BOURNEMOUTH NATURAL SCIENCE SOCIETY & MUSEUM

Share our love of science

Newsletter Autumn 2021

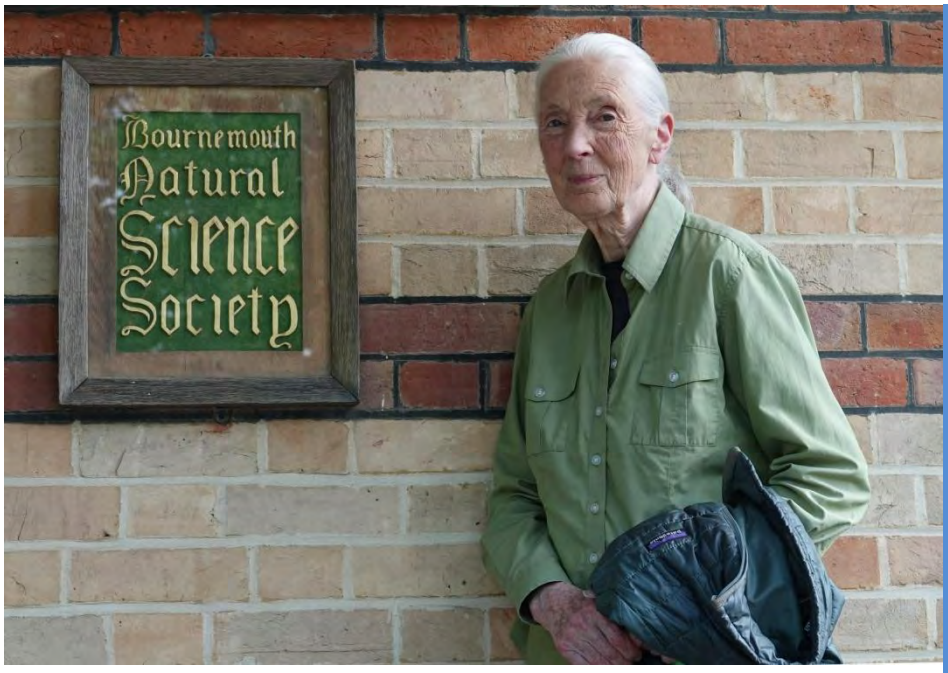


Photo credit - Pam Field

In this Issue:

www.bnss.org.uk

Charity No. 1165591

Jane Goodall at the BNSS *Pam Field*

As many of you will know Dame Jane Goodall is one of our patrons who, because of her influence, spends much of her time travelling the globe spreading knowledge relating to conservation and climate change belying her age. Due to the pandemic her travelling has been greatly curtailed and consequently she has spent more time than normal at her home in Bournemouth. Once we came out of the last lockdown and things became a little more normal, Jane found herself in great demand for interviews either on Zoom or in some cases 'in person'. Understandably she felt that it would be helpful if there was a suitable place for in person' interviews to be held, and happily, the BNSS was suggested.

It has been our pleasure to host a number of interviews in the last couple of months. It was my particular delight to have had the opportunity to chat to her on one occasion when there was a long gap between two interviews on one day. She was easy to talk to as you might expect. On that day I did suggest that she must get tired doing the interviews. She then told me that she had done two interviews on Zoom before she came to us that morning and that she had another two booked for when she got home. The last one started at 9pm! She has more energy than I have. It is hoped that we can continue to help with interview locations again while she remains in Bournemouth.

Reminder for your diaries
BNSS AGM Saturday December 11th 2.30pm

2 BES (Pronounced Bess) *Joyce Navarro, Chair of Egyptology writes about one of the Egyptian deities*

Bes is a domestic dwarf god often depicted with feathered headdress, sword and his tongue sticking out. Many Ancient Egyptian households would have items depicting him especially if they had babies or children. In our Egyptian room, we have an example of a jar, probably homemade, depicting him. Many young visitors delight in seeing this object and I am always happy to explain to them the story surrounding him as he happens to be my favourite cheeky little Egyptian god.

Jar showing reresentation of Egyptian god Bes. Photo credit: Joyce Navarro

Champion of everything, good protector against everything bad – Ancient Egypt's pint-sized, tongue-lolling 'Super Hero'. He was also the companion of Taweret the Hippopotamus Goddess, patron of women in pregnancy and childbirth. When a woman was in labour, Bes would dance around banging a drum or clashing knives or pans together to make as much noise as he could to ward off evil spirits.

