

# Conversazione

***98<sup>th</sup> Annual Exhibition:  
Wonders of the Natural World***

***2017***



***Directory of exhibitors 50p***

***Cambridge Natural History Society  
(1857 – 2017)***



Friday 16<sup>th</sup> June  
1:00 pm – 6:00 pm  
Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> June  
10:00 am - 5:00 pm



[www.cnhs.org.uk](http://www.cnhs.org.uk)

[www.cnhs.org.uk](http://www.cnhs.org.uk)

# Welcome to the 98<sup>th</sup> Annual Conversazione

The Conversazione is the annual exhibition of the Cambridge Natural History Society. This is the largest exhibition of its kind in Cambridge, and covers all traditional aspects of natural history as well as modern biology and conservation.

‘Conversazione’ is an Italian word, roughly translated as ‘at home’. It usually means a social event expressed as an exhibition by members of a society. The CNHS Conversazione evolved out of the meetings of the Society, which at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century consisted of lectures, preceded by displays of specimens shown by members and discussed by the audience. The first Conversazione was held in 1913 but no meetings were held during the First World War. On the 12<sup>th</sup> May 1921 it was held in the Zoology Department and this tradition has continued every year to the present day.

Exhibitors are as varied as their exhibits: local naturalists, artists, conservation groups, members of the University and many others. Everyone is welcome!

We hope you enjoy the Society’s annual ‘at home’, and invite you to come again next year. If you are interested in joining the Society, you will find more information at the Society’s display.

*Kevin Hand, President, Cambridge Natural History Society*

Small donations towards the costs of staging  
the Conversazione are gratefully received.

## Directory of Exhibitors

*Exhibitors are listed alphabetically with information about their activities as well as about their displays. We hope this is useful.*

### **Ackroyd and Harvey**

<http://www.ackroydandharvey.com/>  
<http://www.conflictedseeds.com/>

#### *Slate works*

Three panels about the artworks, made of slate, on the Corn Exchange Street entrance to the David Attenborough Building and on the south wall of the Museum of Zoology's new whale gallery.

### **David R Bain**

david.r.bain@gmail.com

366 Harwich Road, Thorpe-le-Soken, Essex Telephone: 01255 861342

#### *The Sessile Oak: an overlooked tree in North Essex*

A poster presentation, previously shown at the Essex Field Club, discusses the surprising under-recording of such a large organism as Sessile Oak (*Quercus petraea*) in North Essex and possibly in Eastern England. Problems of intermediate hybrids are only a partial explanation for this oversight. This omission may shortly lead to providing leaf material for a national study of chloroplast DNA footprints of post-glacial recolonisation of the two native oak species, a field beyond my competence but with encouragement of a geneticist friend.

### **Henry Berman**

"Large Copper Butterfly", 104 Ramsey Road, St Ives PE27 3XW  
Telephone (day): 01480 462958

#### *Cuckoo bumblebees and their hosts*

Specimens of cuckoo bumblebees and their hosts, with further information.

## **Buglife**

<https://www.buglife.org.uk/>

Imogen burt & Steve Parnwell

[Imogen.burt@buglife.org.uk](mailto:Imogen.burt@buglife.org.uk)

Bug House, Ham Lane, Orton Waterville, Peterborough PE2 5UU

### *Bug Champions*

Buglife is the only organisation in Europe devoted to the conservation of all invertebrates. We're actively working to save Britain's rarest little animals, everything from bees to beetles, worms to woodlice and jumping spiders to jellyfish.

## **Butterfly Conservation Cambridgeshire & Essex branch**

[www.cambs-essex-butterflies.org.uk](http://www.cambs-essex-butterflies.org.uk)

### *Butterfly and moth conservation in Cambridgeshire*

## **Cam Valley Forum**

[www.colc.co.uk/cambridge/cam.valley.forum/](http://www.colc.co.uk/cambridge/cam.valley.forum/)

Jean Perraton

[jean@perraton.myzen.co.uk](mailto:jean@perraton.myzen.co.uk)

2 Penarth Place, Cambridge, CB3 9LU

Telephone (day & evening) 01223 311949

### *Protecting and improving the Cam and its tributaries*

Photos and text to illustrate aspects of the forum's work, and some of the threats to its well-being, including the spread of invasive floating pennywort (*Hydrocotyle ranunculoides*) and the pressures on the chalk aquifers that feed its head waters. The display will include a tank containing pennywort.

