



BOURNEMOUTH NATURAL SCIENCE SOCIETY & MUSEUM

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Share our love of science

NEWSLETTER
SPRING 2019



This is Isla, the first young person to ever hold a reconstructed skull of Tahemaa.

Hello to everyone and welcome to the coming spring. The lantern roof repairs are coming along and other projects are progressing well.

The research on the stone heads is ongoing but we are getting closer to locating the find spot, and I have discovered a number of reports of items which could be related in the area. Another visit to Monmouth is on the agenda to continue.

Another project which is close to my heart has come to fruition and the results can be seen on display in the museum. Vanessa Pearson, a final year student at Arts University Bournemouth, approached us to ask if she could create a new facial reconstruction of our mummy, Tahemaa, using the scans done in 2009.

These scans suggested that she was older than previously thought. Along with the new model, Vanessa created a 3D print of the skull and did a large amount of research to complete her work, including consulting people who had previously worked on Tahemaa.



There is much more to do within the Society and anyone, who would like to get involved in any way, will be warmly welcomed.

Bryan Popple

BNSS Coach Trip 2019 Details.

The annual coach excursion has been set for Thurs 6th June. Departure is from the BNSS building at 8.30 am sharp (BNSS will be open for toilets). Return is approx. 6.45 pm.

The cost is £35 per head inclusive of entrance fees, conservation donation and a full tea.

For those participating the final itinerary and helpful information such as maps will be provided.

The Current Itinerary is:

Ryewater Butterfly Reserve (10.00 to 12.00).

We are privileged that Ryewater Nursery and Butterfly Reserve will give BNSS members a guided tour. The owner Clive Farrell has been fascinated by butterflies since his childhood and over the years has spent a fortune in creating an extensive landscaped garden featuring many special plants supporting butterfly breeding, as well as featuring highly imaginative sculptures.

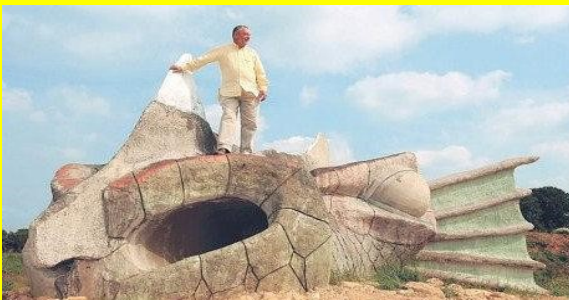
Sherborne Town (12.15 to 13.45)

There is time to find a lunch, if you have not brought one, and explore this lovely historic Dorset market town. As well as a wealth of high quality shops and eating places there are the famous Abbey and town Museum (both free) as well as the market.

Sherborne Castle and Garden (14.00 to 16.00)

Explore the 'new' castle dated from 1600 and its collection of fine art and furniture and the 30 acres of gardens laid out by Capability Brown surrounding the lake that in itself covers a further 50 acres.

Bere Regis (16.50 to 17.50) The local WI will again be supplying one of their famous full cream teas including sandwiches before we depart back to the BNSS premises.



To book and pay, there will be a board in the BNSS, or you can download from the website. Anyone can come along, but preferences to members.

Jolyon Crane

jolyonc100@yahoo.co.uk

YOUNG EXPLORERS & FUTURE BOOKING

We are pleased to report that Steve's Young Explorer sessions are becoming ever more popular, in fact to the point that we are now oversubscribed! The first session of the year was on Rocks and Fossils and was well received by all the families. Ray and Steve did a great job helping children understand the difference between sedimentary, metamorphic and igneous rocks and explaining how fossils are created. This was



followed by a Physics for Beginners morning which was equally popular. Steve managed not to set off fire alarms or blow anyone up!

These sessions are a wonderful opportunity for children between the ages of 7 and 11, to find out about aspects of Natural History and Science in line with the national curriculum; it is also a lovely way for parents and carers to spend quality time with children, and it is often the adults that enjoy themselves as much as the children during the hands-on sessions. *Various members have been doing a sterling job in taking the money at the*

entrance and serving refreshments during the break. (Mark, Keith, Jill, Grenham)

Cakes and biscuits baked by members are sold to help raise funds for the Society. The first prize goes to Jackie whose dinosaur biscuits are exceptionally popular.