Bes, the little hero had many roles:-
- Guardian of Mothers in child labour, warding off bad spirits
- Guardian against snakes and dangerous creatures at night
- Deity of joy, music, laughter and general merry making

This you may not know – apart from the Goddess Hathor, Bes is the only deity often depicted head-on rather than in profile. It was believed that when a baby giggles and smiles for no apparent reason then Bes is nearby blowing raspberries and making funny faces to keep the evil spirits away. Much of the text above comes from the children's book "The Story of Bes" by Shelli Wright Johnson. It is a super paperback that I would recommend reading for a light-hearted but delightfully entertaining look at BES and the Ancient Egyptians' tales surrounding him.

Behind the scenes at the museum: the Pest Check *Jacque Bainbridge*

Some of you may have wondered at the plastic or paper boxes on the floors of the museum, or wondered why Ray or I were crawling around under cabinets! A museum like ours is a feast to many of the insects with an appetite fur, feathers or skin (or indeed other insects). Beetles, moths, silverfish and many more can do untold damage to a valuable specimen. Prevention is better than cure, so the traps hold sticky paper to show what is present and where. Often all that is caught is the odd spider, fly or woodlouse, but we recently had some alarming catches in the museum room – the dreaded museum beetle and various moth pests. With the help of Colin, Keith and Jonathan an unsealed fireplace was found behind the Sections cabinet, with a long-dead, well-eaten pigeon in the grate. This has now been removed and the area treated with "Constrain", a conservation grade safe insecticide. Our guard can never be let down, so continue to expect to see me rooting under cabinets from the heights of the attics to the depths of Geology.

Left, museum beetles; right, pest trap catch. Photo credit: Jacque Bainbridge

OBITUARIES: Dame Margaret Seward 1935-2021 *Jill Abbot*

A distinguished past member of BNSS, Dame Margaret Seward died in July at the age of 85. Margaret and her husband Gordon moved to Bournemouth in 1994. One who smashed glass ceilings throughout her career, Dame Margaret became first woman president of the GDC in 1994. Mike Skivington remembers, "Margaret was a most remarkable woman. I knew her a bit as she had been President of our local medical society as well as a BNSS member. She was Editor of the British Dental Journal, Chief Dental Officer (the equivalent of Chris Whitty) and President of the General Dental Council (The body that runs the Dental Register). So really there was almost no influential post in her profession she did not hold. As regards Margaret's connection with anaesthesia, as President of the GDC she had general anaesthesia in general dental surgeries banned after a number of sad cases where fit children died under general anaesthesia at the dentist." Mary Thornton recalls Dame Margaret as one who spontaneously offered encouragement and support to other women embarking on new roles. Dame Margaret is survived by her husband Gordon who was also very eminent in the field of Oral Surgery and is a CBE.

From her time as editor of the BDJ

Mike Downing

Jill Abbot & Steve Limburn

from BNSS Photodatabase

It was with great sadness that we learned of the death of Mike Downing at the age of 74 after a long period of ill health. After first working in Wales, Mike and Judy moved to this area with their two young children for him to take up a new post at an electronics company. Mike was always a devoted family man supporting everyone in their interests and sharing his own of walking, cycling and sport. He was a great home handyman and enjoyed a creative challenge, which included planning and making gardens. Retirement came early and Mike joined BNSS where his expertise and good nature were quickly put to good use. His boyhood explorations of the Yorkshire moors were invaluable in planning and leading field trips for the Botany section along with other enthusiasts. His organisational skills led to him taking on the task of coordinating the annual and quarterly programme of lectures, workshops and field trips for the society. Mike and Judy together were great supporters, attending talks and helping at events whenever they could until Mike's health began to fail. Many members will remember him with great affection.

Michael Faherty *Jill Abbot*

Keen botanists will remember past member Michael Faherty who passed away in August. He led many field trips for both botany and mycology. Originally from Wolverhampton, Mike's career as a senior language teacher took him to Manchester and London before he retired to Bournemouth. But Mike's interests took him all round the world, his keen ear enabling him to pick up languages wherever he went. He was a keen and talented photographer. Many thousands of his pictures may be found on the National Geographic Society website. Another passion was for the ancient milestones and way markers of the UK. These he photographed and collated in his role as an officer of the Milestone Society. Mike assembled his own collections of unusual artifacts including cast iron boot scrapers. Always intrigued by quirky objects in the natural and built environments, Mike enjoyed sharing the wonders he found. He leaves his widow Liz, and their son and daughter.