The Cam Valley Forum works to protect and improve the river Cam, its tributaries and adjacent landscapes. It does this in many ways, including through advocacy, spreading information and understanding, and direct action such as mobilising volunteers to remove invasive floating pennywort from the river.

## **Cambridge & Peterborough Amphibian and Reptile Group (CPARG)**

[candparg@gmail.com](mailto:candparg@gmail.com)

[www.groups.arguk.org/cparg](http://www.groups.arguk.org/cparg)

Steven Allain

### *An introduction to Cambridgeshire's herpetofauna*

A short overview of the amphibians and reptiles found within

Cambridgeshire, how to identify them and where they are found. Advice and guidance will also be given to those who wish to know more about recording or the events we organise.

CPARG aims to address the conservation of reptiles and amphibians in Cambridgeshire. As a volunteer-run group we also arrange a number of events and training opportunities for our members.

### **Cambridge Astronomical Association**

[www.caa-cya.org](http://www.caa-cya.org)

Brian Lister

Exhibitors: Paul Mardon & others

[btlister@btinternet.com](mailto:btlister@btinternet.com)

Telephone (day) 01223 420954

Institute of Astronomy, Madingley Road, Cambridge

#### *Cambridge Astronomical Association*

Cambridge Astronomical Association (CAA) & Cambridge Young Astronomers (CYA) cater for all levels of interest in astronomy from absolute beginners to experts, young and old. We aim to make astronomy interesting and fun with Monthly Speakers, Public Observing Sessions, Loan Telescopes, Newsletters, Library, Courses, and more.

### **Cambridge Conservation Volunteers**

[www.ccv.org.uk](http://www.ccv.org.uk)

*Volunteering for our wildlife for over 50 years*

### **Cambridge Group of the Wildlife Trust for Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire and Northamptonshire**

[http://www.wildlifebcn.org/localgroups\\_cambridge](http://www.wildlifebcn.org/localgroups_cambridge)

[cambridge.lgwt@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:cambridge.lgwt@yahoo.co.uk)

#### *Forthcoming activities*

The Cambridge Local Group organises talks and walks, usually on the last Wednesday of each month. The group covers the City of Cambridge and nearby villages but welcomes anyone interested to its events.

## **Cambridge Natural History Society**

<http://www.cnhs.org.uk>

Cambridge Natural History Society is open to everyone interested in Natural History - including zoology, botany, ecology, entomology, palaeontology, conservation and the environment. Talks cover a wide variety of topics, and there are exhibitions, excursions and field studies, and an annual dinner. Joining the Society gives you opportunities to meet people with shared interests and access to local experts.

*Welcome to Cambridge Natural History Society*

*The Cambridge Natural History Society a century ago*

*The Conversazione: a brief history*

*CNHS Grantchester Meadows Field Study 2016*

*CNHS field studies in previous years*

## **Cambridge Past Present and Future**

[www.cambridgeppf.org](http://www.cambridgeppf.org)

Ed Wombwell

[ecology@cambridgeppf.org](mailto:ecology@cambridgeppf.org)

Telephone (day) 01223 243830

*The EMBLEM Project*

A display of Cambridge PPF's new Ecological Monitoring for Biodiversity & Long-term Environmental Management (EMBLEM) Project; our vision, plans, partners, and how anyone can get involved in conservation in the area.

We are a small charity who are passionate about keeping Cambridge and the neighbouring villages and countryside special.

We own and care for a number of green open spaces and historic buildings for everyone to enjoy.

We deliver a packed programme of educational, cultural and recreational events for people of all ages.

We seek to give a voice to local people on local planning, heritage and development issues.

