes, I think they could use the information more. If they had more people who, like you, knew what the subject was and how it could be applied. But I have very little influence now. I’ve been- I’ve been marginalised over the years for saying these things to people. And there’s a clique down there that control it. And I’m not bitter. It’s just the way it is. If you’re- if you’re north of the [River], shall we say. If you’re a chairman or a group of- a person in [wildlife charity] that lives north of the [River], you’re second rate.

**INT: Yes. Like you say you’ll lose the enthusiasm people have for going out and doing the recording and-**

P08: That’s only just speaking about [wildlife charity] . There’s still a lot of very, very good people in there. And there’s still people who work. It’s just- it’s just different. Things are different now than they were last century. It’s no longer a few blokes how have a hobby and they go down the pub and they have a- Detectorists, that was that program that I was trying to think of. Where you go the pub, you have a drink, you have your little hobby and your wife goes, oh you and your hobbies. That’s gone. Those days are gone. But it’s a shame because we had our fingers on the pulse and I think the disconnect now between the people at the coal face and the people at the centre. Don’t get me wrong I’ve known the chairman of the society, what’s her name? Oh, me brains gone today. But she’s- I’ve known her for years. She was in the office and now she’s got right to the top, the chief executive. And she- While she’s still there, there’s still a hope. Alright. Next question.

**INT: I’m just thinking. I think we might have covered everything.**

P08: Well good. I haven’t bored you too much.

**INT: So I guess the other thing on that sort of line is, is there any feedback that you would like to receive about the data that you submit that you don’t get? So you know it kind of goes into the national databases and it gets-**

P08: What the data- this data we’ve been talking about today?

**INT: Yes. The data that you- I guess more the kind of ad hoc side of things. But also your transect data as well. Like do you feel like you get feedback on what that data’s used for?**

P08: No I don’t. UK BMS is a terrible thing to put data on. When we used transect walker which was a nice bit of software. Well I think it was [s/l Mr [Name] 0:46:31.8] [s/l [Name] 0:46:32.1] guy. I could look at my trends. I could manipulate the data. I could look at species against species. I could do all sorts of things. It was designed- it was designed for people and butterfly people at that. It’s like in the accountancy world, where you know, there’s all sorts of programs you can run to run your accounts and things like that. And then suddenly the big corporate comes along and says, well we’re gonna use Sage. Because it’s wonderful in America. But American say Sage sucks. I didn’t say that. I’m quoting from people there. Because you get one big software program that fits all. And it doesn’t always fit all because you try to bolt on bits and pieces of software. But the more bits of addons of software, it’s the more the things gonna tip over and fail. Until you have to re-write the whole thing again. And that’s- that’s really sort of happened with UK BMS. It’s nice. It goes in. But I don’t see any- the only records I have, that I know I can look back are my own. Because it- it sort of snaffles all your data and then it, it’s sort of wiped again and then you’ve got this year. And it’s so difficult to extract. And so it’s demotivating in a way. I can’t compare my transect with the one next door. So if anything comes out of this, I’d want something in the systems where the users can see what’s- Perhaps this is a good- good for the project. You can see what’s flying in other areas, rather than going on- on a different vehicle like the internet and talking to other people. So we could see trends and map them all together. You know, it doesn’t do that. It’s almost like every- every recorder is a discrete unit for- for the data and I- you know I can know what is recorded down on the other ends of the Downs or even up in the woods.

P08-2 That’s fair.

P08: What?

P08-2 That’s fair that you don’t know what’s, bits people are doing.

P08: I do know at the end of the year because good people like [Name]. If you’ve read- Have you read [Name]’s book about the butterflies of [COUNTY]?

**INT: No.**

P08: He publishes it every year. And he does statistical trends and things. And he- Yes, It’s a bit insular. But he’s got every site that he’s got recorders on in [COUNTY] and he correlates the information together and produces a lovely booklet once a year. And you can see the trends across all the county and then, from the different records. I don’t get anything like that from- It’s not because they don’t want to. It’s because [Name] has that expertise do that. He’s the only one. There’s nobody in [COUNTY] and[COUNTY] or even [COUNTY] and [COUNTY] that could do this. So it’s patchy. So if head office could do something where we can look at the- look at the data nationally. And not only see our sites, but just see trends within those. It would, it would be nice. And it would be an extremely powerful tool as well. Because you- you could then kind of have- could look at national trends and see like, like well the example I gave you of the Tortoise Shell. Observing it in real time. Seeing how it was disappearing in the south east last summer, but still thriving in the north and the west. That was so powerful. It was so exciting. We were- we were actually watching the season progress as it was going along. And if that could be captured in a computer. That would be brilliant. And if we could do it for all species.

**[0:50:00.5]**

**INT: Yes. And would you be interested in that from the, like the non transect data as well? Would that be of interest if you could see in real time?**

P08: [REDACTED]

**INT: Well I guess that’s the question- so question for you is. Are there things that you wouldn’t want your data to be used for? Are there things that you know, you would be particularly keen for it to be used for and some things that you would, kind of say?**

P08: Well. The problem there is- Let’s take the large Tortoise Shell. You may or may not know there’s a small colony in [ISLAND] in [COUNTY], isn’t there? Hmm-hmm?

**INT: Okay. I didn’t know that.**

P08: Now, what happened was, somebody let something out of a matchbox two or three years ago and this got a few [unclear 0:53:46.8] suckers down there. And it’s established itself on the [ISLAND] is it? Some place like that?

