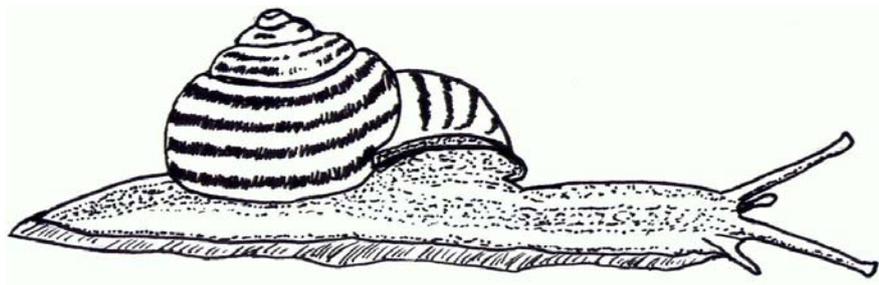


# Conversazione

*90<sup>th</sup> Annual Public Exhibition of Natural History*



*Cambridge Natural History Society  
(1857 – 2009)*

*Friday 12th June 2009*

*1:00 pm – 4:00 pm*

*Saturday 13th &*

*Sunday 14th June 2009*

*11:00 am - 4:00 pm*



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

supported by



# Welcome to the 90<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 the environmental sciences.

'*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 12th 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 on the back of this programme, and at the Society's display, which is near the Museum entrance to the lab.

Dr Toby Carter, President, Cambridge Natural History Society

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

Before you leave, please sign the visitors' book...

**Numbers correspond to the floor plan on the last page.**

- Foyer AN INTRODUCTION TO THE CONVERSAZIONE**  
*CNHS.* (Jon Shanklin) A poster advertising the exhibition.
- Foyer INTRODUCTION TO THE CNHS**  
*CNHS.* A poster showing what activities the CNHS are involved in. With membership information
- Foyer THE SOCIETY'S 90TH CONSECUTIVE CONVERSAZIONE**  
*CNHS.* (Henry Tribe) Ten Programmes: 1920/21, 1932, 1940, 1957, 1976, 1990, 2002, 2007 and 2009 are set out to show similarities and changes over the years
- 1 A HISTORY OF THE SOCIETY AND CONVERSAZIONE**  
*CNHS.* An illustrated text describing the origins and history of the Society and the *Conversazione*.
- 2 THE DITTON MEADOWS SURVEY**  
*Jon Shanklin, CNHS.* The highlights from the CNHS survey of Ditton Meadows in 2008.
- 3 FLOWERS ON THE ZOOLOGY LAWN**  
*Jon Shanklin, BAS.* There is a surprising variety of wild flowers to be found just outside the museum. How many of those shown here can you find?
- 4 NATURAL HISTORY DIARIES**  
*Jon Shanklin, BAS.* Natural History diaries from the time of the Great War illustrate the interests of natural historians 90 years ago.
- 5 MY WEEDY DRIVEWAY: THE FLORA OF A CAMBRIDGE DRIVE**  
*Monica Frisch, CNHS.* The neighbours complained about the dandelions on Monica Frisch's driveway, so she took a closer look at it, saw the dandelions but also many other plants. The result is this small study of the flora with some thoughts about its management - necessary to prevent the growth, in due course, of a small woodland in front of the garage.
- 6 DARWIN CORRESPONDENCE PROJECT**  
*Rosemary Clarkson, Darwin Correspondence Project.* The Darwin Correspondence Project, which includes amongst its sponsors the British Ecological Society, is dedicated to publishing the definitive edition of letters to and from Charles Darwin (1809-1882). Begun in 1974 by Frederick Burkhardt and Sydney Smith, it has to date produced seventeen out of thirty projected volumes.
- 7-9 WANDLEBURY COUNTRY PARK AND COTON COUNTRYSIDE RESERVE**  
*Jon Gibbs, Cambridge Preservation Society.* Displays and information about Wandlebury Country Park and Coton Countryside Reserve; their management, wildlife and uses.