4 Fuzzy Blobs – A Guide for the Perplexed *James Fradgley*

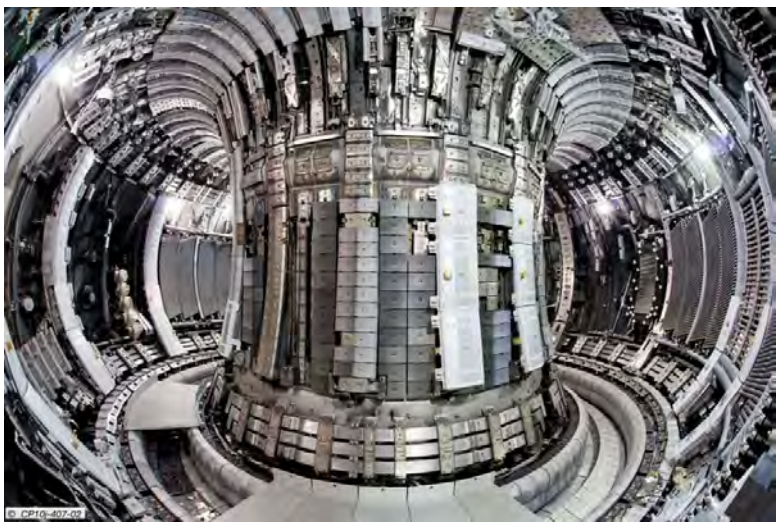
First, **Steve Tonkin** talked about emission nebulae, predominantly showing H-alpha. These look busy but are a harder vacuum than anything we can do on Earth. Colours may come from red H-alpha to blue from scattered light: different angles may give us Rayleigh or Mie scattering. These are almost always illuminated by a very bright embedded star. We then looked at planetary nebulae, the gravestones of Sun-like stars, and supernovae which come from the explosion of more massive stars. The dust these stars recycle into the interstellar medium can then go towards forming the next generation of stars. The Sun itself is probably a third-generation star.

Then we turned to spiral nebulae, and the historical argument about whether they were part of the Milky Way or not, which was resolved by Hubble and Humason using Cepheids that Henrietta Swan Leavitt had discovered. Lastly, we looked at clusters. Open clusters, e.g. the Pleiades, are small groupings of stars that formed from a single cloud and are generally in the galactic plane where such clouds are found. Globular clusters, aka galactic clusters, have hundreds of thousands of stars, orbit around the Milky Way, and some of which may be the core remnant of small galaxies that were absorbed by the Milky Way. 100 years ago, Harlow Shapley used their distribution to show the Sun is far from the centre of the Milky Way.

Spiral nebula M 51 by the Lick observatory 1900

Nuclear Fusion: Harnessing the Power of the Sun *James Fradgley*

Dr. Chantal Nobs (Culham Centre for Fusion Energy) talked through the history since WWII of devices that tried to make fusion work, including the infamous "Zeta" machine that didn't deliver what was claimed. Her examples were mainly Tokamak machines, and she covered the JET (Joint European Torus) machine's history in some detail, which is what she works with now. After JET which will be shut down in a few years, she went on to discuss the much larger ITER machine which is under development in France. All these are very international efforts, and the Brexit decision won't affect the UK's involvement.



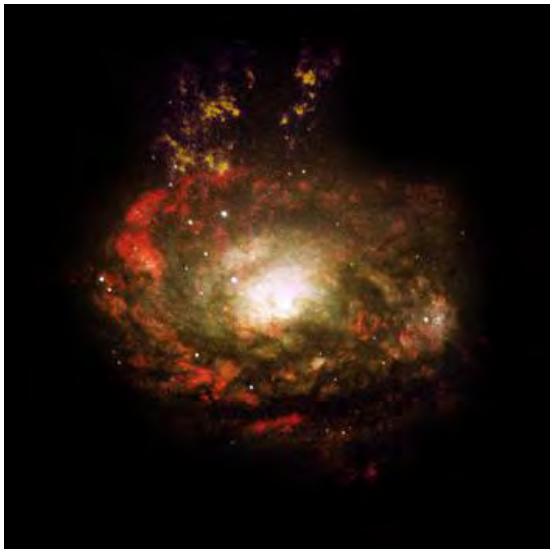
Chantal then looked at the decommissioning of JET and the planned way to handle the radioactive components, including use of robots. The D-T reaction (deuterium tritium) reaction was looked at, as these are the easiest isotopes of hydrogen to fuse. Deuterium is readily available in water, but tritium supplies are a problem. Much of it comes from lithium, which is itself not a very common element. After the talk there were many questions, which continued for almost as long as the talk itself.

Internal view of the JET tokamak (from EFDA-JET public relations page)

Interacting Galaxies *James Fradgley*

William Joyce started by covering the different sorts of galaxies. He gave an explanation of many different types of structure with illustrations. Galaxies are not very widely spaced in the universe in relation to their size and many of them interact. He covered interactions, again with many illustrations.