P08-2 Yes.

P08: [ISLAND], [ISLAND]. And it went up and it went and buzzed round some. And they’ve got twitchers there. And the people down there got a bid fed up with the twitchers. So there may be some data. Now that was one where I was know it was a release that- that’s taken and has- and has- the population somehow has stabilised and it’s been there for three or four years. But it may, as it’s only a tiny population. It won’t have biological certainty will it. Because the gene pool would deplete over time and it will disappear or something like that. But for the moment it causes a lot of excitement as people go down there. Because they’ve also got Long-tailed Blues nearby as well. Along the south coast in [CITY] or [TOWN] or somewhere like that. And near [TOWN] or somewhere like that. On the [NATIONAL PARK]. So you know, you get twitchers from the north coming down to see these- these things. Now there are some species you want to protect. Some are really, really rare, for example do we really want to put Duke of Burgundy on- on a live database? Because you- you end up with collectors and things like that going and taking them. So we’ve always been careful about some species, putting them on websites, the rare. But for the general population I think it’s great. It’s good to know that a Painted Ladies are coming in and where they come in. It’s good to know where the Cloudy Yellows are. So that people can- can just do- I can do what’s called a pop up field trip. I do those now.

**INT: Hmm-hmm. That’s very good.**

P08: I- Well I’m talking about 2019, not 2020. You know, I invented the pop up field trip. Just put- I say, Clouded Yellows and Wall are flying in [unclear0:55:36.7] meet me at the gate in three days’ time. And it’s surprising. You get 20 people rock up.

**INT: Yes. But it’s something about having that real time data, isn’t it? That then you can-**

P08: Yes. Real field data allows you to do that sort of thing. So it’s- it’s good and it’s bad, you know. It’s good but if it exposes people- exposes the species that’s in threat you know, do we really want people to know that the Large Blue is spreading along the [REGION]. Geesh. Will the people come and collect it? There are still collectors about. And they know more about the species than we do, believe it or not. If you actually speak to a collector, and there are groups you can hack into. Not hack in, but.

P08-2 On the Dark butterfly.

P08: On the Dark butterfly. They know more about what’s flying where than we do. And then you get rogue people that breed things up and then let them go. I saw a [unclear 0:56:35.0] when I was working in the city of London. Which is the- which is a wonderful grey and bright orange butterfly that lives in Miami. And it was flying around. I used to work in- in [BOROUGH], because [COMPANY] have an office in [BOROUGH]. And when I went- we went across to a place called [NEIGHBOURHOOD] which is roughly behind [TRAIN STATION]. It’s an open space, and they have little concerts and things like at lunch time. Where you can go and get a bit of culture. And there I was sort of listening to, I don’t know some music or something there, and a blooming great orange thing flew through. And I said I don’t know what that is. And it sort of like [unclear]. And it was distinctive. It’s completely orange with a couple of little- and it’s got different wing shapes because it’s more like a heliconius than a- anything you get in Britain. And I put it out and it- I think it was released at a wedding or something like that. Because that- that can happen and you need to know-

P08-2 Escape from-

P08: Or escape from a butterfly house or something like that. But it was a surprise to see it in the [CITY].

**INT: Yes [laughs]. Oh dear. Right I think I have-**

P08: You got enough?

**INT: I think I’ve got- I’ve asked all of my questions or we’ve covered everything anyway. So yes.**

P08: Alight. I let you say bye-bye to [Name].

P08-2 [Laughs]

P08: Long suffering [Name].

**INT: [Laughs] Enjoy your [unclear].**

P08: She’s getting good at her ducks and she’s good at her butterflies now. Since she married me. She can actually- yes, I think you could do butterflying now.

P08-2 Yes.

P08: You see. Is that what happens when you get married [INT]? Do you impose your hobbies on to people? Does it make it bad?

**INT: Well mine haven’t rubbed off on my husband at all. He’s still, likes sees a Peacock and says, what’s that [laughs].**

P08: Oh no, [Name]’s good now. She spotted the Tortoise Shell before I did yesterday.

P08-2 And the Peacock.

**INT: Very good.**

P08: And the Peacock, yes. I hope that’s useful.

**INT: Very useful. Thank you so much. Thank you for your time.**

P08: Drop me your address if you want a copy of my book and I’ll send it to you free.

**INT: Thank you.**

P08: Drop me address on my email.

**INT: Thank you.**

P08: Drop me- drop me your address on your email and I’ll post it off to you.

**INT: Thank you so much. And thank you for your time. And yes, if you’re happy we’ll keep-**

P08: And it may even be useful as a reference document for what we said today.

**INT: It will. Yes, it will, I’m sure. And if you’re happy to keep- us to keep your contact details and we can keep you up to date with next stages of the project-**

P08: Yes please.

**INT: -as well.**

P08: As long as I haven’t bored you to death.

**INT: No. Not at all. Not at all. Very useful.**

P08: Would you say that loudly so [Name][unclear 0:59:11.3]. You’ve been okay.

**INT: Not at all. Not at all [laughs].**

P08-2 [Unclear 0:59:16.4]

P08: Okay. Thank you very much then.

**INT: Thank you. Take care.**

P08-2 Bye.

**INT: Bye.**

P08: Phew. Supposed to pull a cord now, aren’t you?

P08-2 [Unclear 0:59:26.0] red button.

**Audio Ends: [0:59:27.3]**