## **Cambridge Wild**

[www.cambridgewild.org.uk](http://www.cambridgewild.org.uk)

<https://www.facebook.com/cambridgewild/>

Mandy Haywood

[mandyhaywood@icloud.com](mailto:mandyhaywood@icloud.com)

Telephone (mobile) 07902 454367

Cambridge Wild is an informal network of people and groups interested in wild spaces, wildlife and how people interact with them. It provides access to information and helps pull together a programme of events from time to time.

*Green spaces and groups caring for them in Cambridge*

A large-scale map will show the location of green spaces in Cambridge, with information and leaflets about the groups who help look after them.

**Cambridgeshire Bird Club**

[www.cambridgeshirebirdclub.org.uk](http://www.cambridgeshirebirdclub.org.uk)

facebook [Cambridgeshire-Bird-Club-246564612060364](https://www.facebook.com/Cambridgeshire-Bird-Club-246564612060364)

The Cambridgeshire Bird Club promotes the study, recording and conservation of birds in Cambridgeshire and encourages a wider interest in natural history and the protection of county wildlife habitats.

*Cambridgeshire Bird Club*

Our activities, and some nests, too!

**Cambridgeshire Geological Society**

[www.cambsgeology.org](http://www.cambsgeology.org)

Chris Donnelly

[www.fenedgetrail.org](http://www.fenedgetrail.org)

[info@cambridgeshiregeologyclub.org](mailto:info@cambridgeshiregeologyclub.org)

*The geology of Cambridgeshire*

Photos, maps and examples of the geology and landscapes of Cambridgeshire, with information on how to discover local places of interest, including those on the Fen Edge Trail.

The Cambridgeshire Geological Society works to promote the understanding, enjoyment and conservation of geodiversity, particularly within Cambridgeshire by inspiring public understanding of, and interest in, geodiversity, raising awareness of the geodiversity of Cambridgeshire, and providing advice and guidance on Cambridgeshire's geodiversity and its conservation.

**Cambridgeshire Mammal Group**

[www.cambsmammalgroup.co.uk](http://www.cambsmammalgroup.co.uk)

Roger Featherstone

[roger.featherstone@btinternet.com](mailto:roger.featherstone@btinternet.com)

*Cambridgeshire Mammal Group*

The group created a mammal Atlas of Cambridgeshire in 2016. We conduct training activities and surveys as well as holding social events.

## **Countryside Restoration Trust**

countrysiderestorationtrust.com

*The Bourn free project*

Non-native invasive species control and the return of 'Ratty' on the Bourn Brook and upper cam catchment.

## **Ely Wildspace**

[www.elywildspace.org.uk/](http://www.elywildspace.org.uk/)

Tony Fulford

[tonyfulford@gmail.com](mailto:tonyfulford@gmail.com)

19 Mallow Close, Ely CB6 3WH

Telephone (day) 01353 659524 (evening) 01353 659524

(mobile) 0774 666 5195

*Ely Wildspace and its environs: surveying, monitoring and promoting nature on our doorstep*

- 1) The Ely Wildspace environment and its conservation.
- 2) Bees of Ely: cuckoo bees and their hosts.
- 3) Bird sound - locally: what it is and what we make of it (sonograms + audio).
- 4) Progress with the Ely Big Year, a sort of year-long Bioblitz compiling as comprehensive a catalogue of flora and fauna on the Ely Wildspace as we can manage.

Ely Wildspace promotes public awareness and involvement in natural history through volunteer-based activities, which are publicised on [www.elywildspace.org.uk/](http://www.elywildspace.org.uk/) .

## **Leah Fitzpatrick**

**STUDENT DISPLAY**

[naturalfitztory@outlook.com](mailto:naturalfitztory@outlook.com)

[www.naturalfitztory.tumblr.com](http://www.naturalfitztory.tumblr.com)

*Undercover Discover*

Suitable for children and adults, get hands on with a variety of real & replica animal skulls from badgers to zebras! Can you identify the mystery specimens to their skulls?