He then continued by looking at black holes and different apparent types of jet, e.g. M81, including blazars and quasars, which are generally viewed as being the same type of object but seen from different angles. These very active galactic nuclei are all in the distant past and distant universe, it is thought because the black holes that power them may have run out of fuel. Seyferts are galaxies that may be intermittently active.



Circinus Galaxy, a Type II Seyfert galaxy. Hubble image produced by NASA & Space Telescope Sci. Inst.

Galaxy mergers is another area that he was well able to illustrate, including a simulation of the merger between the Andromeda galaxy M31 and the Milky Way. The merger of the central supermassive black holes sometimes happens, but often there are 2 such black holes which will presumably merge eventually. William commented that active galaxies is a very hot research topic.

Astronomical Events that Influenced History *James Fradgley*

To start, **Graham Bryant** discussed some of the orbital factors of the Earth and the Moon, and the resultant tidal effects. Then he went on to cover several specific events. The first was the battle of Milvian Bridge, which was won by the emperor Constantine, claiming he'd seen a cross in his dream and then saw one in the sky. Graham suggested it could be a parhelic circle which can have the cross effect, and as a result Christianity became the established religion. Graham covered a lot of the connections between Shakespeare's Hamlet and Tycho Brahe. He then went on to cover the battle of Chancellorsville in the American civil war. General "Stonewall" Jackson was shot by his own side as he returned from a reconnaissance. Graham suggested that he was backlit by the full moon, and so was unrecognisable. As a brilliant general, who knows how the war would have progressed had he survived?

Did the moon sink the Titanic? The previous year had a very warm summer and the strong spring tides may have caused more calving of icebergs than usual. In addition, there was no moonlight and no bright stars low on the horizon, so the horizon would have been very dark: they hence couldn't have seen the iceberg till it was too late. D-day involved a lot of necessary timing in relation to needing a full moon, the right tides, and long daylight hours.

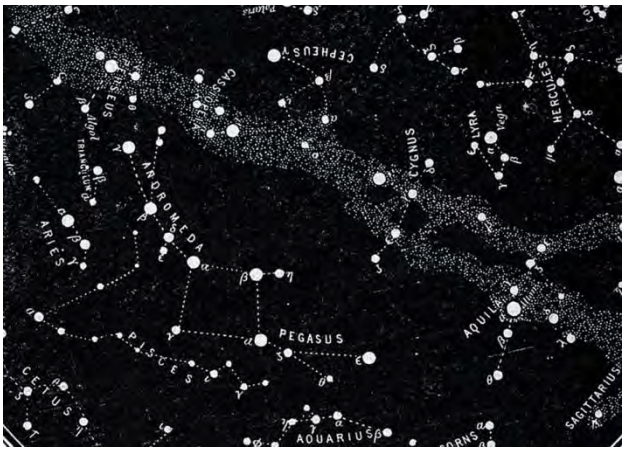
Illustration of Sinking of the RMS Titanic by Willy Stower 1912

Another WWII event was the sinking of The USS Indianapolis. After delivery of the atom bomb components to Tinian, it sailed on at full speed to Leyte. Visibility was poor that night, so it didn't zigzag. Then the clouds cleared momentarily and a Japanese submarine that was nearby saw it and was able to sink it. A sad aftermath is that a large percentage of the crew survived the attack but were killed by sharks. Finally, Graham mentioned a few things that could have changed history but didn't. The Tunguska event in 1908 over Siberia was not a problem, but had it happened over London, London would have been wiped out. Various other meteoric events could potentially have triggered a war.

6 Mythology of Stars: Perseus & Medusa *President Bruce Longstaff*

Perseus famously slew the gorgon, Medusa and rescued Andromeda.. He gives his name to a constellation in the northern sky, located down from his mother-in-law, Cassiopeia and her husband, Cepheus. To his right is princess Andromeda who he saved from the sea monster Cetus. There are 88 recognised modern constellations, most of them with Greek or Roman names and mythical origins. It is no coincidence that this is the area of the ancient world that has the best stargazing conditions. Stories were made up about gods and kings who were assumed to cast good or bad omens on humans below. Perseus was born of Danae, a mortal, and Zeus chief of the gods. Danae's father, Acrisius, King of Argos, had been told by the oracle at Delphi that he would be slain by his daughter's child. He imprisoned her in an underground chamber but Zeus (Jupiter) managed to get to Danae and she was delivered of a baby boy. The chief stars in Perseus, the constellation, are Algenib, also known as Mirfak which means elbow, with Algol (demon) two spectral stars and Menkib (leg of Perseus) along with more than twenty other bodies.

