

SOCIETY BUSINESS

50th ANNIVERSARY OF THE BRITISH LICHEN SOCIETY and ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING, 11-13 JANUARY 2008

**NETTLECOMBE COURT FIELD CENTRE, WILLITON , TAUNTON,
SOMERSET TA4 4HS**

Nominations

Nominations for Officers for 2008 and two members of Council for the period 2008-2011 should be sent by e-mail or in writing to the Secretary, c/o Department of Botany, The Natural History Museum, Cromwell Road, London SW7 5BD before 12th December 2007. No person may be nominated without their consent. As there has been a change in the constitution to allow 9 elected members to serve on Council for three years we are only electing two persons to replace John Skinner and William Purvis.

Council Meeting

Council will meet at **14.00 on Friday 11th January 2008** at Nettlecombe Field Centre. Please let the Secretary have any items you wish Council to discuss by 12th December, 2007.

This weekend we are celebrating the 50th year of the British Lichen Society and it is an opportunity for all members to meet, reminisce and also to plan for the future. All contact details and booking instructions are provided in the Summer Bulletin (and can also be viewed on the BLS website). The celebration dinner will be held on Saturday night and Mark Bolland has made a special price of £65 for those people who wish to come just for the AGM on Saturday and leave on Sunday after breakfast. This price includes a buffet lunch, the celebration dinner and bed and breakfast on Saturday night. Concerning accommodation; all single rooms are already booked so arrange to share with other people where possible. If you are desperate to have a single room please contact the centre to arrange accommodation in a local B&B.

The programme:

The Secret Life of Lichens exhibition will be on show at Nettlecombe all weekend so please take the opportunity to see this spectacular interpretation of lichens and the people who study them.

The Geography lab is reserved to put up exhibits of historical or lichen interest from 14.00, **Friday 11 January** onwards. This is an opportunity for members to see what you are doing so please contribute items to this. Display boards and tables will be available but we need to organise this well before the meeting so please let Scott LaGreca know (by e-mail S.LaGreca@nhm.ac.uk, or snail mail, NOT telephone as Scott is away) the subject and/or title of your exhibit and space required (e.g table, electrical or internet connection) **by 12 December, 2006**. You are also welcome to contribute items to the exhibition on Saturday morning after 9.00 a.m.

Friday evening

Wine or soft drinks will be served at 18.30 in the Staff Sitting Room prior to dinner in the Great Hall at 19 p.m.

We aim to enliven proceedings on Friday evening by taking a lighthearted approach to lichens and lichenology by remembering people who have contributed to our knowledge over time. We are celebrating 50 years of the BLS, and we ask you to show your appreciation of lichens and lichenologists **by dressing up as a lichen or a lichenologist of your choice (alive or dead)**. We realise that members may need access to archive material (some of which is available on Google), and Mark Seaward as archivist of the BLS has agreed to help in this matter. We intend to prepare a Rogues Gallery of lichenologists, but at the time of going to press we have not arranged to put it on the website, so do check to see if it is there. Remember, that your dress or accessories must contain good clues for rapid identification. Will there be a prize for the “best dressed lichen/lichenologist”? Wait and see.

Also on Friday evening we would like to commemorate special people and events by way of slides or overheads. As this requires some co-ordination please contact Mark Seaward to say what you have to offer in this line. To keep up our international flavour David Richardson will give a short presentation on his visit to Sable Island and Simon Davey will give an account of the joint BLS and Tuckermann workshop in Newfoundland.

The book sale. Please bring books or other items for sale. There will be a special table reserved for books included in the sale in the staff sitting room. Please hand these to Mark [Seaward] before 18.00 on Friday. This will be run on paper bids which Mark will assess on Sunday morning after breakfast. 25% of the proceeds from the sale goes to the BLS.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING/EXHIBITIONS/LECTURE MEETING

Saturday, 12th January, 2008

The Annual General Meeting will be held in the Common Room at Nettlecombe Field Centre, Williton, Taunton, Somerset TA4 4HS.