## **Friends of Cherry Hinton Brook**

[www.friendsofcherryhintonbrook.org.uk](http://www.friendsofcherryhintonbrook.org.uk)

[general-secretary@friendsofcherryhintonbrook.org.uk](mailto:general-secretary@friendsofcherryhintonbrook.org.uk)

*Cherry Hinton Brook – a wildlife haven*

Information about Cherry Hinton Brook, and the role of the Friends in keeping it a clean and pleasant environment.

The Friends' activities include maintaining and improving the appearance of the Brook; raising public awareness about the importance of the Brook for wildlife; improving the Brook as a home for wildlife: observing and monitoring the wildlife of the area: working with other organisations of similar interest.

## **Froglife**

<http://www.froglife.org/>  
[info@froglife.org](mailto:info@froglife.org)

1 Loxley, Werrington, Peterborough, PE4 5BW

Telephone (day) 01733602102

*Leaping forward for amphibians and reptiles*

An introduction to the work of the amphibian and reptile conservation charity, Froglife, with an emphasis on local projects in Peterborough and Cambridgeshire and Froglife's Year of the Toad campaign aimed to raise awareness of the current plight of the common toad.

## **Roger Horton**

[rogerhorton@zoho.com](mailto:rogerhorton@zoho.com)

145 St Bede's Crescent, Cambridge CB1 3UA

Telephone (mobile) 07455 563375

*Where are they now? Refinding Black Poplars in the NatHistCam area.*

The Black Poplar, often called "England's rarest tree", has frequently been recorded in and around Cambridge as native or planted specimens. The NatHistCam project gives the chance to re-examine this distribution.

## **Huntingdonshire Fauna and Flora Society**

[www.hffs.org.uk](http://www.hffs.org.uk)

Peter and Jenny Walker will be present on Saturday

[walkpeg@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:walkpeg@hotmail.co.uk)

6 Andrew Road, Eynesbury, St Neots, Camb

*General information & current projects*

## **Bob Jarman**

*The Lesser Redpoll – one of Cambridgeshire's rarest breeding birds*

Until about 1995 the Lesser Redpoll was a regular breeding bird across Cambridge. It then just disappeared – a trend observed nationally. The last county breeding record was in 2002 but a displaying male was seen over Carlton Way in 2016. This display asks the question: Why has it vanished?

*The House Sparrow – a future Rare Bird?*

In Cambridgeshire the rural House Sparrow is probably extinct due to farming intensification. In urban areas populations are declining. This poster looks at the reasons for the decline of one of our commonest and most familiar birds.

## **Dr Gwenda Kyd**

*Betula spp. – The Bountiful Birches*

From its symbolic use by the Romans to its modern day use in skincare, no tree has a wider range of uses and influences than birch. These include in food and drinks, as medicine, as a source of materials and in art. Birch also contributes to improving our natural environment.

## **Gill Mallett**

*Stones from Madagascar – and travel souvenirs*

Polished and unpolished gemstones from the rich geology of Madagascar collected on a tour of this fascinating island.

## **NatHistCam**

<http://www.nathistcam.org.uk>

Mark Hill

[nathistcam@gmail.com](mailto:nathistcam@gmail.com)

11 Chaucer Road, Cambridge CB2 7EB

*Natural History of Cambridge*

NatHistCam was launched at last year's Conversazione. We are focussing on the flora and fauna of Cambridge City. The years 2017-2019 are the main period of recording. The project has three main components, monthly surveys, a survey of gardens and ongoing recording by local experts. We produce blogs, tweets and articles in the local press, and at the end will publish books and learned articles. Go to

our website to view progress and read our blogs.

**Nature in Cambridgeshire**     <http://www.natureincambridgeshire.org.uk>

Mark Hill     [info@natureincambridgeshire.org.uk](mailto:info@natureincambridgeshire.org.uk)

11 Chaucer Road, Cambridge CB2 7EB

*Nature in Cambridgeshire*

Nature in Cambridgeshire is published annually and launched at the Conversazione. This year we present volume 59, priced at £7.50. During the past year we also published a memorial volume *Oliver Rackham (1939-2015) in Nature in Cambridgeshire*, with his articles and book reviews and an obituary by Philip Oswald. These and recent back numbers will be available for purchase.