Perseus with the Head of Medusa by Benvenuto Cellini from Tuscany official tourism website



Constellations from article by Normal Lattey, 1907

Durotriges *Bryan Popple*

Dr. Miles Russell explained that the idea that the Romans began a violent campaign against hillforts in south-west Britain in AD 43, conquering the local Iron Age tribes and imposing a new order, is wrong and that recent work by students and staff at Bournemouth University (BU) have re-evaluated the archaeological evidence, suggesting a far less violent story. Seutonius's account details 30 battles involving 20 towns, but in 1986, Niall Sharples suggested Maiden Castle was abandoned by 100BC; the many burials there were carbon dated to 50BC – 90AD. Other sites such as Hod Hill and Spetisbury show similar stories.

Lake Farm – a reconstruction looking south, based on the geophysical survey results. It shows the eastern supply road between workshops and entering the fortress's rear gateway & the road from the main gateway heading towards Badbury Rings.

Photo Credit:
David John, BU

At Lake Farm in Wimborne, where an early Roman fort was discovered but was not visible on surface, pits, armour, pottery and a lead-lined tank were found during Ian Horsey's excavations of 1978-9. The fort had an area of about 30 acres. Evidence of Roman occupation finished around 65AD, according to a Magnetometer survey by BU's Dave Stewart & Paul Cheetham, including the officers' quarters, barracks and Command Headquarters etc. Vespasian was a resident of Dorset from 43-47AD and there is evidence that his wife and daughter, Domitilla the Elder and Younger, were here in 45AD. Likely to have been at Lake Farm?

The Great Landslide *Jacque Bainbridge*

Richard Edmonds was the Jurassic Coast Project manager and gave us a detailed talk on the massive landslide at Bindon, west of Lyme Regis at Christmas in 1839. About 50 acres (ca. 20 ha) and 8 million tons of rock slipped toward the sea.

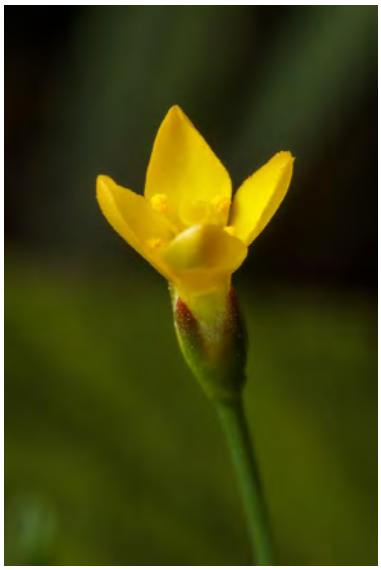
Dr. William Buckland, William Dawson and Rev.W.D. Conybeare happened to be in the area and took extensive measurements with Mary Buckland providing watercolour illustrations. These were published as "A Memoir and views on the landslips on the coast of E.Devon &c." in 1840 (this interesting paper can be read on the Lyme Regis Museum website). Richard has spent a great deal of time and effort reassessing the nature and mechanics of the slip, aided by new photographic drone and LIDAR surveys conducted by English Heritage. Some of his conclusions are still controversial but go a long way towards interpreting this major landscape event.

The Great Chasm, part of the Bindon Landslide, by Mary Buckland 1840 courtesy of Lyme Regis Museum

'Back from the Brink' – final report *Grenham Ireland*

Sophie Lake has been one of the project leaders in this nationwide attempt to stem the widespread extinction of vulnerable species - working on the project "Adding diversity to Dorset's Heaths". Naturalists from a wide variety of conservation bodies plus volunteers from across the county are looking to enhance small populations of rare species in a project led by Plantlife. This has involved surveying sites, creating new microhabitats informing the public and training volunteers.

Sophie talked to us about a few examples from the project. First, Yellow Centaury which is a small gentian, only growing to 2-12cm in height, and was initially restricted to 3 sites compared to the 10 found in the 1930s. The plant can be found in pools along trackways which remain wet in winter but heaths are far less used nowadays and making new ruts can create new habitats – Yellow Centaury is now flourishing at 6 sites in Purbeck.



Yellow Centaury

Clubmosses are more like ferns than mosses and these were some of the first plants to colonise land. The Marsh Clubmoss grows on wet heaths but is reliant on small areas of bare ground created by livestock or vehicles. Work has shown it appears to need a degree of compaction as well as occasional disturbance. Its decline has mainly been due to the loss of traditional management of heathland but it also requires the presence of an obligate fungus to complete its life cycle.

