

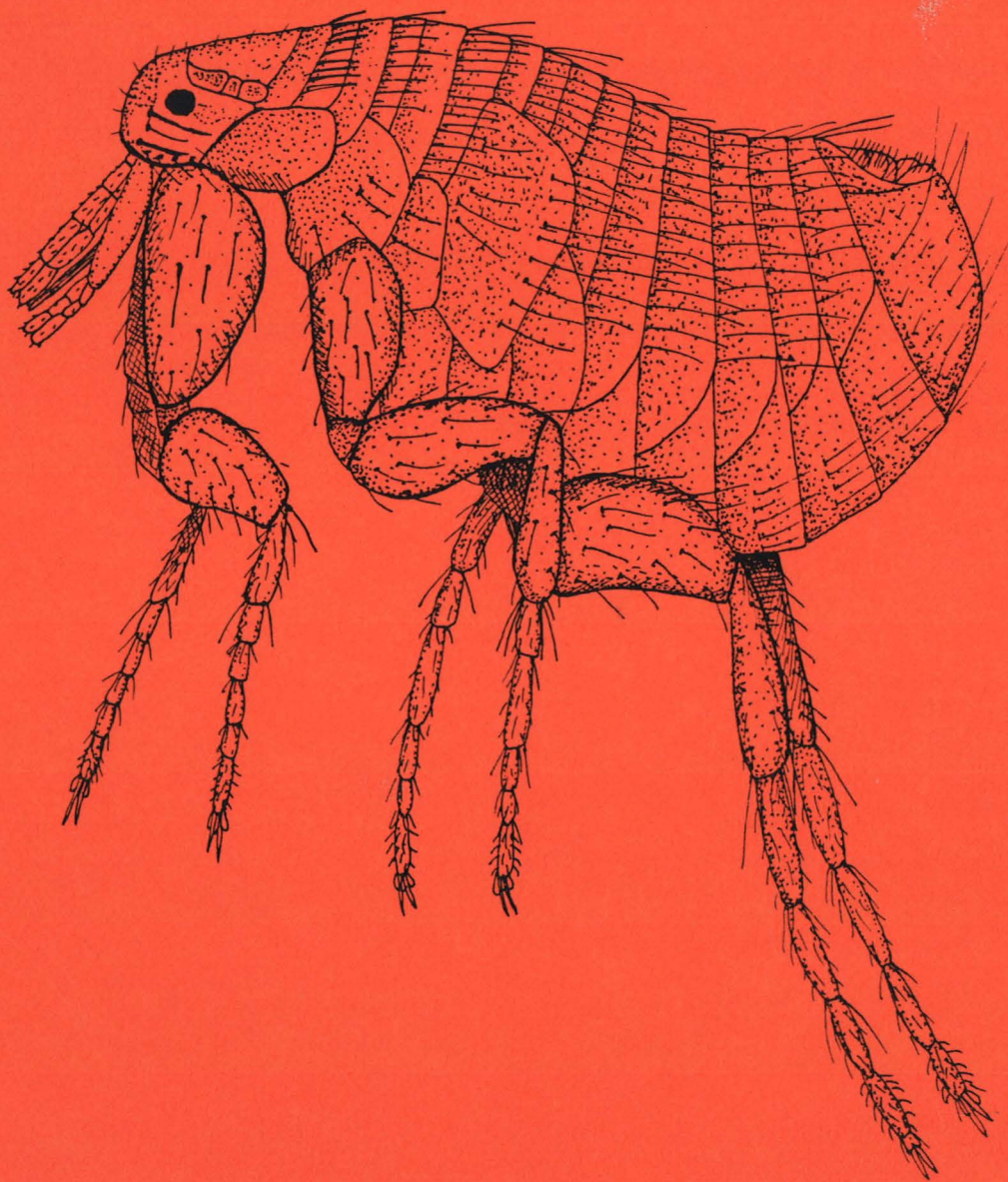
# NEWSLETTER



Volume 3 Part 5

1983

Biology Curators' Group





## Editorial

Your Editor and his Assistant have now survived one year and are still going strong! This issue contains several interesting articles, mostly of spontaneous origin with a particularly impressive contribution from Bill Ely which we think will be of value to many members; lets hope that others take up his suggestions.

The shorter articles are particularly pleasing to receive. We have a 'hit list' of ideas and people to obtain larger articles which works well, but the smaller articles are vital for a varied Newsletter. May we remind you that this publication is still a 'newsletter' rather than a learned 'journal', so let's hear some news from your part of the world! Even a few paragraphs or a letter would please us.

The controversial statements in our last editorial had an astounding response of..... zero ! Do you really all agree with us ? No views on bird's egg displays were forthcoming, despite the fact that many museums have removed them from public galleries after repeated thefts. Someone somewhere must have an egg display which they feel is conservationally constructive, not destructive. Comments on bird's eggs for the next issue please !

As for the role of provincial museum collections and galleries; another zero response here too ! Many museums are restricting their displays to local wildlife only and some are sticking rigidly to the same policy for collections. Surely we should be giving the public a chance to see material from other parts of Britain and abroad. Our reference collections, of great value to researchers, are surely of little use to them if they hold only local material from a tiny area, and not a full reference series. Should everyone really have to travel to London to see a Platypus or to identify a fly ? Do you agree ? Well write and tell us ! Comments for the next issue please !

After a flying start "Notes for Diploma Students" has died the death. We desparately need one or two specialists to continue this series, which has been so well received in the past two issues. Also, lets hear from Diploma and Leicester students about your requirements (printable or otherwise) and we will try to find experts to help.

So there we are !

Plenty to get your teeth/mandibles/suckers into !

Belated Best Wishes for the New Year from the Editors.

Steve

&

Derek

Minutes of the Committee meeting of the Biology Curators Group held at the British Museum (Natural History) on Tuesday 30th November 1982.

Members present Eric Greenwood (chair), G. Stansfield, P. Lambley, R. Cleeveley, S. Garland, J. Mathias, C. Steele, P. Morgan (from item 4)

- 1 Apologies were received from H. Mendel, P. Davis and G. Hancock.
- 2 Welcome Charles Steele was welcomed to his first meeting as liaison officer with the Museums Association.
- 3 Minutes of the meeting held 10th August 1982 were approved and signed.
- 4 Matters arising
  - a) Tax allowance John Mathias reported that he was looking into this.
  - b) Conservation of natural history collections It was agreed to remind Mr. Howie that he had promised an article on this subject for the Newsletter.
  - c) Chester Museum Mr. Greenwood reported that the possibility of making a short term appointment to effect the dispersal of collections was under consideration.
  - d) Manual of curatorship Mr. Steele gave a short progress report on the Manual which was on target.
  - e) CoEnCo Mr. Stansfield reported that the subscription had not been paid because no decision had been received from the Museums Association on whether they would pay half the subscription. Mr. Steele agreed to pursue this. Mr. Stansfield also reported that at a meeting to take place on 16th December it was planned to dissolve the Wildlife Link Committee and to reform it as an independent, unincorporated association. This was a result of the severe financial problems of CoEnCo.
  - f) Wildlife and Countryside Act Seminar Report Mr. Stansfield reported that he was waiting for replies from Peter Morgan and Mike Hounsome. Some changes were needed in Mike Hounsome's paper because of the Modification Order made by the Secretary of State with respect to the import and export of endangered species and effective from 4th October 1982. It was agreed to publish the report of the Seminar together with the appendices as a separate BCG publication, as soon as possible. Pricing and marketing was left to G. Stansfield, John Mathias and Steve Garland.
  - g) H.M. Customs In the absence of Mike Hounsome there was nothing to report. It was agreed to ask Mike whether he would be able to provide the paper, and if not, to look for another contributor.

h) Burton on Trent Museum John Mathias reported that he had heard that The Staffordshire County Service had advised on the dispersal of collections which were being offered on a ten year loan. It was thought that problems could arise with material covered by the terms of a bequest. No mention had been made of the entomological collections. It was agreed that a letter should be sent to the Chief Executive of the Head of Leisure Services, expressing concern that the Museum was being wound up and the collections dispersed. Information should be sought on the plans for other collections and for the bird cases. The Group should offer advice.

i) Consultations with NERC No consultations had taken place since the Cardiff meeting.

5 Cardiff Conference Peter Morgan reported on progress with the Proceedings of the Conference. It was hoped that publication would be in the early New Year. He agreed to look into the possibilities of joint publication by the National Museum and the Group.

## 6 Future programme

a) AGM 1983 This had been arranged to take place at the Hancock Museum on 25th March. It was hoped that it might be possible to arrange overnight accommodation in the University. A programme would be included in the next Newsletter.

b) Harrison Museum The visit had now been confirmed for Saturday 25th June. Articles about the museum and the nature reserve would be appearing in the Newsletter together with the programme. Lunch would be available at the 'Riverhead' at £1.10 per head.

c) ICOM 1983 Plans were progressing for a tour for the Natural History Committee of ICOM members prior to the ICOM General Conference in London.

d) Museums Association Conference 1983 It was agreed to write to Dr. Isaac about the possibility of a meeting for BCG members on Monday 20th September in Swansea.

## 7 Museums Association matters

a) Working party on Natural Science Collection Resources It appeared that Janet Chamberlain would be giving up the chairmanship of the working party. A new chairman had not been appointed. Some money had been found but the results of other applications was not yet known. It was thought unlikely that an appointment could be made in January.

b) Natural Sciences Diploma Course A meeting between BCG, GCG and the Department of Museum Studies was to take place on January 7th in Leicester.

- c) National Heritage Bill A copy of the relevant parts of the Bill had been received from the Association. It was not thought that any action from BCG was needed.
- d) Registration of Museums It was noted that the Association would be circulating a paper on this subject.
- e) Countywide Consultative Committees Although some members had not seen this report it was not thought that the Group would wish to respond as a Group.