Bearing the growing numbers in mind and that we want to continue offering a quality experience to everyone, the numbers for Young Explorers are now capped at 32 children per Saturday. Families also need to complete our new registration forms to meet GDPR requirements. Places can be booked in the month prior to the session via email youngexplorers@bnss.org.uk or the Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/BournemouthNaturalScienceSociety>

We then ask families to arrive in good time to sign in and pay for a 10am start. There is a break after an hour for about 20 minutes, followed by another hour's fun – ending at approximately 12.30. An adult must stay at all times. **Please spread the word that families turning up on the day without having booked a place risk being turned away as we simply do not have the resources or helpers to cater for larger numbers. They will only be able to attend if we have no-shows.**





Finally, thanks again to Steve for his inspiration with the programme and his keen team of expert helps – our own



volunteers. Thanks too, to the families who support us and bring valuable revenue not the Society to help us inspire generations to come. It's wonderful to see so many young people excited by our love of science!



Anna Cuccia

LANTERN ROOF REPAIR

Since my last report work has carried on apace.

The glass in the lantern was labelled and carefully removed for storage. Fortunately breakages were limited although it was apparent that some of the glass was not original and presumably had been replaced earlier in the life of the lantern.



With the glass and paint removed it was possible to see how the lantern was constructed. This comprised a substantial timber frame which had been constructed offsite and assembled in-situ. Panels, also constructed off site, had then been nailed into the frame before the glazing had been added.

Unfortunately wood rot had badly affected much of the sill round the

base of the lantern as well as parts of the frame and some of the panels. Many of the nails holding the lantern together were rusted through and the integrity of the structure appeared compromised. The worst affected area was on the south side which of course receives the prevailing weather. With the Conservation Officer's agreement the lantern was dismantled and removed to the RT Carpentry workshop for repair.



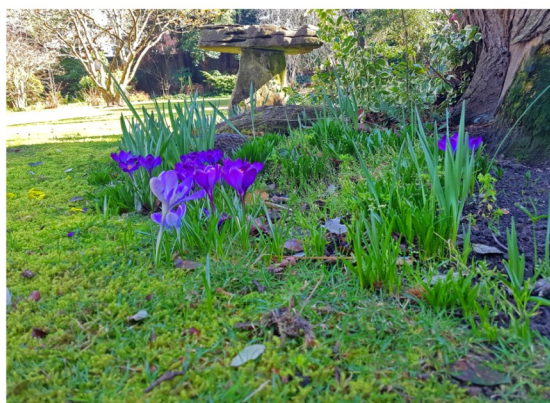
Work has continued to repair the gully around the base of the lantern in advance of the final return of the repaired parts enabling the lantern to be rebuilt. Completion is due at the end of March.

In order to get a grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund it was necessary to agree to undertake a number of activities including improving the skills of the people who give their time to help run the BNSS. Most of the activities involve minor costs but on **Saturday 1st June** at the BNSS we are hosting a workshop on funding run by a professional expert, which is a commercial arrangement.

In the morning the Trustees will be looking at the funding strategy. In the afternoon for a couple of hours we would like everyone who volunteers for the BNSS to attend the workshop to improve their skills relating to funding and asking for donations. Please put the date in your diary! We need a good turnout to make the most of the investment in this workshop. A buffet lunch will be available to those attending. More details to follow.

Colin Lord

EARLY SPRING AND THE BNSS GARDENS



We anticipate some much-needed tree work to be undertaken once the lantern scaffolding is down. The sweet chestnut should be rejuvenated when some heavy limbs are cut back. The dead paulownia will be cut to the ground as will the neighbouring sophora. A garden will always need to be managed and to change if it is to live and thrive.



January and early February were not good for the BNSS gardeners. Too many Tuesdays were damp and windy for much work to be tackled. Still, from inside we have enjoyed the

bright witch hazel (*Hamamelis mollis*) viewed from the museum room. Venturing outside we found the fluffy mimosa (*Acacia dealbata*), its billowy branches especially glorious seen up close. Alongside is Owen's wattle (*Acacia pravissima*), also an Australian native though less well known to us. It has hanging stems of triangular leaves and masses of delicate pale yellow flowers.