The Purbeck Mason Wasp is classified as endangered. It has exacting requirements needing sandy ground with some clay content in which to build a nest. Bell heather is also important both as a food plant for the Heath Button Moth caterpillar, which the wasp paralyses and uses as a food source for its larva, and also as a nectar source for the adult moth. Scrapes have been made across Purbeck both by hand and using machinery and it is hoped that these potential new sites will link existing populations.

Purbeck Mason Wasp.
Photo credit for both images : Alex Hales & 'Back from the Brink'

8 'Rockpooling' – *Grenham Ireland*

Mary Thornton invited **Julie Hatcher** to give a talk about rock pools. She described the animals that live, or become trapped in them, and the variable conditions of temperature and salinity that the inhabitants need to tolerate. She described some of the familiar ones such as limpets which browse using their radulas on algae-covered rocks but return to their 'home' each day which gives them a tight fit to their rock to withstand wave action and predators. Some molluscs have much reduced internal shells and the 'sea hare' can look like a piece of kelp. It is also capable of expelling purple ink. She also discussed how, due to climate change, some local species are being replaced by those normally found in warmer waters such as the St. Piran's hermit crab previously only found in Cornwall and further south but now present in Dorset.

We learned how to distinguish blennies from gobies (the latter has a divided dorsal fin) and about 'cryptic animals'. These small animals can be found by shaking seaweed in sea water and observing what is released against a white tray, creatures such as the skeleton shrimp and the green sea slug. Much more information is available on Julie's Facebook pages.

Sea hare (15cm long) in an aquarium showing its 'horns'. Photo credit: G. Ireland

Wildlife of Poland – *Jill Abbot*

White stork on nest. Photo credit: Jill Abbot

Courtesy of Naturetrek, our speaker **Richard Bashford** of the RSPB and BTO took us to the remarkable natural landscapes and wildlife of eastern Poland, and to the largest forest in Europe, the greater part of which extends across the border into Belarus. Initially, we were shown marshy habitats interspersed with rustic villages and woodland. The countryside here is still cultivated with horsedrawn ploughs, growing an assortment of crops in strips. It is the perfect habitat for the elegant and plentiful cranes. Former gravel pits are now fishponds where the bell-like croak of fire-bellied toads fills the air, red-necked and black-necked grebe breed and penduline tits create their elaborate nests. White storks nest on rooftops or poles and use the same nests each breeding season just adding more sticks.

In marshland, black-tailed godwits nest in large breeding colonies, as do ruffs with their lecking display and the great snipe, also a lecking bird. In richer areas of farmland the corncrake is abundant. The core forest area has been left entirely to nature since the War, although wild bison were reintroduced and are now given feed in hard winters. Access is only permitted on foot or by bicycle and with a guide. Ten species of woodpecker include white-backed, three-toed and the loudest one, the black woodpecker. Richard showed many other fascinating species, perhaps the most delightful being the tennis ball-sized pygmy owl.

Illustration of a lek with ruffs displaying their plumage. Johan Fredrick Naumann, Natural history of the birds of central Europe, 3rd Ed. Revised by G. Berg et al.; Edited by Carl R. Hennicke. 1905 .

See Great Bustard event p12

Life on the wild side – *Jonathan McGowan* *(Ed. Our Zoology Chair, now lives in the Lychett Bay/Turlin Moor area having moved from Boscombe)*

Poole Harbour, with its large natural habitat of islands, reedbeds, marine grasslands and heathland, is the most biodiverse area in the whole of the UK. It provides some of southern England's most important habitats for a variety of species. The southern shores of the harbour are wilder than the northern areas which are built up, but to the north-east, around Lytchett Bay it can be just as rewarding as the southern fringes in respect to birds, reptiles, plants and insects. Lytchett Bay has several nature reserves on its shores that are popular among bird watchers, botanists and entomologists alike - there is something for everyone, encompassing all the scientific sections within the BNSS.

Ravens. Photo credit: Jonathan McGowan

Although there is some disturbance by people and dogs, the bay is relatively quiet in comparison to the other parts of the harbour. You will see no speed boats, jet skis or kite surfers here. The bay is shallow and not best suited to such pursuits. Usually there are no boats in Lytchett Bay except the odd small one that has lost its moorings and edged its way through the channel, to be abandoned by the tide in the reedbeds, often to rot down and become embedded with seashore plants. There is a no-fishing policy within the bay.