Officers' reports

- a) Editor Steve Garland announced that there was ample material for the next issue. Possible contributions from the BMNH were discussed.
  - b) Treasurer John Mathias reported that the deposit account stood at £675 and the current account at £329. There were 168 personal members, 48 institutional and 4 complementary.
  - c) Secretary The Secretary reported on routine correspondence. The Chairman reported that the UK Group of IIC would welcome articles on the conservation of natural history collections for their Newsletter.
- 8 Reg Harris bibliography It was agreed that this be passed to John Mathias in order to obtain a quote for typing and publishing. The possibility of financial help from an Area Museum Service or from IICUKG was discussed.
- 9 Next meeting was arranged for 22nd February in the British Museum (Natural History), subject to a room being available.

G. Stansfield  
1/12/1982

# Reports

## Secretary's Report

The two main events of the year have been the Wildlife and Countryside Act Seminar held in London in May and the Cardiff Conference which took place in July. The former was held in cooperation with the Museums Association and brief reports have been published in the Museums Bulletin and in the Newsletter. After some delays, it is hoped that the full report will be available within a matter of weeks. The report of the Cardiff Conference ( which the Secretary was unfortunately unable to attend) is promised early in 1983.

It was not possible to organise a meeting for members at the Museums Association Annual Conference at Nottingham this year but Eric Greenwood and Howard Brunton both presented papers on aspects of natural history collection management to the main conference.

An important development during the year has been the proposals to reintroduce a Natural Sciences Diploma Course. Two meetings have been held between members of the BCG and GCG and it is hoped to put forward firm proposals to the Museums Association shortly. It is recognised that there may be difficulties in making the courses compulsory and it is thought that courses should be made available to any natural history curators who wish to attend. It is proposed that the courses be held in Leicester with some field work and some visits to London and elsewhere.

The Group has commented through the Secretary on a number of developments which affect natural history museums and natural history collections including the dispersal of collections at Chester and Burton on Trent, and a number of official reports.

The Group has been pleased that the Museums Association has continued to provide a liaison officer at committee meetings and would like to place on record its thanks to Janet Chamberlain on her retirement from this position and welcome Charles Steel who has taken her place.

We would also like to thank the Museums Association and the British Museum (Natural History) for providing facilities for meetings.

Later in the year we hope to welcome some of the overseas natural history curators who will be attending the International Council of Museums Conference to be held in London. An excursion is being arranged for members of the ICOM Natural History Committee and it is hoped that some BCG members will be able to accompany them..

As I shall be retiring from the position of Secretary at the Annual General Meeting I would like to take this opportunity to thank members for their support during my period in office.

G.Stansfield  
Honorary Secretary

## Chairman's Report for 1982

In the report for 1981 (BCG Newsletter 3(2) 67-68 (1982)) I said that I thought that some members may feel that not much has happened and I feel that the same comments could be made again. However, your committee have long agendas and two meetings for members have been held. In addition, 3 issues of the BCG Newsletter have been published.

Early in the year a most successful meeting was held in conjunction with the AGM at Sheffield City Museum and I think all those who attended were impressed with the work carried out by the staff. In conjunction with the National Museum of Wales the BCG held in July a most important conference 'A National Plan for Systematic Collections'. As intended it brought together museum curators from a wide range of museums, as well as users of systematic collections. A few 'administrators' were also present but it was disappointing to find no representatives of the Office of Arts and Libraries, the Museums Association or the National Heritage Memorial Fund.

Nevertheless, the conference was a success with valuable contributions from abroad and the proceedings will be published in 1983. Already some informal comments have been made in the BCG Newsletter (vol. 3 pt. 4). I am also sure that the informal talks after dinner were as important as the formal sessions as it was in these that barriers, real or imaginary, began to fall apart.

For me I felt there were two important lessons to be learned. Firstly, I felt the conference demonstrated, as suspected, that many people from a wide range of organisations had similar interests in systematic collections and that they could all learn from each other. For example, I was enormously impressed by the work of the Commonwealth Agricultural Bureaux and the professionalism that was shown towards the curation of their collections. Secondly, it was important for organisations to define their roles. At present individual institutions do this independently but this is a waste of scarce resources. Duplication occurs and it seemed to me that increased collaboration between different kinds of institution could only be beneficial. From the point of view of local authority museums I felt that the conference made their staff look hard at what they were doing and indeed they were asked to define what they did best. Perhaps for smaller museums this conference with its emphasis on large scientifically important collections was depressing. However, this need not be so provided museums and the museums professions examine and define their roles and are prepared to collaborate closely with other organisations not calling themselves museums but which have deep interests in systematic collections. The importance of this kind of link cannot be over emphasised.



Clearly the BCG has continued its interest in the curation of natural history collections and it is hoped to reconvene the Cardiff conference in two or three years time when, perhaps, the results of the initiative taken by the Museums Association to appoint a researcher into natural history collections will be available.

As in previous years the work of the committee has been fully reported in the BCG Newsletter and a great deal of emphasis has been given to highlighting the problems facing collections. The heart of any museum is its collections but if natural history in museums is to develop we must demonstrate the value and use of the collections and other services offered by a museum to the public. This service aspect of a museum's work must not be undervalued and perhaps this leads back to the question of defining roles and demonstrating what each kind of museum can do best. Surely there is much to do with plenty of scope for future meetings of the Group and, of course, the committee will be pleased to consider any suggestions.

*R. F. Greenwood*

## Meetings

### Future Meetings

Harrison Zoological Museum and Reserve, Sevenoaks, Kent.  
Saturday, 25th June 1983.

Elsewhere in this Newsletter two articles describe the history and work of the Museum and Reserve established by the Harrison family. As it is rather unusual for important natural history museums to be administered privately the BCG was pleased to accept the invitation of Dr. David Harrison to visit the Museum and Reserve. However, numbers must be limited to 30 people and prior booking is essential.

### Programme

Meet Bowerwood House, St. Botolph's Road, Sevenoaks, Kent, at 9.45 a.m.  
Lunch at the Riverhead, Sevenoaks 12.30-2.00 p.m. @ £1.10 per person.  
Disperse 4.30 p.m.

The party will be split into two groups and each will visit the Museum and Reserve during the course of the day. The party will only be together as a single group for lunch.

### Booking

Please send £1.10 to Dr. P.E.J. Wheatcroft, Keeper of Natural History, Horniman Museum and Library, London Road, Forest Hill, London, SE23 3PQ not later than Monday, 20th June 1983. Cheques should be made out to the Biology Curators' Group.

Please indicate when booking if you are travelling by car as a few cars will be needed for transport.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE BIOLOGY CURATORS  
GROUP.

THE HANCOCK MUSEUM - NEWCASTLE UPON TYNE

25th MARCH 1983

PROGRAMME

- 10.30      Coffee
- 11.00      A history of the Hancock Museum: Peter Davis  
The Magic of Birds: Tony Tynan  
John Hancock - ornithologist and taxidermist:  
Eric Morton
- 1.00      Lunch
- 2.00      Annual General Meeting
- 3.00      Brief talks on changes behind the scenes (AMT)  
and Documentation (PSD)
- 3.30      Tours of collections/Demonstrations of SPIRES  
in action/Tour of galleries.
- 4.30      Disperse

ACCOMODATION-

For long-distance travellers 15 single rooms have been provisionally booked for the evening of 24th March at the University's Hotel, the Avon & Northumbria. Bookings will need to be confirmed with the Hotel by the 3rd March. The cost will be £14.40 for bed and breakfast. Contact Peter Davis at the Hancock Museum for further details.

0632 - 322359

Biology Curators Group

Notice of Annual General Meeting - 1983

The Annual General Meeting of the Biology Curators Group will be held at 2.00 pm on Friday 25th March at the Hancock Museum, Newcastle upon Tyne.

Agenda

- 1 Apologies
- 2 Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on April 2nd 1982 at Sheffield City Museum.
- 3 Secretary's report (to be circulated)
- 4 Treasurer's report (to be circulated)
- 5 Editor's report
- 6 Election of Officers and Committee
- 7 Date and Place of next meeting
- 8 Any other business ( any business under this heading should be notified in writing to the Honorary Secretary at least two weeks before the meeting)

Nominations are invited for Officers and members of committee

Present position :-

<u>Chairman</u>	Eric Greenwood	willing to stand for re-election
<u>Secretary</u>	Geoff Stansfield	not willing to stand for re-election
<u>Treasurer</u>	John Mathias	willing to stand for re-election
<u>Editor</u>	Steve Garland	willing to stand for re-election
<u>Committee</u>	Peter Davis	(coopted) willing to stand
	Peter Morgan	willing to stand
	Martin Brendell	willing to stand
	Kelvin Boot	not willing to stand
	Howard Mendel	willing to stand
	Mike Hounsome	willing to stand
	Peter Lambley	willing to stand
	Jim Bateman	(coopted) willing to stand
	Bari Logan	(coopted)

Note Nominations for officers or members of the committee should be sent to the Secretary with a signed statement indicating that the nominee is prepared to stand.

G. Stansfield  
Hon. Secretary  
c/o Department of Museum Studies  
105 Princess Road East  
Leicester LE1 7LG

### Guild of Taxidermists Conference 1983

This year's Guild of Taxidermists Conference to be held at Edinburgh (R. S. M. and University) in April, is likely to be the biggest so far, with a large contingent of eminent American practitioners attending. This demonstrates the very real progress made by the Guild in recent years in its work of stimulating dialogue between professionals in this country and abroad. The benefits of this are reflected in improved techniques, methods and materials and an enhanced professionalism, and some examples of work of the very highest quality will be on display during the Conference. Well worth going to see.

For Programme details contact - D Ferguson

Taxidermy Dept  
Art Gallery and Museum  
Kelvingrove  
Glasgow

## **Pestilential Enquiries**

In common with most museum entomologists, the identification of usually badly squashed or "sellotaped" psocopteran is a common request at Bolton. These queries originate both from the general public and via the Environmental Health's department Food Inspectors and Pest Control Officers.