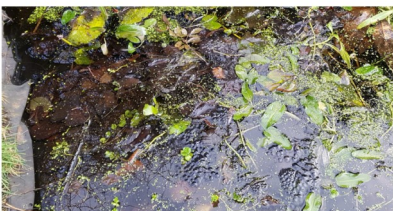


February and March are peak months for the camellias that do so well in our sandy acidic soil. Inspiration is the deep pink semi-double in full view of the house, while Charlotte de Rothschild is a single white with golden stamens. Many other varieties can also be discovered on all sides. Where we have found the time

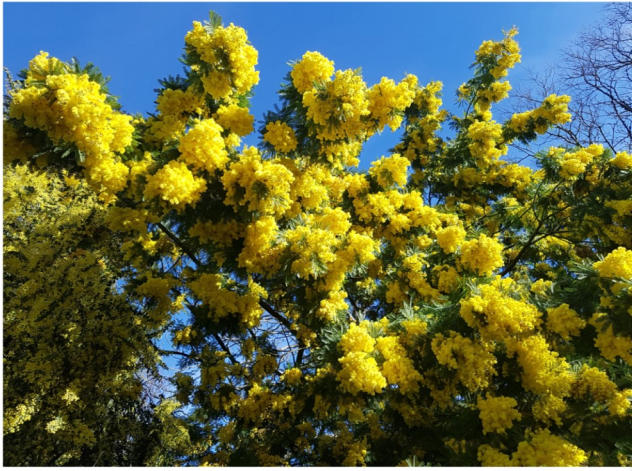
to prune shortly after flowering the next year's display has been more profuse.

Large shrubs have benefited from a reduction in height allowing more light to reach the growing shoots. In the front garden the two bright red single camellias with gold stamens showed their earliest flowers at Christmas and will continue into April.

As the Spring progresses it is rewarding to take a stroll along the pathway past the azaleas to find the arching stems of *Stachyurus praecox* beside the strawberry tree. Further along the weeping pear overlooks the pond where frogspawn spreads like



jewels on the surface. In 2018 the "Beast from the East" caught our frog and newt population at a critical time in their spawning ritual. Many were found floating having frozen to death. The survivors will have less competition this year and the population should recover unless another "Beast" turns up.



The gardening team have had some health issues recently and could do with more back-up. It's a lovely garden to spend time in so do get in touch if you are able to help. Presently we can only work on Tuesdays when BNSS is open to the public between 10am and 4pm. If enough people were interested in coming regularly then another day might

become a possibility. The two ponds also need some TLC from time to time to keep them healthy. We don't have fish but the non-vertebrate pond life can be fascinating especially when viewed under the microscope.

Do come outside and explore.

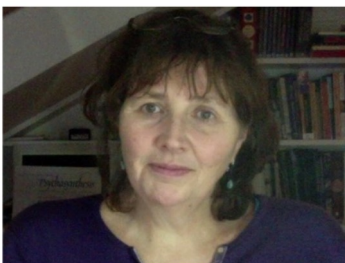
Jill Abbot Spring 2019



INTRODUCING KATE WHITE:

As we know, most people in Bournemouth still have no idea about the BNSS, what it does, or even its location. Kate White joined BNSS as Publicity Officer, and a member of the Programming team, just before Christmas. She has been busy building up a database of local, regional and national media to get the news out on our activities; creating posters and flyers to distribute at the museum and to local tourist attractions and community centres and such; managing the

Twitter feed and helping with the Facebook page; and working with our department heads and trustees to develop and coordinate publicity and advertising. So, send her all your ideas for highlighting museum activities and history!



Kate has an international background in business, academia, the media and publishing. Her business, *InTheWorks*, provides business & leadership coaching, and she has been involved in the performing and visual arts, has worked 10 years as a freelance journalist, has an undergraduate degree in classical piano performance and art history from the State University of New York, Postgraduate Diploma

in Cultural Astronomy at Trinity St David/University of Wales as well as a full range of editorial services to academic and non-fiction authors, postgraduate students and publishers.

We wish her well in her task of generating publicity to our Society, and one of only two museums in Bournemouth.

You can reach her at intheworkscoaching@gmail.com.

Her website is: <https://www.intheworkscoach.com>

THE KNEPP ESTATE

Few talks have generated as much interest as Isabella Tree's talk, standing room only, on 'Rewilding' based on her book, which has been one of the best reviewed of any nature book in recent years. Together with her husband, Charlie Burrell, the entire 3,500 estate has been given over to a return to nature, the results of which have exceeded all expectations, and has altered our perceptions of our ecological history.

I was arranging a BNSS walk around Knepp, together with Ashley, using the free footpaths, and we were hoping to take 3 or 4 others from the BNSS.

When I checked the list, there were 40 names on it(!), so unsure at this stage how we will go about it. Knepp do not want coaches, and Isabella has said that spring is probably the best time to go (although the main attraction will be the Purple Emperor butterflies). But if you are a BNSS member, and wish to go, please email

ianjulian@virginmedia.com or

ashley.l@ashpartnership.co.uk and we will keep you posted and see what we can arrange. An alternative of course, is to visit yourself, and although expensive (it is how they make a living) it is well worth the occasional visit.