When the tide is out, waders come to feed; curlews, whimbrel, redshank, black-tailed godwit, oyster catchers and Canada geese are the most common species during summertime. During the winter, avocets, dunlin, sandpipers of several species, bar-tailed godwits, widgeon, Brent geese, mergansers and divers can be seen. All of this bird life brings in raptors, hunting all year round. Marsh harriers can be seen most days especially in fine weather, skirting the meadows and reedbeds for smaller birds or mammals. Sparrow hawks can be seen hunting often harassed by carrion crows or ravens that can be seen daily around Lytchett Bay. Peregrine falcons regularly visit to hunt any species of birds and often take them to feed chicks in Poole town centre. Other falcons too use the bay such Merlin in winter, and red-footed falcon in spring time. These rare birds turn up every year locally but do not stay. Kestrels can be seen hunting voles and common lizards.

During the spring and autumn migration runs, ospreys can be seen on most days fishing in the bay. It is one of the best places to see these now resident birds, and migrants, as it is quiet without much human disturbance. Some days one can see three or more individuals skirting the shallower reaches of the bay, searching for mullet, sea trout and small bass. The bay is crammed with fish and is an important nursery for several species.

Huge flocks of cormorant can be seen when the tide is out, feeding on marooned small fish within ponds within the sand bars. Up to six hundred individuals occasionally materialize in a frenzy of attack; they appear from nowhere on cue when the time is right.

/continued

Osprey. Photo credit: Jonathan McGowan

Life on the wild side (continued) *Jonathan McGowan*

Alongside these cormorants are dozens of egrets, little and great white are often together along with grey herons. A few cattle egrets can be seen around Lytchett Fields reserve feeding alongside cattle and sika deer.

The sika play a vital role in keeping the area biodiverse as their droppings fertilize and create a wealth of insect life so important for birds of all species especially the passerines, the warblers, swallows, water rail, cuckoo and buntings. Cetti's warblers can be heard throughout the year especially springtime, often numbering dozens. Reed buntings during winter can be seen around Turlin Moor and Upton edges of the reedbeds, alongside small flocks of bearded tits. The bearded tits can number fourteen in a flock, piping their little notes often unseen unless they all take flight from the reeds. One can observe them from close up if one is quiet and remain stationary. Many hundreds of Mediterranean black-headed gulls nest nearby and their calls can be heard through spring and early summer, often flying overhead unseen! Despite them being pure white!

Sika deer stag. Photo credit: Jonathan McGowan

Water rails are numerous. Less often seen than heard, some enter the mudflats at low tide clearly visible from the shores. Snipe stand around in open fields when waterlogged after rain, and in winter hundreds of oystercatchers feed on earth worms on the rugby field. Bittern can be seen flying low or standing on the edge of the reeds. Foxes can be seen during the daytime stalking the larger birds when the tide is out, but not daring to walk out onto the mud for obvious reasons. One or two kingfishers can be seen fishing the drains.

Sunset. Photo credit: Jonathan McGowan

This area is sensitive being on the edge of the conurbation and the wild side of the harbour but with education and careful management it should become a better choice to observe many of the harbour's more shy creatures.

Turlin Moor is renowned for 'wild people' as well as wild animals, and that is still the same, but the wild people syndrome lessens over the years, these days peace is more common than noise, and more people are out with bins and camera rather than off road motorbikes.

[Ed. Next time, more about the mammals, reptiles and invertebrates of Lytchett Bay]

SOCIETY NEWS: Museum Opening in August 2021 *Pam Field*

As had been our practice for several years, it was decided by the trustees that we would open the museum to visitors on Wednesdays, Fridays and Saturdays during August from 10am to 4pm. Unfortunately it did not prove possible to find enough stewards to manage three days each week in addition to the volunteers' usual Tuesdays so we settled for Fridays and Saturdays. Obviously with the problems created by the pandemic this was not a straightforward thing to do.

It was felt that in order to keep groups of visitors separate from each other it would be necessary to have some form of booking system. There was not found to be any "off the shelf" programme that would be suitable so Grenham Ireland, greatly assisted by Richard Griffin, one of our volunteers, adapted one to fit the bill. Richard wrote extra code and did extensive testing as well as documenting all the steps involved. We finally had a system on our website by which visitors could book a half hourly time slot which meant that we could ensure that there was only one individual or group on each floor of the museum at a time. The system also stored contact details for the visitors so that, in the case of an infection breaking out, we could notify all possible contacts and provided a booking summary of the bookings made. In addition to pre-booking, we devised a 'recommended route' around the museum which was generally successful in operation.