**NIAB**

[www.niab.com](http://www.niab.com)

Pam Butler & Sandra Chapman

[Mushroom\\_s@hotmail.com](mailto:Mushroom_s@hotmail.com)

Huntingdon Road Cambridge CB3 0LE

Telephone (mobile) 07775577161

*Seeds and Seed Disorders*

This exhibition comprises a collection of weed seeds and crop seeds found within the UK. It highlights the different characteristics of seeds used for identification purposes and will include crop and weed seeds. Some seed borne pathogens will also be exhibited.

The mission of NIAB is to provide independent science based research and information to support, develop and promote agriculture and horticulture, helping the industry to fulfil its potential in supplying food and renewable resources, whilst respecting the natural environment.

**John O'Boyle**

[oboylejm@hotmail.com](mailto:oboylejm@hotmail.com)

*Cambridge Science Park – an A-Z of trees*

A selective gallery of trees on the Cambridge Science Park. This display shows the range and diversity of trees on the Science Park, almost one for each letter of the alphabet.

**Saving Albania's vultures** [www.facebook.com/savingAlbaniasvultures](http://www.facebook.com/savingAlbaniasvultures)

Lesley Dodd & Kevin Hand

[twitter.com/Cuckoo\\_Horse](https://twitter.com/Cuckoo_Horse)

*Help save the cuckoo horse!*

Information and fundraising for forthcoming Saving Albania's Vultures research visit with videos and Return of the Neophron project reports.

This July a team of conservationists and volunteers will travel to Albania to help local wildlife body PPNEA monitor the remaining Egyptian Vultures (*Neophron percnopterus*) and the threats to their survival, so sites can be protected and the population allowed to recover.

Please contact [www.acefoundation.org](http://www.acefoundation.org) for details of how to donate to the project. THANK YOU!

### **Small-life Supplies**

[www.small-life.co.uk](http://www.small-life.co.uk)

Dorothy Floyd

[emma@small-life.co.uk](mailto:emma@small-life.co.uk)

Telephone (day) 01733 203358

*Insect Cages*

See some of our stylish range of insect cages, all made in the UK. Our cages are designed to make it easy to look after the insects, and also provide the optimum ventilation and space that they need to thrive. We're also happy to discuss your requirements for bespoke cages.

### **Henry Tribe**

*Life at Two Million-Magnification*

Photographs show the diverse bacteria that make up Poo.

*The Ermine Moth on Cambridge's Bird-cherry trees*

A look over five years.

### **U3AC (University of the Third Age Cambridge) Naturalists Group**

Main contact: Olwen Williams

[olwenw@gmail.com](mailto:olwenw@gmail.com)

U3A Cambridge provides educational and social opportunities for people no longer in full-time employment. The Naturalists Group meets weekly in term time.

*Life in the Gutter*

What can you find in a drop of pond water? Or the average gutter

water?? We will attempt to display the variety of organisms present, but not normally seen. We also have some larger beasts.....

### **Wildlife Travel**

[www.wildlife-travel.co.uk](http://www.wildlife-travel.co.uk)

The Manor House, Broad Street, Great Cambourne, Cambridge CB23 6DH. Telephone (day) 01954 713575

Chris Donnelly

[wildlife-travel@wildlifebcn.org](mailto:wildlife-travel@wildlifebcn.org)

#### *Wildlife holidays supporting conservation*

Details of the holidays run by Wildlife Travel, aimed at those with a general interest in natural history or keen naturalists and the focus can include birds, plants, general wildlife and culture.

Wildlife Travel has been organising holidays for 29 years and donates all its profits to conservation. Destinations are worldwide, travel and accommodation is of a good standard, excursions are not strenuous and trips are led by experienced leaders. All flights are carbon balanced through high biodiversity conservation projects.