The difference with her nature and conservation book as opposed to the others, is that it is not theory, it has been done and achieved and secondly it is not depressing. So, there is just one nature book to learn about our soil, worms, trees, birds, butterflies, conservation, river and flood management and so on, please read 'Wildling' and see the videos on YouTube or here - <https://knepp.co.uk/>

A message from Isabella –

It was a total delight. Thank you for the warm reception, for getting such a wonderful audience in, and for puffing the book up so spectacularly. I've certainly sold enough copies to warrant waiving the expenses, though very kind of you to offer. BNSS is a wonderful place and I'm aware you need all the funds you can muster! Just wish I'd had time to have a proper look around.

With warmest wishes

Isabella



*Isabella Tree and Paul Morton of
birdsofpooleharbour & the Osprey
Project*

WILDLIFE TO BE SEEN ROUND & ABOUT BOURNEMOUTH

A Kingfisher is a bird enjoyed by all, whether you are into birding or not, and they arrive in larger numbers in the winter than the rest of the year, as they migrate here from the colder, north. They like it reasonably near the coast, as a safeguard for when the rivers freeze, and they can be seen all along the Stour. A great way of seeing them is at Blandford Forum. Park at Morrisons, cross the blue bridge, turn left and in the next half mile, you should see many, close-up, and often easy to photograph.

Blandford was for many years the best place in Europe to see and photograph Otters, but this ceased last year (I was told fishermen were seen throwing stones at them, but this is unconfirmed), but despite this, Otters may also be seen all along the Stour, although, as so often with nature, it is just pot-luck.

The most famous Kingfisher, probably anywhere in England, is near Cherry Tree Nursery. Park in the lane off the roundabout, walk down half-a-mile to the Stour, and you arrive at an outlet where there are usually some anglers and photographers here. (In my view, some of the photographers are too close, I have written a paper on this, trying to get within 6 feet, despite the long lenses, and I am told there could be 15 of them.) But, the Kingfisher is certainly tame, and perches on the posts.

A fabulous place for birding is Poole Park, and it will become even better, as £3 million pounds are being spent on the park, most of which is aimed at improving the habitat of the



birds. I often take nature groups here, for close-up identification and onto Baiter and Poole Quay. At the moment the main lake is drained, so it is a sea of mud, and attracts up to 300 Black-tailed Godwits, not a sight usually seen in the middle of a town! Recently there has been Black (Australian) Swans, and the most exotic duck in the world, a Mandarin. Both of these species of birds are now classified as being British, as they have bred here for over 100 years.

Finally, do visit the Lansdowne Tower, as the Peregrines nest for their tenth year. You can see them at the top of the tower, but binoculars are beneficial. Normally, they will not hunt the gulls and pigeons here, for fear of striking the buildings, but this is not foolproof. Do also look at the live webcam <http://www.bournemouthperegrines.org.uk/> which hopefully will shortly come onstream, it is live theatre, and which the BNSS were instrumental in setting up, although regretfully no longer support.

The Peregrines always do well here, they tend to go to the seashores for hunting, adopting their famous swoop, becoming the fastest living creature on earth. Early June is the best time to watch them at the Tower, as they interact with their newly fledged chicks, calling each other and even performing food-drops.

We await the return of the Ospreys from Africa. Will they stay or will they go? Some of the chicks released from Poole Harbour 2 years ago are now due to return, and it is hoped they will be the first to nest in Southern England – but as this has never been tried before, no one knows what will happen.

Please let me know if you know of any unusual or interesting sightings in our vicinity, anything to do with the natural world.

Spring Fair Weekend

Mark your calendars for two days of exhibits & activities for all ages. Try your hand at pond dipping! Learn about seasonal change, wildlife conservation, and metamorphosis.



Explore the museum collections with our science & history experts. Exhibitors include the Dorset Wildlife Trust, ARC, Stour Valley Rangers, Back from the Brink, & others.