I was delighted to hear from Grenham two days after the system went live on the website that bookings were flooding in. We had no idea whether anyone would come at all as we had not been open to the public since March 2020 so the interest was very gratifying. In all, 260 people booked to visit during the month. The downside was that they did not all arrive as expected! In fact there were 76 no shows, so roughly 30%. Notwithstanding that disappointment we received roughly £500 in donations and sale proceeds during the period. The trustees owe a vote of thanks to all the volunteers who gave up their time to come to help each day particularly given that the gaps created by non-attendance sometimes caused considerable periods of tedium.

Since 7th September, the museum has been open to visitors and members as well as volunteers on Tuesdays and reasonable numbers of the general public seem to be taking advantage of this.

Ed. Pam omits to mention her important role in organising the stewards before and during the openings without which we could not have opened to the public.

Photo credit: Jill Abbot

Open Garden Afternoon *Jill Abbot*

An enjoyable Saturday afternoon was spent on 11th September in the BNSS garden. The weather was kind. Showers were threatened but the sun emerged so it was pleasantly warm and we were able to observe sunspots through the solar scope kindly demonstrated by Kate Eiloart. Carol and Marilyn manned the plant stall, dispensing advice and sharing stories. Keith Patenotte showed native butterflies from the collection, while Mark gave wildlife gardening tips and showed some live moths. In the lecture hall a film narrated by David Attenborough showed clips of amazing wildlife in action. Jo Crane answered questions about the new AV system. Jacque and Joyce expertly dispensed tea and cake. Thanks to everyone involved both on the day and in the preparation for it.

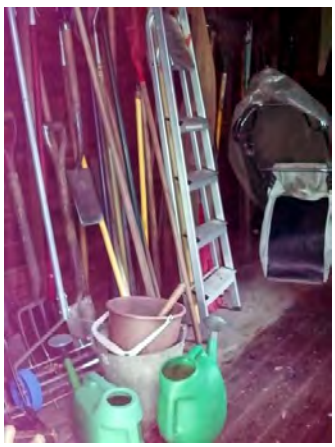


Photo credit: Jill Abbot

Members who spent time in our garden on 11th September will have seen some of the problems that face the small gardening team. We just don't have the time or the energy that are needed to keep up with the maintenance. Working on Tuesday mornings we do what we can. If other members were able to add to our regular Tuesday crew or help with a monthly working party on another day, the garden would greatly benefit.

In addition, there are special tasks, each of which is looking for a volunteer. Pond maintenance, Repair and Maintenance of "bug houses", turning compost heaps, sorting out the sheds and repairing or getting rid of old rusty tools. Who will take up the challenge? Email contact@bnss.org.uk or phone to leave your details.

Future Event – Book by October 31st

Bombers of the Bird World!

Photo credit : Gt. Bustard Group

*Book a BNSS trip to Salisbury Plain to witness the reintroduction of the **Great Bustard**. We're looking at a 2hr long visit on Friday 25th March 2022 in Land Rover Station wagons (£20 a head) plus an hour there and back from the museum, lunch and a Visitor Centre – leave the day free! This is the build up to the breeding season where the world's heaviest flying bird prances like a pony on the land - desperately trying to impress the petite hens - there's a big difference in size. In 1873 the last one was killed on the Plain. In 2004, the first birds were re-introduced. Now the Bustards are self-sustaining. Please Book with Pam by the 31st October to contact@bnss.org.uk or phone 01202 553525 and leave a message. Once we have the numbers and the date confirmed, more information and transport arrangements will follow. Let's get up to Salisbury Plain and get in the mood!* ***James Dovey (Chair Ornithology)***

More Volunteers needed please! *Grenham Ireland*

Following on from the two pieces overleaf, I would like to encourage more members to become more involved in the Society's activities. As well as joining the team of stewards or gardeners, I would welcome talking to anyone who would be interested in editing the Newsletter (or a Newsletter) or making contributions to the BNSS Website. We are also **urgently** looking for a new **Chair of Assembly** as Jill Abbot steps down after the AGM.

BNSS Photographic Competition

Deadline extended until ***November 30th***

New Membership Secretary

Sally Grant has taken over from James Fradgley as Membership Secretary. Please send all membership enquiries to: bnssmembership@gmail.com

New Feature 'Symbol Sudoku'

contributed by James Fradgley

	!	*						
			!		*	%		
		$		+		!	*	
	#			*		$		£
+		&					=	*
	*			$		&		+
		!		#		£	+	
			&		$	=		
	%	=						

Newsletter edited by G. Ireland & J. Abbot BNSS, 39 Christchurch Road, Bournemouth, Dorset BH1 3NS. Email: contact@ bnss.org.uk Tel: 01202 553525