The Institute of Environmental Health Officers have produced an information sheet jointly with the Pre-packed Flour Association and supplies of this sheet are available from the latter. Permission to reproduce it alongside has been given and it is possible that other museums may wish to use the information as a ready made answer to these enquiries. Apparently the notable increase in this pest problem in recent years has prompted research which has concluded in little or no blame being laid at the door of the food manufacturing industry.

On a similar theme, the magazine Environmental Health (November 1982, pp282-283) has an article on the "safe" insecticides based on pyrethroids. This contains basic information on modern products of use in insect control which may have some application for museums.

E. G. Hancock.

## PSOCIDS

Some people are finding to their dismay that their food cupboards and especially dry goods such as flour, milkpowder, sugar or semolina, have become infested with tiny grey insects. They naturally but wrongly assume that the products themselves are at fault. The purpose of this leaflet is to explain the presence of these insects, known as psocids and to tell you how to prevent them.

### WHAT ARE PSOCIDS ?

Psocids are common but harmless household pests, smaller than a pinhead (usually about 1 - 1.5mm long) that are attracted to dry powdery type foods. They do not like the light but prefer to live in dark, warm, humid places such as the folds of packaging in food cupboards. They can live for about six months and in that time a female will lay up to 200 eggs.

They are not caused by poor hygiene; they are just as common in scrupulously clean homes as they are in the not-so-clean.

At the same time, research has shown that the sorts of psocids (there are many different types) found in homes are never found where food is produced. So they are very unlikely to be brought into the home in foods.

### SO WHAT CAUSES THEM ?

That is the mystery. As yet nobody knows for certain but what is certain is that they are always associated with high humidity. It could be caused by new plaster drying out, it could be condensation from not having enough ventilation in the kitchen, it could be a leaky water pipe. There are many reasons but you can be sure that if you have psocids, you have humid conditions.

### HOW ARE THEY PREVENTED ?

Always keep your dry foodstuffs, cereals and the like, in a cool dry, well ventilated place. Clean out your cupboards regularly but if you use water, always make sure that they are completely dry before you put the food back. When you are cooking or boiling the kettle or even just using the washing machine or tumble drier, make sure that the kitchen is properly ventilated.

### HOW DO YOU GET RID OF THEM IF THEY APPEAR ?

Remove the affected food immediately and dispose of it outside. Check everything else in the cupboard. Food in cans and bottles will still be alright but make sure that there are not insects hiding under the labels. Treat the infested area with a good household insecticide which is suitable for use near food. Clean out all the dust crumbs etc. then make sure the cupboard is completely dry.

Having done that, find the cause of the humidity and cure it.

But remember, prevention is better than cure.

Always store dry foods in a cool dry place.

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An information leaflet published jointly by:-

Pre-Packed Flour Association, 6 Catherine St., London, WC2 5J.

The Institution of Environmental Health Officers,

Chadwick House, Rushworth Street, London, SE1 ORB.

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Hereford.

18th November, 1982

The Editor,  
Biology Curators' Group,  
Sheffield City Museum,  
Weston Park,  
Sheffield,  
S10 2TP

Dear Sir,

I was pleased to see that my enquiry as to the taxonomic validity of the human species raised at least one reply, albeit somewhat flippant, but none the less very readable. However, I intended my question - "what form does the type of Homo sapiens take, and where is it located?" - as a serious point. Mr Tynan correctly points out a mis-spelling - a fine example of how such errors arise. (I do not think it arose from my pen, but if it did, why did the Editor not correct it?).

In the mean time ladies and gentlemen I suggest you pursue the search for the ideal Lectotype and Lectoallotype - in the name of science of course (but it makes a good opening line!). Alas, count me out as I am happily married, though I have my nostalgic youth to fall back on - but enough smut.

To Mr Tynan I can only say that to the true Natural Historian Iconotypes are a poor substitute; though folks in other professions would no doubt disagree - Master Bakers for example.

Yours faithfully



Jonathan Cooter.

Ed. The fault was all mine. Since these early days the proof-reading has improved and I doubt if any similar errors will slip through in the future.

# Entomology - MOD

The Ministry of Defence owns about 600,000 acres of land on well over 200 different sites around the country. Much of this land remains undisturbed by people and is often in a semi-wild state, and thus is extremely rich in wildlife. A number of sites contain habitat types that are fast disappearing from the rest of the British countryside and most have rare or endangered species on them.

Over 170 of these sites now have 'Conservation Groups' on them, composed of a mixture of local naturalists, foresters, NCC representatives and service personnel who have an interest in preserving their local areas. The task of each Group is to (i) record all the wildlife, habitats and sites of historical and scientific interest and to monitor these records  
(ii) produce vegetation, archaeological and sensitivity maps to pinpoint the areas which need most protection  
(iii) prepare management proposals and implement those which are accepted.

With most plant and animal groups this is a reasonably simple brief, but the recording of invertebrates poses special problems. Firstly there is the difficulty of finding enough entomologists to work on the sites, and secondly there is the problem of getting specimens identified. Most entomologists have a good knowledge of one or two insect groups but are unable to identify any other specimens they may catch. It is in both these areas that I hope the local museums may be able to help. It would be very useful if entomologists working in museums could help to identify specimens and then to undertake the curation of any voucher specimens. This would I believe benefit both parties concerned - the museums would increase their collections (and their knowledge of the local fauna), and the Conservation Groups would be able to produce more data on the invertebrates and hence be in a better position to protect them.

If you would be interested in either collecting insects on MOD land, or in curating specimens, please write to Mr A M Walker

Entomology Unit  
Royal Army Medical College  
Millbank  
London SW1

## The Harrison Zoological Museum

The Harrison Zoological Museum at Sevenoaks, Kent, was founded by James Maurice Harrison. He was born in 1892 and devoted his life to medicine and ornithology. His interest in ornithology began in his youth at Hastings, where he came to know George Bristow, the taxidermist, whose good name he was to defend so valiantly many years later. He began to amass the remarkable collection of systematic bird skins, later augmented by the efforts of his elder son, Jeffery Graham Harrison.

Jeffery took on early his father's interest in ornithology and also became a family doctor. He was a most distinguished ornithologist, specialising in wildfowl and conservation.

Jeffery, born in 1922, died suddenly and prematurely in 1978, aged 56, only seven years after his father, who had died in his eightieth year in December, 1971.

The present Director of the Museum, David Lakin Harrison, is James' second son, likewise a family doctor and devoted, since his youth, to systematic mammalogy, specialising in Arabian mammals and also in small mammals generally such as bats and rodents.

In April 1971 the Museum became a Trust and following Certification of its collections as being of National and International Scientific and Historical Importance, it was accorded Charitable status. The collections are now estimated to contain at least 30,000 bird specimens and more than 12,000 mammals. It is certainly one of the largest collections of its kind in this country and the mammal collection is currently listed amongst the fifteen largest in Europe. Recently a palaeontological collection has been added to the Museums mammal department.

The mounted bird collection contains many unique treasures including an extinct Passenger Pigeon and also many of the historical Kent and Sussex rarities, which formed the subject of the "Bristow Affair". It includes probably one of the most comprehensive collections of wildfowl and waders.

The Libraries contain many important reference books including Linnaeus' *Systema Naturae* and most of the important regional works on mammals and birds, as well as a very large reprint collection.

The purpose of the Museum is twofold. Firstly research; providing a service to the international scientific community, who are welcome to study the collections in furtherance of their own researches. Secondly, it is concerned with education, both with the training and encouragement of young scientists similarly interested in systematic zoology and in the wider sense of providing information on Natural History to the general public.

Our Assistant Curator, Paul Bates, who originally came to us from Tonbridge School Natural History Society, is now



undertaking a PhD thesis on the Zoogeography of Arabian and African mammals in pursuit of his own special interest.

During his lifetime Dr. Jeffery Harrison established a Wildfowl Reserve at Sevenoaks, which is an S.S.S.I., the history of which is reviewed separately here. It is now planned by the Trustees of the Harrison Zoological Museum and the Trustees of the Jeffery Harrison Memorial Trust to construct a Museum building on the Reserve, to display the mounted bird collections of the Museum. This will allow a greater public access to the collections than is at present possible and will form a unique educational facility for visitors interested in the bird life of the Reserve. It will also provide more desperately needed space at Bowerwood House for the rapidly expanding scientific collection and libraries. These treasures of interest only to specialists are now planned to remain permanently at Bowerwood House, situated so conveniently near Sevenoaks Station and the Main London Road.

Both the Museum and the Reserve have been honoured by visits from H.R.H. The Duke of Edinburgh.

David Harrison acts as Consultant Mammalogist to the Oman Government and the Museum has been visited recently by H.H. Prince Faisal bin Ali al Said, Minister of Culture and National Heritage in Oman. The Museum has been much concerned in recent years in the conservation of Oman's larger mammals especially the unique Arabian Tahr. The Oman Flora and Fauna Survey Expeditions to the Jebel Akhdar and Dhofar, undertaken for the Oman Government are an important example of the part a Natural History Museum can play in the fields of conservation, education and research.

We have always had a long and friendly association with the British Museum (Natural History) which is reflected in our own Board of Trustees. This association is one with which we are both proud and grateful and much of our research work would have been impossible without it. Our Type specimens of mammals have all been presented to the National Collection.

David L. Harrison

# Sevenoaks Experimental Wildfowl Reserve

## History

The restoration of gravel pits for purposes of wildlife conservation is taken for granted nowadays, thanks largely to work done at Sevenoaks. Yet the Reserve began at a time when habitat creation, as opposed to simple protection, was rarely considered, and it was due to the foresight of Dr. Jeffery Harrison. In 1955 he approached the gravel company which were excavating wet pits at Bradbourne, Sevenoaks, and arranged management rights over the area which was to become the Sevenoaks Experimental Wildfowl Reserve.

The first few years were a period of basic research involving an analysis of the stomach contents of locally shot duck. This led to an extensive planting programme in and around the lakes, using those species which it had been determined were food for the local wildfowl - plants such as bur-reed, reed sweet-grass and pond sedge which also provided cover at the waters edge. A large number of trees were planted round the lakes, particularly alder, silver birch and willow; as well as providing shelter and attracting insects, seeds of alder and birch are a wildfowl food.