### **Wildlife Trust for Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire and Northamptonshire**

<http://www.wildlifebcn.org/>

The Manor House, Broad Street, Great Cambourne, Cambridge CB23 6DH. Telephone 01954 713500

Paul Wyer

#### *The work of the Wildlife Trust*

The Wildlife Trust for Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire and Northamptonshire works to make our three counties a place where nature matters, where wildlife can flourish and enrich the lives of the people who live here: with your help we care for local wildlife. Ninety five per cent of the local population live within five miles of one of our 126 reserves and contributions of time or money will directly benefit local wildlife.

Henry Stanier

[henry.stanier@wildlifebcn.org](mailto:henry.stanier@wildlifebcn.org)

#### *The Great Fen*

[www.greatfen.org](http://www.greatfen.org)

Learn the latest about this flagship Living landscape project, which has been restoring fenland habitat for over 15 years now. The fen is alive with water voles, dragonflies, butterflies, Cuckoos and birds of prey – a future wetland landscape and more.

## **Zoology Department**

Downing Street, Cambridge CB2 3EJ

*Cockroaches and other creatures*

### **The *Sophora* Tree**

Visit the Society's tree, illustrated on the cover, a fine specimen of *Sophora japonica* planted in 1957 to mark the Society's centennial year. Leave the laboratory, cross Downing Street, and enter the courtyard opposite the Zoology Department. The *Sophora* tree is on your right in the centre of the lawn.

**The University Zoology Museum** will be reopening later in 2017 after four years' closure for refurbishment. They will be celebrating with all sorts of exciting events and activities as they welcome visitors back into the galleries! The Finback Whale skeleton can now be seen hanging in its new gallery.

### **Acknowledgements**

The *Conversazione* is entirely dependent on the goodwill and co-operation of many people and the Society would like to thank everyone who has given their time and effort to the event, whether as a volunteer, or as an exhibitor. In particular, thanks are due to: the Department of Zoology for allowing us to use the zoology laboratory, Jacek Zalewski and Dan Green for helping the event to run smoothly and for letting us use microscopes and other equipment, and Monica Frisch, Paul Mardon and other members of the Society for organising the event.

For more information about the Society visit our website

**[www.cnhs.org.uk](http://www.cnhs.org.uk)**

# Cambridge Natural History Society

## Membership

CNHS membership is open to anyone with an interest in natural history. Both the public and members of the Universities play important roles in the activities of the society. Recent events have included talks on a wide variety of topics, field trips and surveys, as well as our annual exhibition, the *Conversazione*.

For a small membership fee, you will be able to attend all of our activities and will be kept informed of forthcoming events by termly programme cards and regular emails.

*Join today at the Society's display. A membership form can also be downloaded from our website or email [membership@cnhs.org.uk](mailto:membership@cnhs.org.uk)*

### **Forthcoming events**

- |              |                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
|--------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| June 21      | CNHS nature in my neighbourhood walk around Chesterton churchyard. Meet at 6:20 pm at entrance to churchyard of St Andrews on Church Street.                                                          |
| July 5       | CNHS evening visit to Wandlebury. Meet at 6:00 pm by the car park cycle racks. Grid ref TL 493532.                                                                                                    |
| July 20      | CNHS field study - Coldhams Common. Meet at 6:00 pm at the eastern entrance to the common off Barnwell Road at the layby opposite Camgas PLC. Grid ref TL 479584.                                     |
| August 2     | CNHS evening visit to Magog Down. Meet at 6:00 pm by the car park cycle stands. Grid ref TL 487532.                                                                                                   |
| August 27    | CNHS field study - Coldhams Common. Meet at 2:00 pm at the northern entrance to the common off Newmarket Road between Barnwell railway bridge and the football ground. Grid ref TL 473594.            |
| September 17 | CNHS field study - Coldhams Common – Lichens. Meet at 11:00 am at the northern entrance to the common off Newmarket Road between Barnwell railway bridge and the football ground. Grid ref TL 473594. |

Thursday evening talks resume in October.

There are email lists for advance notification of events (the general list) and for details of excursions (the excursion list). These are open to all. Contact [webmaster@cnhs.org.uk](mailto:webmaster@cnhs.org.uk) to be added to either email list.