13 & 14
April
10am
to
4pm

Refreshments
available!
Admission
£3 adults
£2 children



Find us at
39 Christchurch Road
Bournemouth BH1 3NS
www.bnss.org.uk



BOURNEMOUTH
NATURAL SCIENCE
SOCIETY & MUSEUM



Weekends of 13/14 April - - - - -

Members will have two opportunities for getting involved this coming quarter with two weekends planned to open our doors. The first the **Spring Fair weekend of 13/14 April** is aimed at bringing other wildlife and conservation bodies to our premises and showcasing what our members do on Tuesday mornings. There will be visits from Amphibian and Reptile Conservation (ARC), Back from the Brink, Dorset Wildlife Trust and others, doors open 1000-4.00pm. All cakes made and helpers welcomed. Entrance fee of £3.00 Adult, £2.00 child, £10 family.

Members able to help should sign up on the list in the foyer or on the contact@bnss.org.uk email. Or just come along with friends and families to support the Society.

- - - - and 4/5 May

The second weekend is **4/5 May**. We have been approached by the **Bournemouth Emergent Arts Fringe** to host some Ecoacoustic presentations, both in the building and in the garden. There will be an opportunity for members to make their own sound recordings in the garden and hear them digitally enhanced. Professor Adrian Newton will be talking about Science and Practise of Ecoacoustics, on **Saturday 4th may at 2.30pm**. Members who can support an open morning from 10.00 - 2.00pm are especially welcome on the Saturday and we will endeavour to open our doors again on the Sunday for anyone wishing to help out. Please get in touch with mmthornton5@gmail.com

JOHN NORIE'S COLLECTION

November 2011, & Tony Priggen and his wife came into our museum, sat down with John Creswell, and handed over various ornithological collections belonging to his uncle, the late John Norie.

Looking at the dates of his superb bird, nest and egg photographs and the dates in his egg collection, it appears that John's interest in ornithology peaked during the 1950's. His main stomping grounds were the Hoo Peninsula, overlooking the Thames Estuary, and Radnoor in Wales. He also collected antiques and had the largest collection of tea caddy spoons in the country!

In 1976 John & Phyllis moved down to Highcliffe, to be near her parents. Bird-watching continued in the Bournemouth area & the New Forest, and he acquired the nickname, due to much ephemera, of the 'Puffin Man' from his nephew's children! John died in hospital, in Bournemouth, on the 12th of September 2002 after a short illness.

Nine years later Tony was clearing through his uncle & aunt's place and decided that John's collections were worthy of a home. Many items, including his cameras, went elsewhere but in November 2011 a home had been found for some of John Norie's memories and his passion for the natural world.

James Dovey (BNSS) February 2019

Some of these pictures are slightly enhanced. Interesting to note how eggs can vary in size and colour, and the huge size of the Guillemot's eggs! Do ask if you wish to see these and the photographs.



John Cresswell

4 March 1939 – 20 Feb 2019



John was born in Southbourne and attended Stourfield School. On leaving school he worked in the drawing office of the de Havilland Aircraft Company in Christchurch. He then moved to London and worked in the drawing office of the Chemistry Department of University College for 33 years. During this time he met Pat and they were married in 1977. He retired in 1998 and moved to Bournemouth in the year 2000.



John Cresswell passed away in Bournemouth Hospital after a protracted illness not having been able to visit the Society for some months. John joined the Society in 2000 and soon immersed himself in its activities. He sorted

the old records of the press cuttings and sorted some of the old documents into a form of archive. In 2006 he became a Trustee and continued in that position until 2010. Also in 2006 he took up the post of Curator which he held until 2010 when he started the General Section as its Chairman. In 2007-2008 he was President of the Society.

As well as the natural sciences John was very interested in history, particularly that of the local area and he researched many areas of interest. He also researched the history of 39 Christchurch Road and wrote the details in a short paper; he conducted tours of the building during Architectural Week.

John was not only a member of BNSS but of many other local societies and organisations volunteering at Hengistbury Head and supporting the Friends of Fisherman's Walk. John also had articles on local topics published in the Bournemouth Echo.

His efforts for the Society and other organisations will be sorely missed.

He leaves his wife Pat and sister Margaret.

Steve Limburn & Ray Chapman

Thank you for the comments regarding the newsletter, and to those requesting a hard copy (which I admit is preferable), these are available for £1 at the BNSS. If you do like it, it is thanks to your contributions, the articles or photos submitted, so keep doing so, on any subject you wish, to do with the Society, even if salacious or critical. Keep sending to

ianjulian@virginmedia.com.

**Find us on Facebook
Twitter and Instagram**



and follow @BNSS1 on

*Sitting in the cell, 6 ft by 3 ft,
no windows, no light, no bed-
ding, as suffered by the Tol-
puddle Martyrs - Dorchester
Court BNSS coach trip*