In addition to the planting programme, other management techniques were developed at the Reserve in order to improve the habitat for wildfowl. Where possible, straight banks were broken up by spits and bays to increase the shoreline. In the absence of many islands, artificial nesting rafts were built to provide safe breeding sites, whilst areas of "duckling survival habitat" were created where plentiful insect food and shelter were available for the young birds. Loafing spots were provided by sandbanks. The results of this work were such that the formerly bare gravel pits were converted into a series of attractive lakes which, in 1968, was designated a Site of Special Scientific Interest.

## The Wildfowl Population

The success of the management programme is shown by the wildfowl populations which have gradually increased over the life of the Reserve, whilst reaching a plateau in recent years. As expected, the mallard is the commonest duck with up to 85 pairs in the breeding season; a recent decrease in numbers is possibly due to the increasing attraction of other local areas such as new reservoirs. Gadwall have also nested on several occasions. Of the diving ducks, tufted duck are present in varying numbers throughout the year - they breed and also moult on the Reserve, as well as being winter visitors.

A wide variety of other ducks have been recorded, especially over the winter when there are always numbers of pochard, teal, wigeon, shoveler and shelduck. Hard weather brings in different species, particularly smew, goosander and goldeneye. Less regular visitors include garganey, pintail, scaup and red-breasted merganser.

Both greylag and Canada geese were introduced to the Reserve and both have bred successfully. The Canada gees reached a peak of around 400 birds, though recently they have moved away to colonise other lakes in the vicinity. The greylags have increased steadily from about 50 birds which were introduced to a maximum of nearly 500. Several other geese have been seen on the Reserve, including bean, pink-footed, whitefronted and a number of barnacle geese. White swans use the Reserve regularly and both whooper and Bewick's swans have been seen occasionally in winter.

## Waders and Other Water Birds

Several areas of the Reserve have been managed specifically with wading birds in mind. One, a low-lying field, partly flooded and with good

cover of rushes, was called the "snipe bog" as it attracted snipe and jack snipe in large numbers. This field was later excavated and most of the waders are now seen at a sand-bank on the main lake; this area has been divided into a series of shallow lagoons which can be flooded by means of a pump. As well as wintering snipe, this sand-bank attracts green sandpipers and lapwings throughout the year and, on migration, common and wood sandpipers, greenshank, redshank, dunlin and ringed plovers, as well as occasional less common species such as avocets. On the more bare gravel areas, little ringed plovers have bred regularly for several years, whilst areas of damp woodland attract woodcock.

Several pairs of great crested grebes nest on the Reserve every year, as do numerous coots, rather fewer moorhens and reed buntings and one or two pairs of kingfishers. Water rails and grey wagtails have also bred on occasions. Herons, which nest at a small wood to the west, regularly come to the Reserve to feed. Less frequent visitors have included bittern, bearded tit, spotted crake and the smaller grebes, whilst ospreys have been recorded regularly on migration, as have six species of terns.

#### Other Wildlife

The woodland areas of the Reserve have all the usual tits, warblers, thrushes and finches (including siskins in winter), as well as treecreepers and all three species of woodpecker. Recently, a rookery has developed in an area of alder woodland, whilst for about 20 years there has been a sand martin colony of varying size in the sand excavations. The kestrel is the only bird of prey seen regularly, with occasional hobbys and sparrowhawks, and both little and tawny owls have nested. Amongst the rarer visitors have been hoopoes, great grey shrikes, waxwings, black redstarts and a Dalmatian pelican.

As well as the bird life, other animals have taken advantage of the habitat creation work, including many small mammals which are preyed upon by foxes, stoats and, recently, mink. The Reserve supports a large variety of dragonflies, as well as other aquatic life and butterflies. There is a good population of grass snakes but surprisingly few amphibians.

Since restoration work began, many plants have colonised the area naturally, including a number showing attractive flowers, such as common spotted orchid, water speedwell and water forgetmenot, common centaury and scarlet pimpernel. A few species growing on the Reserve are quite uncommon in Kent, including a good colony of danewort.

#### The Future

Following the death of Jeffery Harrison in 1978, the Reserve is now leased from the owners, Redland Limited, and managed by The Jeffery Harrison Memorial Trust. The work which has gone on in the past continues, and the Reserve is constantly evolving. Several small new lakes which have been dug recently are being restored with trees and aquatic vegetation and one is being planted as a reed bed, whilst another area of sand flats is to be managed as wader habitat. Two hides are in use and a third is to be built, as is a visitor centre. Visits, by school groups or organised parties, are welcome, but must be by arrangement with the Warden; a small charge is made for each visitor. For further details, contact the Warden at "Tadorna", Sevenoaks Wildfowl Reserve Bradbourne Vale Road, Sevenoaks, Kent TN13 3DH (Tel: Sevenoaks (0732) 456407).

## Delusory Parasitosis

Museum enquiries can be very varied, ranging from a piece of rock brought back from a holiday in Spain, to a weed found in a garden or insects from a food cupboard. Some enquirers bring in insects and other organisms which they suspect of being a nuisance or by which they have been bitten or injured in some way. During the past five years I have handled at least three unusual cases involving such problems. The use of the wording "at least" is significant because it is only fairly recently that I have clearly recognised the syndrome and it is likely that other cases have escaped my earlier attention.

Two of the cases involved previous contact with cat fleas. These can reach quite high numbers, several thousand around the house with perhaps a dozen or more feeding on the cat at one time. With certain people the unpleasant experience with fleas can later develop into a neurosis. In the two most recent cases this neurosis was spotted and became extremely acute but in the earlier case it went, until now, unrecognised. There has, by coincidence, recently been an article and a series of letters in Antenna (Bulletin of the Royal Entomological Society of London) on the neurosis: Delusory parasitosis (Mumford 1982; Smith 1982a, Mumford 1982, Laurence 1982, Smith 1982b). These recent published instances together with my experience of the problem prompted me to bring the matter to the attention of B.C.G. members who do not follow Antenna or may not be aware of the existence of the problem.

Smith (1973) mentions that certain individuals develop a mental condition following attacks by fleas which is termed "delusory parasitosis". This disorder is not uncommon and can be quite serious and is often not appreciated by the sufferer's doctor. Halucination of arthropod infestation has been reported by entomologists (Busvine 1966; Miller 1954; Pierce 1921; Pomerantz 1959; Smith 1934, 1973; Waldron 1962) and in the medical/entomological literature (Busch 1960; Mester 1975, Schrut and Waldron 1963). More recently a review of entomophobia was given by Mumford (1982).

Mumford lists eight generalised complaints associated with delusory parasitosis (from Schrut and Waldron 1963):

1. The "bugs" are black and white when first noted, but may change colour later.
2. The "bugs" often jump.
3. The "bugs" often infest patients' hair, and can be combed out for "collection".
4. "Bites" on the skin usually itch and cause scratching, sometimes to the point of tissue damage.
5. The "bugs" may come from common household products like toothpaste, petroleum jelly, or cosmetics.
6. The "infestation" can become such a problem that the patient has to move, but the "bugs" usually reappear in the

new dwelling as well.

7. The patient may be so positive about his infestation and describe it so lucidly that his family will often strongly support his claims, even if not afflicted themselves.
8. The infestation may have lasted 2 or 3 months or longer, while actual arthropod infestations seldom last that long.

The two most recent cases that came to my attention fit into this series very well. The individuals concerned also fit the descriptions of those most frequently featured (Mumford 1982) namely: middle-aged to elderly women.

The first and most serious of the two recent cases began with a telephone call from the enquirer who wanted various household materials examined for pests. A few days later she brought in fourteen samples including vacuum cleaner dust, lead from leaded light windows, hair from her head, grease from a cooker hob, debris from inside her slippers, a fresh hen's egg and an electric kettle. She had been in touch with the Pest Control Officer of the Environmental Health Department (several times I discovered when contacting them) who were unable to find anything of significance. The lady in question, when she brought the material to me, turned out to be in her late forties and married to a man in his late seventies. In conversation I discovered that her cat had had fleas two years previously and it was evident that she was very worried about her house being overrun by some sort of "insect". The fear of her "infestation" was putting her marriage in jeopardy; her friends did not like calling on her; she was fanatical about cleaning her house (which the Environmental Health Department said was spotless); she daily bathed in Jeyes Fluid; she had had her hair virtually cut off several times for fear of infestations on her head; she was convinced that every little pimple arising on her skin was a bite and that something was in her house biting her. She thought that the "things" could have come either from Spain via her electric kettle which she had brought back or from a chicken farm from which she bought her eggs.

My fears and suspicions were highly aroused by this conversation and I was sympathetic and tried to allay her fears and told her I would thoroughly examine what she had brought in. She did not want anything back; I was to dispose of everything including the suspect kettle. As I expected, after a thorough microscopic examination of the material I found nothing of note. A few Henoticus californicus Mannerheim were present in material from one drawer of a cupboard and two Anthrenus verbasci Linn. larvae from within the base of her antique clock (feeding on the felt base-pad). No mites or other arthropods were present in the samples. A report was produced and she was pleased with these negative results but sadly more worried because she could now no longer blame anything for her "bites". Subsequently she brought a further six items to me for examination, which also proved negative. In conversation during a further visit from the enquirer she quite seriously threatened suicide. The

delusory parasitosis was pushing her to the limit. I attempted to soothe and convince her that she had nothing to fear and that perhaps she should visit her doctor so that he could examine her bites and carry out further tests. She told me that she had been to see her G.P. after her cat had had fleas and she would go and see him again. I discussed her problem with Environmental Health who were tired of her complaints and said that cases like hers were not uncommon. When I mentioned delusory parasitosis they were most interested as they had not heard of the disorder before. It was decided on the grounds of her mental condition and suicide threats to contact her G.P. as soon as possible (she had volunteered the identity of her doctor) in the hope that some help could be given. A copy of the reports given to the enquirer and details of the case and its development and implications with respect to delusory parasitosis were sent to her G.P.