- 10.00 Coffee will be served in the staff sitting room
- 10.30 Annual General Meeting

AGENDA

1. Apologies for absence
2. Minutes of the Annual General Meeting January 2006
3. Matters arising
4. Officers and Committee Chair Reports
5. Ursula Duncan Awards
6. Honorary member award
7. Field Meetings 2007-2008
8. Election of Officers and two members of Council including vacant positions of Bulletin Editor, Secretary and Librarian (including a home for the library!)
9. Any other business
10. Date and place of next AGM

12.45 Buffet lunch in the Great Hall (Exhibits will still be on view until Sunday)

Lecture Meeting: **Past, present and future of the British Lichen Society.**

14.00 – 14.45 **Mark Seaward The British Lichen Society: historical reflection**

For more than three centuries great interest has been shown in the natural history of the British Isles, as testified by the vast number of local, regional and eventually national societies established to study all aspects of the subject, including of course lichenology. Over this period, various attempts were made by individuals to galvanize interest in lichenology at a national level, culminating in the establishment of the British Lichen Society in 1957, which will be reviewed. Attention will be paid to the state of lichenology 50 years ago and to the key players involved in establishing and developing the Society and in successfully promoting the subject, not only nationally but internationally, through a wide range of activities. The changes witnessed within and without the Society over the past half century will be charted, and some personal thoughts on its past, present and future will be presented. [The lecture will be illustrated by documents and photographs from the Society's archives and material submitted by members. Please contact Mark Seaward with any relevant material that you can provide including personal reminiscences, slides or other memorabilia so that these can be included in the talk or used on Friday evening, making it a special and personable event.]

14.45 – 15.30 **Christopher Ellis – The Only Constant is Change: climate as an emerging feature in a lichenologist's worries**

Lichenologists are familiar with change. As a community of specialists, BLS members have documented the effects of acid rain, changing nutrient loads, contrasting management factors, and (more recently) the recolonisation of lichens into post-industrial environments. Human-induced climate change has emerged as a major concern in the wider scientific community, and this presentation will explore its possible consequences for our lichen flora, exploring areas of uncertainty and the challenges to conservation. Chris Ellis will argue that as we better understand the importance of multiple interacting factors (pollutants, management) the recognition of additional drivers of change (climate) reinforces the need for specialist societies and expert recording, with an imperative to maintain our databases and ensure long-term monitoring.

15.30 - 16.00 Tea

16.00 – 16.45 **Christoph Scheidegger - Changing lichenology in a changing world**

During the past fifty years a series of technological developments have influenced lichenological research and improved our understanding of lichen ultrastructure, physiology, ecology and systematics. On the other hand complex societal problems such as environmental pollution, the global biodiversity crisis and climate change have led to conceptual progress in lichenological research. Lichenology has made major contributions to the development of methods on how to monitor diversity and its change and has provided early examples of how to implement the concept of integrative biology. I will give two examples of integrative lichenological projects and illustrate the successful outcome of the following 1) bringing together researchers of diverse expertise to identify, articulate and structure problems. 2) providing hierarchical exploration of the issue and 3) the application of concepts developed for lichen bioindication and monitoring projects to research, outreach and educational frameworks. I will argue that the approach is worth considering also in current lichen conservation concepts and programmes.

16.45 – 17.30 Janet Simkin – Much Ado about Data: recent advances in biological records

Most of us keep some record of the lichens we see, but what do we do with those records? Put together in a large database, the information they contain becomes a valuable resource for research and conservation. Computerising records has been an important part of the society's work for many years, but until recently, we lacked the technology to make full use of the data we held. Now, we have new and more powerful software. We are even putting our data on the internet through the NBN Gateway. Databases are no longer just about producing distribution maps, although these will always be important. This talk will explore some of the new facilities, and show how ready access to maps, site lists, time series and ecological data, can support the next fifty years of British lichenology.

Sunday 14 January

Field Excursion to Nettlecombe park, no vehicles required!

Details of the arrangements to be provided at the AGM.