I have recently discovered that the lady and her husband later moved from their flat in an attempt to run away from the phantom infestation. She apparently has not visited her G.P. and I have had no reply from her doctor; so I am unable to say how this case was concluded, if at all.

The most recent case involves (it is still in progress) an elderly widow living alone in a basement flat. She has never had a cat and so there is no obvious flea association. However, she claims that things are biting her depositing black or white sticky deposits around her house and that these started after certain building works were carried out close by. Environmental Health failed to find anything wrong: her house was (is) spotless. To reassure their client they have, as is their practice, given various treatments and supplied insecticidal sprays. She still persists in bringing material into the museum for examination and is convinced that she is being invaded by a secretive pest which bites her legs and leaves the unpleasant deposits. She has a diagnosed skin complaint and this, combined with her age, probably accounts for the 'bites': small ulcerating skin lesions of internal origin rather than external. The 'deposits' she finds are largely imaginary or at the most, particles of dust, flaked paint and other household material. The case is still in progress and has not advanced beyond a report on the material brought in by the enquirer and a letter explaining the situation, the form of which was recommended by Smith (1982a) and is reproduced with this article by kind permission of the Editor of Antenna and the Author, K.G.V. Smith (BM(NH)).

Most museum enquiries are straightforward but a few can become more involved and the degree of involvement will largely depend upon the amount of interest taken by the person answering the enquiry. Such involvement by the biologist/entomologist may make them think twice before committing themselves to a lot of work and worry. But surely if the case in question suggests that delusory parasitosis is involved then it is the moral and ethical duty of the biologist to pursue the matter as far as possible. Delusory parasitosis is a very sensitive area and as Smith pointed out (pers. comm.), because we are non-medics we have to tread very carefully. As enlightened biologists

we might well be the first to recognise the problem and thus we can provide the initial evidence and impetus for the treatment of the afflicted enquirer. The whole problem is very complex and can involve dermatologists, psychiatrists as well as the GP and biologist. The drug Pimozide can be used to treat afflicted patients, but this has unpleasant side effects. The attitude of many patients also makes help and treatment difficult.

We all deal with enquiries. How many have you that could fit this pattern? It might be interesting to try and obtain some statistics from curators. If you have any examples please let me know.

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Suggested standard letter (Smith, 1982a):

Dear Sir or Madam,

I am sorry to hear of the trouble you are having and we are carefully studying the samples you have sent us. As yet we have not found any insects that could be causing your condition but it is possible that your symptoms may be arising from other causes and it is important to consult your general practitioner. It would be helpful if you could put me in touch with your doctor so that I can send him the results of our tests when these are completed.

Gerald Legg,  
Keeper of Biology,  
Booth Museum of Natural History,  
Brighton.

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# Storm over seal at fish market

THE SIGHT of a dead grey seal shocked shoppers in Bolton fish market today. The seal had been drowned in a North Sea trawler's nets and was on display on a fishmongers stall.

The fishmonger, Mr Mark Hayton, was sent the seal as a "curiosity" by his supplier in Scotland.

But a spokesman for Greenpeace, the conservationist organisation, said today that it was "grotesque" to put the seal on show.

Greenpeace wildlife conservationist, Mr Mark Glover said: "On a world scale the grey seal is a rare animal. There is little we can do about them being caught in trawler nets and drowned, but it is grotesque for someone to put a dead seal on show like this."

The RSPCA visited the J. Gittins fish stall on Ashburner Street market, but RSPCA inspector, Mr Andy Foxcroft said: "They are doing nothing illegal.

"The grey seals are not in season at the moment, but this one was accidentally caught in trawler nets and there is nothing to stop them

by TONY DONELLY

putting it on their stall."

Mr Hayton, who runs the stall, said that he had donated the seal to Bolton museum.

"It has caused a lot of controversy in the market. People seem to think that there is something cruel about it and I have had to put a sticker on explaining that the seal was killed accidentally.

"I'm sorry if we have offended anybody, but I was just hoping some good could come out of it by giving it to the museum. I asked my supplier to keep an eye out for any curiosities so I could put them on the stall. But I had no idea it would shock people."

The senior keeper of natural history at Bolton museum, Mr Geoffrey Hancock, said: "We are very pleased to accept the seal as an exhibit. We don't have one at the moment."

"Bolton Evening News,

20 Nov. 1982"



## Grand Opening of the "Chateau Challenger '68"

The list of ills afflicting many museum spirit collections is a long one, and the older the collection the more vulnerable it becomes to incorrect maintenance, wear and tear, and neglect.

It is a familiar enough picture - store-rooms with a climate closely resembling that of Death Valley, California in summer; spirit collections reminiscent of the old Hammer Horror movies, with cracked glass vats containing 'bits of rubbery-looking things' floating in dilute Ribena; cobwebs, the odd pickled rat and the occasional curled brown label bearing some ancient hand.

It is true that the properties of different storage solutions may provide greater or lesser protection against harmful agencies, fungal attack for instance, but this depends greatly upon storage conditions and collection usage.

Where large and poorly sealed containers cannot be replaced, solutions with ferocious evaporation rates and high flammability are not the order of the day; similarly, where material is regularly removed from containers for inspection by school children, formaldehyde (currently under suspicion as a carcinogen) is not an appropriate choice, being at the very least extremely noxious to work with.

Faced with the daunting prospect of 'getting stuck into' Stockholm Tar or red lead in a big way and perhaps fitting steel fire doors, or seeking regular medical screening, what is the alternative? Move into Computer Programming?

One answer is to remove the various alchemical solutions currently fermenting in the collections, with their unguessed at pH's and dilutions, and replace with good old magic mixture - propylene phenoxetol.

Following the advice and encouragement of Reg Harris (then of BMNH) such a transfer was undertaken at Sheffield Museum in 1979, being precipitated by the need to undertake extensive conservation measures; comply with Fire Regulations; and establish a rationalised system of preparation and maintenance. The latter being particularly important in view of the subsequent addition of some 5000 freshwater invertebrates to the spirit collections.

The task took about 5 man months and 400 litres of Steedman's solution, liberally dispensed from a large Polythene dustbin.

The collections comprised two fairly distinct areas, modern and historical collections. The former being housed in dark Beatson Jars, with small items in inverted tubes packed top and bottom with fibre wadding and inverted in a common reservoir. The jars were lined on the base with wadding and in many cases divided with card. Some larger items were held in large plain glass jars with plastic screw tops. All modern material was stored in 70% IMS. The historical collection as could be expected, was largely stored in formalin, and comprised a vast range of containers, many of which were sealed with tar or with ground glass stoppers, and in some cases had to be replaced.

The relatively low evaporation rate of propylene phenoxetol solutions was a particularly important consideration when re-using jars with suspect seals or tops, and subsequent experience has shown that fluid loss from these has been very slow.

The procedure we used (after Harris 1978):-

- 1 Reconstitution of dried-up material may be necessary.

Specimens were placed in a solution of 2% aqueous tri-sodium orthophosphate, in a warm place until form was fully restored. For large items this may take a week or more. When strongly discoloured the solution was changed, and any persistent staining of the specimen due to oxidation effects was treated with 10 volumes of hydrogen peroxide.

- 2 Specimens were washed in de-ionised water for a few minutes and transferred for several days to the following:-

Steedman's solution A	-	40% Formaldehyde:	10 ml
		Propylene glycol:	5 ml
		Phenoxetol:	1 ml
		Water:	84 ml

Specimens washed again in de-ionised water and transferred to the following:-

Steedman's solution B	-	Propylene glycol:	10 ml
		Phenoxetol:	1 ml
		Water:	89 ml

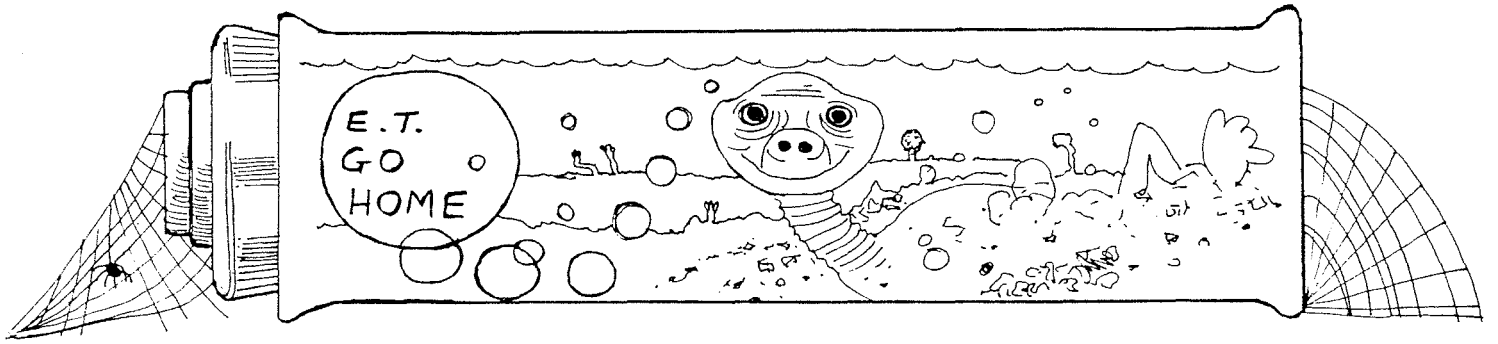
Reagents required:-

40% Formaldehyde

Propylene glycol

Phenoxetol

De-ionised water



Propylene glycol is a humectant and no sample immersed in solutions containing this reagent will ever completely dry up even when all solution is evaporated off. Propylene glycol as an additive to preserving fluids has a softening effect, relaxing stiff tissues. It is a powerful inhibitor of moulds and appears to assist the penetration of formaldehyde. It lowers the freezing point of preserving fluids and has solvent properties so that phenoxetols may easily be dissolved. It also breaks down to pyruvic acid and acetic acid and is, therefore, relatively harmless to man - preferred to the use of glycerine which can encourage moulds and bacteria.

Solution B provides a clear, non-toxic, non-flammable, non-volatile and odourless solution; and our specimens have retained their colour well, whilst remaining very flexible. Flexibility was also restored to older material formerly stored in IMS. These properties have many obvious advantages.

The effective cost, bearing in mind the low evaporation loss over time and subsequent saving in both labour and materials is equivalent to that of IMS. Phenoxetol is of further value as a narcotizing agent, particularly for invertebrates including leeches, planarians and worms.

In the transfer of large numbers of specimens from alcohol to Steedman's B, care should be taken to ensure that the fabric of labels is sufficiently robust to survive in the essentially water based media. Light papers may be considerably softer in 'B' than in IMS. Our experiments with 'Tyvec' were not entirely successful, with difficulty experienced in writing clearly with 'Rapidograph' pens, there being a tendency for the waterproof ink to bleed and spread on the paper. The use of an extremely fine nib seemed to reduce this problem. Re-labelling does add significantly to the cost of a collection transfer of the type described above.

Other areas of difficulty are gelatin based preparations which must be stored in alcohol, and perspex containers which are only suitable for use with formalin.

Propylene phenoxetol is now replacing spirit as a standard preservative in many institutions, care should be taken, however, to check its suitability for each intended application, and each animal group.

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Jerry Lee

City Museum, Sheffield

Ed. I would like to take this opportunity to invite other articles concerning propylene phenoxetol solution and its uses in museums. Have you had any problems with it? What is the most unusual use that you have found for it? (only those suitable for printing please!) I approached the BM(NH). about it, as they have been using it for the longest period. However they feel that further work and study is needed before a definitive summary can be produced. In the absence of such careful studies I feel that other museums who are using the solution can make a valuable contribution by recording observations in this Newsletter.

## Sources of Biological Records

### "The Naturalist"

I have recently been going through the early volumes of "The Naturalist", the organ of the Yorkshire Naturalists' Union, partly to check that all the records from our locality were extracted by a Job Creation Team in 1977 (I have found a few which they missed) and partly because I have recently taken over as Yorkshire recorder for the Hymenoptera Parasitica and I wanted to check that all the relevant records had been extracted (and I found a few of those as well). Although "The Naturalist" is a Yorkshire publication it is a "Journal of Natural History for the North of England" and contains many records from Lancashire, Cheshire, Derbyshire, Nottinghamshire and Lincolnshire as well as Yorkshire and the northern counties. Curators in these counties who are collecting biological records will presumably regard "The Naturalist" as a primary source of information and will have extracted the records for their own areas. Curators in other parts of the British Isles may not realise that the earlier volumes, in particular, contain information from most parts of the country, and in my browsing I have noticed records from most of the counties in the South of England as well as from Wales, Scotland and Ireland, not to mention the Continent, North America, Ceylon, Rodriguez, Australia ..... The information varies from complete articles on 'The Flora of East Somerset' and 'A Collecting Expedition to the New Forest' through short notes on 'Sphinx convulvuli at Brighton' and 'Salisbury plants' to reports of specimens exhibited at society meetings or reported in correspondence. I have made a note of each article or record as I have noticed it, and the following list is a guide to the references:-

#### Vol. I (1875)

p.10	Scotland	Bryophyte, Blairgowrie
	W. Midlands	Bryophyte, Birmingham
	Kent	Ornithology, Ashford
p.13	Sussex	Lepidoptera, Horsham
p.14	Scotland	Cryptogamic Society of Scotland, meeting
p.16	Hunts.	Lepidoptera, Monks Wd. and St. Ives
	Staffs.	The North Staffs. Naturalists' Field Club, report
p.26	Scotland	Lepidoptera, Rannoch
p.26-27	Hants.	Ornithology, Basingstoke
p.28-29	Kent	Lepidoptera, (unlocalised)
p.41	Hants.	Orchids, Alresford
p.42	Scotland	Glasgow Field Naturalists' Society, meetings
p.43	Isle of Man	Lepidoptera, (unlocalised)
p.45	Scotland	Lepidoptera, Rannoch
p.45-46	Cambs.	Botany, Burwell Fen
p.53-55	Somerset	'The Flora of East Somerset'
p.55	Scotland	Botany, Blairgowrie and Hebrides
	Wales	Lepidoptera, Barmouth
	Ireland	Botany, west
p.56	Wales	Lepidoptera, Towyn
p.58	W. Midlands	Birmingham Natural History and Microscopical Society, meeting
	Sussex	Botany, Hastings
p.58-60	Scotland	Cryptogamic Society of Scotland, meeting
p.60	Hants	Lepidoptera, Portsmouth
	Kent	Lepidoptera, Brighton
p.60-61	Wales	Lepidoptera, Barmouth
p.62	Ireland	Mollusca, Co. Cork
	Avon	Mollusca, Bristol
p.73	Kent	'Curious Egg'
	Channel Is.	Lepidoptera, (unlocalised)
p.75	Sussex	Lepidoptera, west
	Kent	Lepidoptera, Folkestone
p.77	Isle of Wight	Mollusca, Freshwater
p.77-78	Staffs.	North Staffs. Naturalists' Field Club, report
p.80	Isle of Wight	Ornithology, reference
	Wales	Lepidoptera, north

(1876)

p.111	Hants.	Lepidoptera, New Forest
p.126	Devon/Cornwall	Lepidoptera, Plymouth
	Kent	Lepidoptera, Folk estone
p.142	Scotland	Ornithology, (unlocalised)
p.143	Staffs.	North Staffs. Naturalists' Field Club, meeting
p.158	Staffs.	North Staffs. Naturalists' Field Club, meeting
p.171	Dorset	Lepidoptera, Portland
	Kent	Geology, (unlocalised)
p.173	Isle of Man	Botany, (unlocalised)
p.175	Wales	Lepidoptera, south
p.177-82	Sussex	'Five Days in East Sussex' (Lepidoptera)
p.186	Scotland	Ornithology, Orkney
p.187	Kent	Lepidoptera, (?unlocalised)
p.188	Cambs.	Geology, (unlocalised)
	Sussex	Botany, Eastbourne and Hailsham
	Sussex	Mammalia and Ornithology, Abbott's Wood

Vol. II (1876)

p.10	Wales	Geology, Llanberis
	Wales	Botany, Snowdon
	Wales	Lepidoptera, north
	Sussex	Lepidoptera, Abbott's Wd.
p.11	Kent	Lepidoptera, Strood
	Berks.	Amphibia, Windsor
p.12-13	Somerset	Geology, Ilminster
	Bucks.	Geology, Great Brickhill
p.24	Scotland	Lepidoptera, Rannoch
	Sussex	Lepidoptera, Chichester
p.27	Sussex/Kent	Botany, Tunbridge Wells
	Isle of Man	Lepidoptera, (unlocalised)
p.28	Wales	Geology, Llandudno and Holywell
	Cornwall	Geology, Penzance
p.30	Scotland	Ornithology, Shetland Is.
p.31.	Scotland	Ornithology, Shetland Is. and Bass Rock
p.42	Scotland	Lepidoptera, Rannoch
	Scotland	Botany, Stirlingshire
	Wales	Lepidoptera, Pwllheli and Penrhynduduth
	Isle of Man	Botany, (unlocalised)
p.43	Scotland	Lepidoptera, Perth
	Dorset/Oxon.	Lepidoptera, Dorchester
	Isle of Man	Lepidoptera, (unlocalised)
	Isle of Man	Conchology, (unlocalised)
p.44	Wales	Conchology, Tenby and Pontypool
	Channel Is.	Conchology, Guernsey and Jersey
	Cornwall	Geology, St. Ives, Dolcoarth, Carnbrea, East Pool and Pednan-drea
p.45	Kent	Coleoptera, (unlocalised)
p.46	Scotland	Ornithology, Shetland Is.
	Berks./Oxon.	Coleoptera, Reading
p.58	Sussex	' <u>Sphinx convolvuli</u> at Brighton'
	Somerset	Conchology, Bradley Knoll
p.58-59	Devon	Conchology, Paignton
p.59	Norfolk	Lepidoptera, Thetford
p.60	Scotland	Geology, Caithness, Nairn & Tynet
	Wales	Lepidoptera, Pembroke
p.61	Scotland	Lepidoptera, (unlocalised)

p.68	Sussex	Lepidoptera, (unlocalised)
	Kent	Lepidoptera, (unlocalised)
p.69	Sussex	Lepidoptera, Hailsham
	Hants.	Lepidoptera, (unlocalised)
	Wales	Lepidoptera, Pembrokeshire
p.69-70	Cambs.	Lepidoptera, Wicken and Taxley
p.70	London	Lepidoptera, (unlocalised)
	Hants.	Lepidoptera, Ringwood
	Kent	Lepidoptera, Sheerness
p.71	Isle of Wight	Lepidoptera, (unlocalised)
	London	Lepidoptera, (unlocalised)
	Sussex	Lepidoptera, Hailsham
	Kent	Lepidoptera, Strood
	Avon	Lepidoptera, Bristol
	Isle of Man	Lepidoptera, (unlocalised)
p.72	Avon	Lepidoptera, Bristol
p.80 (1877)	Scotland	Lepidoptera, Berwickshire
p.83	Kent	Lepidoptera, Chattenden
	Herts./Essex	Lepidoptera, Cheshunt
	Norfolk	Lepidoptera, Norwich
	Wales	Lepidoptera, Pembroke
p.84	London/ Warwicks.	Lepidoptera, Kingsbury
	Hants.	Lepidoptera, New Forest
p.85	Kent	Lepidoptera, Folkestone & Gravesend
	London	Lepidoptera, Camberwell / Forest Hill
p.86	Scotland	Lepidoptera, Perthshire
	Kent	Lepidoptera, Folkestone
	Suffolk	Lepidoptera, Bury St. Edmunds
p.87	Scotland	Lepidoptera, Rannoch
	London	Lepidoptera, Norwood Junction
p.88	Wales	Lepidoptera, Carmarthen
	Hants.	Lepidoptera, East Meon
	Scotland	Lepidoptera, Perth
	Kent	Lepidoptera, Folkestone
	Norfolk	Lepidoptera, Norwich and fens
	Dorset	Lepidoptera, Isle of Portland
p.94	Wales	Lepidoptera, Llangollen
p.95	Scotland	Lepidoptera, (unlocalised)
	Hants.	Lepidoptera, New Forest
p.110	Scotland	Conchology, Glasgow, Edinburgh and Crieff
	Scotland	Lepidoptera, Rannoch
p.113-4	Scotland	Lepidoptera, Perth
p.124	Wales	Conchology, Llandudno
p.130	Staffs.	Orthoptera, Stafford and Burton-on-Trent
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 p112 Wales Bryophyte, Llandudno.  
 ? Scotland Bryophyte, Bowness.  
 Hants. Bryophyte, Lyndhurst.  
 p119 Scotland Bryophyte, Ben Nevis.  
 p134 Wales Botany, Anglesea.  
 Cambs. Botany, (unlocalised).  
 Ireland Botany, North and Galway.  
 Scotland Botany, Skye.  
 p138 Avon Conchology, Bristol.  
 Kent Conchology, (unlocalised).  
 Somerset Conchology, Weston-super-Mare.  
 p150 Scotland Bryophyte, Ben Lawers, Ben Ledi and Balquhiddar.  
 Suffolk Bryophyte, Tuddenham Bog.  
 p154 Suffolk Bryophyte, Tuddenham Bog  
 p160 Scotland Ornithology, (unlocalised).  
 Scotland Bryophyte, Ben Lavigh.  
 Wales Bryophyte, Dolgelly.  
 p161-2 Surrey Trichoptera, R. Wey, Guildford and Weybridge.  
 p162 Scotland Trichoptera, Bute.  
 p185 Wales Bryophyte, R. Usk.  
 p188 Wales Bryophyte, R. Usk  
 p189 Wales Bryophyte, Festiniog and Llanberis.

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p22 Wales Bryophyte, Bala.  
 p28-9 Wales Bryophyte, R. Wye/Builth.  
 p36 Sussex 'Lepidoptera in Abbot's Wood, Sussex'.  
 p37 Cornwall Ornithology, (unlocalised).  
 p41-5 Scotland ) 'Wm. Wilson's Tours in Scotland and Ireland, 1827-  
 p45-9 Ireland ) 1830'.  
 p55-6 Sussex 'The Natural History of Hastings & St. Leonards  
 and the Vicinity', review.  
 p56-7 Herts. Obituary, H. H. Crewe.  
 p59 Wales Bryophytes, Builth, Abergynolwyn, Glyders  
 and Barmouth.  
 Scotland Bryophyte, Ben Mac Dhuì.  
 Sussex Bryophyte, Brighton.  
 Wales Pteridophytes, Barmouth.  
 p60 Wales Algae, Llanfairfechan and Anglesea.  
 Scotland Bryophyte, Ayrshire.

p61-3	Hereford	'The Woolhope Club at Hereford - Fungus Foray'.
p63	Wales )	
p64-8	Ireland )	'Wm. Wilson's Tours in Scotland and Ireland, 1827-
p68	Wales )	1830'.
p69	Ireland	Mollusca, Waterford.
p71-2	Devon	Botany, (unlocalised).
p90	Dorset/Oxon.	Lepidoptera and Botany, Dorchester.
	Sussex	Lepidoptera and Botany, Camber.
	Norfolk	Lepidoptera, King's Lynn.
	Scotland	Lepidoptera, (unlocalised).
	Ireland	Lepidoptera, Galley Head.
	Cambs.	Lepidoptera, Wicken Fen.
p91	London	Lepidoptera, Bloomsbury and Camberwell Green.
	London	Botany, Chislehurst.
	Essex	Mammalia, (unlocalised).
	Hereford	Fungi, Heaton Woods.
	Salop/Hereford	Fungi, Ludlow.
	Scotland	Lepidoptera, Glasgow.
	Wales	Botany, Snowdon.
p92	Wales	Bryophyte, Abergavenny.
	Sussex	Bryophyte, east.
	Somerset	Botany, (unlocalised).
p94	Ireland	Ornithology, Tralee.
p103	Sussex	Lepidoptera, (unlocalised).
p103-4	Essex	Lepidoptera, Colchester.
p104	Scotland	Lepidoptera, Invergarry.
p106	Devon/Cornwall	Lepidoptera, Plymouth.
	Kent	Lepidoptera, (unlocalised).
p107	Wales	Bryophytes, Clogwyn-dur-Arddu and Glydr Vawr.
p108	Norfolk	Botany, (unlocalised).
p123	Scotland	Botany, Glen Callater and Roxburghshire.
	Surrey	Ornithology, (unlocalised).
	Scotland	Ornithology, Bass Rock.
p124	Wales	Bryophytes, Conway and Llanberis.
p136-7	Cambs.	'Notes from Cambridge' (Lepidoptera and Mammalia).
p139	Sussex/Hants.	Obituary, W. Buckler.
p151-2	Isle of Man	Mollusca, Port Soderic and Ballaugh.
p154	Staffs.	Lepidoptera, Burnt Wood.
	Wales	Bryophyte, Llanberis.
p155	Devon	Mollusca, Brixham, Torbay, Lynn and Sheldon.
p178	Cambs.	Lepidoptera, Cambridge and Kirtling.
p187-90	Staffs.	'Reminiscences of Burnt Wood, Staffordshire'.
p194-5	Ireland, etc.	Obituary, E. Birchall.
p205	Somerset	Bryophyte, Minehead.
p209	Wales	Bryophyte, Ben-y-Gloe.
p203	Cambs.	'Insects at Cambridge'.

As I read through subsequent volumes of "The Naturalist" I am continuing to make a note of the "foreign" records and will produce a second instalment for the newsletter, but I should like some guidance on how to deal with the information after that. Among the possibilities are:-

1. I can continue to publish the records in this form;
2. I can publish a more condensed version e.g. - Kent Vol. 1 p.10, 28-9, 60, 73, 75 etc.
3. I can extract the information and send it to those curators who request it.
4. I can assume that I have primed the pump sufficiently and you will all rush to get hold of a full run of the journal to read through yourselves, and I can forget it.

I would welcome some feedback on the most useful way of presenting this information in the future.

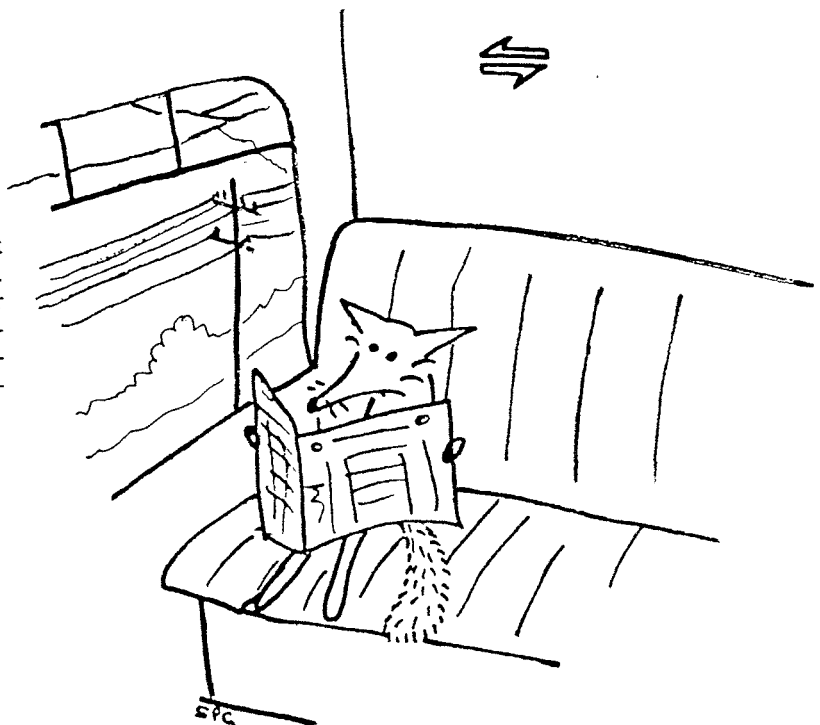
If you have found this list of records useful maybe you would like to do the same for your local/regional journal, or one of the national ones. There are vast numbers of biological records in the journals dealing with conchology, arachnology, entomology, botany etc. and none of us has the time to check them all. Between us we could make a start on it.

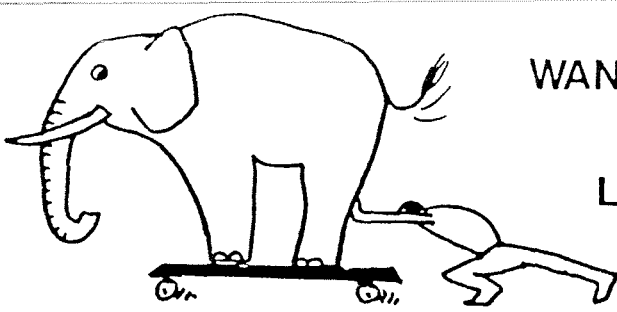
Bill Ely,  
Clifton Park Museum.

## London foxes

Fox-watch is the latest project to be organized by the London Wildlife Trust, and aims to record all the foxes living in or commuting to the Greater London area. The results will not only aid conservation but will be vitally important if rabies is ever brought into this country. The Trust also hopes to be able to find one good fox site which can be set aside specially for the study of foxes. Anyone living in the Greater London area can join in the Fox-watch by getting in touch with Fox-watch, 52 Browns Road, Walthamstow, London E17.

"Natural World"  
Winter 1982 p12.





WANTS, EXCHANGES,

LOST & FOUND



The Whitmore Collection of Molluscs  
at Worcester City Museum

The Worcester City Museum Service possesses a very extensive collection of British and foreign terrestrial, freshwater and marine molluscs, possibly numbering in all several thousand specimens. Most are mounted on paper - covered wooden blocks upon which is written information concerning their genus, species, location (in general terms) and the name of the collector (but not the date of collection). At one time these specimens were carefully laid out in glass-topped cases and drawers in the public galleries, but at some stage in the now-distant past (presumably as a result of changing fashion) they were removed from display. Unfortunately, at this point they became completely muddled up and were dumped loose into a variety of different sized cardboard boxes (some indeed were left lying loose in the roof void of the museum where they accumulated the inevitable thick layer of dust) - fortunately the number of breakages seems to have been surprisingly small.

A very basic attempt is now being made to sort out this important collection and provide better storage conditions for it. In the process of this operation it has become apparent that by far the greatest proportion of specimens was collected by one "Sir G. Whitmore, K.C.H." A study of the Dictionary of National Biography suggests that this person must be General Sir George Whitmore, Knight Commander of the Hanoverian Guelphic Order, an Officer in the Royal Engineers, who was born at the Manor House, Lower Slaughter, Gloucestershire in 1775 and who died at Charlton, Kent in May 1862. He was obviously an avid collector (judging by the number of specimens we have associated with his name), though perhaps rather by purchase and exchange since his service career took him only to the Mediterranean and Caribbean, whereas his collection is geographically much more widespread. Why his collection came to Worcester, and when, remains a mystery - though the fact (as revealed in the 1851 Census of Charlton) that one of Whitmore's daughters was born in Worcester points to the possibility of some local family connection.

Any further information on this prolific collector, especially in his capacity as a malacologist, would be welcomed by the writer.

Henry Middleton  
Curator

Worcester City Museums Service  
City Museum & Art Gallery  
Foregate Street  
Worcester WR1 1DT

WANTED - BROWN BEAR SKELETON



Aillwee Cave is situated in the Burren area of County Clare in Ireland. It is open to the public and has an award-winning visitor centre at its entrance. Brown Bear remains were discovered in 1973 and this animal is now adopted as the logo for the cave. Unfortunately there were not sufficient remains to construct a full animal so Brown Bear skeletal material is required with a view to exhibiting a full skeleton at the site. A complete Skeleton would be ideal, but if sufficient bones can be found to reconstruct one then that too will be of use.

If anyone can help, please contact: Mr. Michael Mulqueeney,  
Director, Aillwee Cave, Ballyvaughan, County Clare, Ireland.

**AILLWEE CAVE**  
BALLYVAUGHAN, CO. CLARE, IRELAND.

Information Wanted : L.A.Reeve's Conchologia Iconica (1843-1878)

I have recently become interested in the publishing of Reeve's monumental work Conchologia Iconica . It would appear that there were both coloured and uncoloured copies and that these were issued as monthly parts, individual monographs, individual volumes (1-20) and as a complete set. Because of the differences introduced by binding and rebinding, it is frequently difficult to distinguish the different methods of issue. I would therefore be most interested to hear from anyone who knows of individual parts, to complete sets, that might be so identified and anyone who has any wrappers in which the monthly parts were issued.

Dr P.F.Lingwood.

8, Sorrento Way,  
Darfield,  
Barnsley,  
S.Yorks, S73 9RN

## NAPHTHALENE - Information please

Napthalene is still in widespread use in museums as a pest repellent and for some time I have been attempting to find out more about it, relating to both its effectiveness as a repellent and its dangers as a health hazard. I have seen various references to it including a maximum permitted level, notes that it can be absorbed through the lungs and the skin and one reference suggesting that it can cause mild anaemia. Several colleagues and I have attributed various symptoms to exposure to high napthalene levels. I would be interested if anyone could provide me with information or references to information concerning the chemical, or even if you have personal views or experiences with it.

A recent publication from America may contain useful information, although I have not yet seen a copy. It is titled "Pest control in museums: a status report (1980)" by S. R. Edwards, B. M. Bell and M. E. King and is reviewed in Curator Vol. 25 No. 3 pp. 228-9 by L. H. Herman. Judging by the review it seems that there is no pest control method which is both effective and safe. I would welcome any short articles for the Newsletter concerning the system in use at any museums, large or small, in the U.K. and problems which occur. Steve Garland, Assistant Keeper, Sheffield City Museum, Weston Park, Sheffield S10 2TP.

## Species Record Cards - Still Required

Derek Whiteley has now received examples of completed cards from a number of biological records centres, and wishes to acknowledge assistance from the following museums (in addition to those listed in the last issue) North Herts., Oxfordshire, Rotherham, Bristol, Ipswich, Stoke, Buckinghamshire, Tyne & Wear, and Leicestershire. The general impression at the moment is that recording techniques differ from centre to centre, sometimes quite broadly. However it would be nice to receive even more completed cards from other centres, before the results of the survey are published, probably in the next newsletter.

Also many thanks for the notes, information sheets and newsletters relating to local B.R.C.'s, which will add a few meaty bits to the proposed article.

## FREE LINNEAN SOCIETY SYNOPSES OF THE BRITISH FAUNA AGAIN!

Between 30 and 40 individuals, institutions and societies have so far requested copies of the Synopses advertised in the last BCG bulletin. However there are still LOTS of the Old series Nos. 6, 8, 9, 13 and 14 left. If anyone would like any (or any more!) copies, please contact the Horniman Museum (see BCG Bulletin, October 1982 for full details of postage charges etc.).

We propose to continue the BCG distribution until March 31st 1983. After that date we shall pass all remaining Synopses on to other interested groups, who will organise their own internal distribution systems. We can't keep the Synopses indefinitely, due to lack of space.

A few slight problems cropped up during the first batch of requests, so it might be worth clarifying these (rather belatedly):

1. We cannot cope with formal Council orders, nor can we produce official invoices. The reason is simply that the Synopses are not the property of the Horniman Museum, but are held on behalf of the BCG. The charges are for postage and packing, which can be handled via local funds.
2. It has been suggested that the Synopses could be re-sold by recipients, but personally I feel this is ethically dubious. As the Linnean Society decided to give their synopses away it seems logical to distribute them as gifts. If your local Natural History Society members would like copies, either give them some or tell them to contact the museum.
3. If you pass on news of the offer to non BCG members, please make sure they have all the details correct. (Ideally send them a photocopy of the relevant pages!). This saves lots of confused phone calls.
4. David Allen, our Librarian, is dealing with 'standard' requests for sets of synopses. He would prefer these to be made in writing, cash with order! Non-standard requests, for instance large numbers of a single title, should come to me.

Penny Wheatcroft  
Keeper of Natural History  
Horniman Museum  
London Road  
Forest Hill  
London SE23 3PQ

## BUTTERFLIES; EAST AFRICA

A collection of butterflies from Tanzania (then Tanganyika) is offered to any interested museum. They are from localities in the Southern Highlands region of the country and were collected some twenty years ago. The specimens are well preserved, but not well labelled and are available free to a 'good home'. For details contact: Dr. Donald Currie, 7, Abbey Hill Close, Winchester, Hants. Telephone: Winchester 65181.

## GEORGE BRISTOW IS INNOCENT, OK?

*(and a plea for help in proving it)*

by Dr. P. Morris

It is just 20 years ago that the authoritative journal 'British Birds' published a lengthy paper which sought to demonstrate that an improbably large number of rare birds had been collected supposedly from the Hastings area of Sussex. There were so many of these 'Hastings Rarities' that they surely could not all be genuine, so a long series of records were declared invalid and many rare birds struck off the British list.

The original authors declined to say who might have been responsible for importing phoney rarities and passing them off to rich collectors, but the popular press were less inhibited and named George Bristow, the well-known taxidermist of St. Leonards-on-Sea. Many (but not all) of the rarities certainly were mounted by him. So great was the ballyhoo at the time, that the Hastings Rarities affair probably ranks second only to Piltdown Man in public awareness as the biological hoax of the century. Unfortunately, Bristow had died in 1947 and was thus unable to defend himself; though others tried (notably J. Harrison in "*Bristow & The Hastings Rarities*"; A. H. Butler Ltd. 1968) but of course did not get the same size newspaper headlines.

Consequently, to this day, Bristow is widely assumed to have been responsible for a major zoological hoax and to have made money out of dishonest trading in rare stuffed birds. In fact, there is a lot of unpublished information to suggest that Bristow did neither. I feel that it would be nice to produce evidence which would clearly set the record straight, at least as far as Bristow's role is concerned. It would also be nice to think that the Guild had done something to defend its own so to speak, and clear the name of a respected taxidermist from unfair (and probably unjust) accusations. So, I am writing to ask if any members of the Guild have or know of any information relating to George Bristow which has not already appeared in 'British Birds', Harrison's book, or the popular press in the early 1960s. Are there any photographs of Bristow or his shop? Where is his diary and account book?

It is unlikely that many members can help in that rather specific way, but I am also seeking to compare Bristow's charges for mounting birds with the prices of other contemporary taxidermists. So, here's a wider appeal: Do you have (or have access to), or know of, any price lists, account books, invoices, Museum order books, etc., etc. from which we might draw up a list of prices charged by as many taxidermists as possible any time between 1890 and 1916 (and also 1930-40).

If you think you can help in this, please drop me a line so that we can discuss more specifically the best way of collecting and collating the information.

Any help with information on poor old Bristow or about other people's price lists and charges would be much appreciated.

Contact: Dr. P. Morris, West Mains, London Road, Ascot, Berks. SL5 7DG

"Guild of Taxidermists Newsletter No.9 (1982)"

MEMBERS CHANGE OF ADDRESS :- Dr. P.F.Lingwood, from 15 Bain Road, Boston, Lincs. to 8, Sorrento Way, Darfield, Nr. Barnsley.



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The aims of the Biology Curators' Group are:-

- i) to facilitate the exchange of information between individuals concerned with the management of biological collections and records, their research, conservation and interpretation.
- ii) to present the view of curators of biological collections.

Copy dates for future issues based on three copies per year:

31 August for October issue

31 December for February issue

30 April for June issue

Opinions expressed in this Newsletter are not necessarily those of the Committee of the Biology Curators' Group.

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