- 11-12 PORTRAITS OF WILDLIFE AND OTHER PAINTINGS**  
*Rosemary Wild, Saffron Walden.* A portfolio of Rosemary's work which portrays nature, wildlife, other animals and yes, people too. Settings range from tropical Bolivia to cool Cambourne.
- 13 ANGLIA RUSKIN UNIVERSITY LIFE SCIENCES DEPARTMENT**  
 Overview of the wide variety of life sciences courses offered.
- 14 GUESS THE ORDER OF THE INVERTEBRATE**  
*ARU Wildlife Society.* Photos of past field trips, and a "guess the invertebrate" game. Some will be viewed under the microscope and some will be in specimen tubes. Not all will be from the UK.
- 15 SAVE THE SINHARAJA RAIN FOREST IN SRI LANKA**  
*Sidney Karunawardana.* Save the Sinharaja Rain Forest, Sri Lanka - A campaign to prevent further deforestation within this UNESCO World Heritage Site, Sri Lanka's last viable area of primary rain forest.
- 16 GENETICS OF THE BLACK AND GREY SQUIRREL**  
*Helen McRobie, Anglia Ruskin University.* Posters and exhibits looking at the Black and Grey squirrel populations in Cambridgeshire.
- 17-19 Sat. A NATURAL HISTORY, CONSERVATION AND ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES COMPETITION FOR YOUNG PEOPLE**  
*Pamela White, The Blake Shield BNA Trust.* A short history of the Blake Shield BNA Trust and details of the annual competition for children between the ages of 5 years and 16 years (in three sections according to age), plus Registration Forms for the competition.
- 17 - 19 Sunday THE PHASMID WORLD**  
*Dorothy Floyd, Small-life Supplies.* See our selection of stick insects, caterpillars and beetles for sale, together with our purpose-designed cages.
- 20 WALKING IN CAMBRIDGESHIRE AND FURTHER AFIELD**  
*Ron Bailey, Cambridgeshire Rambling Club.* Displaying our regular activities and a selection of photos and records from the past 80 years.
- 21-22 ENHANCEMENT OF EXISTING AND DESIGNATION OF NEW LOCAL NATURE RESERVES IN 2009/10**  
*Ellis Selway, Cambridge City Council.* It is an exciting time for the city's Local Nature Reserves. Discover the projects completed and proposals for 2009/10.
- 23 NEWTS OF GREAT BRITAIN**  
*Mo Hassan.* Information on Great Crested, Palmate and Smooth Newts, plus live examples of Palmate and Smooth newts, eggs and young.
- 24-25 OPEN AIR LABORATORIES EAST OF ENGLAND PROJECT: ORCHARD BIODIVERSITY**  
*Dr. Lorna Paterson, School of Life Sciences, University of Hertfordshire.* Open Air Laboratories display details the East of England Community science project on orchard biodiversity which focuses on lichens, mosses and fungi.

- 26 PEAT, CARBON STORAGE AND WILDLIFE OF THE CORROUR ESTATE**  
*Elizabeth Cooke, Department of Plant Sciences, University of Cambridge.* Maps of peat depth and carbon storage in the blanket bog and upland heath of the Corrour Estate in the Western Central Highlands of Scotland. Photos of wildlife on the estate, particularly the plants.
- 27-29 BUTTERFLY CONSERVATION**  
*Julia Napier, CNHS.* A poster display about butterflies; foodplants of butterflies and assorted caterpillars
- 30 FRIENDS OF FLEAM DYKE AND THE ROMAN ROAD**  
*Julia Napier, CNHS.*
- 31 LIFE AT THE ANIMAL BEHAVIOUR RESEARCH UNIT, MIKUMI, TANZANIA**  
*Leah Collett, Anglia Ruskin University.* Photos and information on life and living in a research station in Mikumi National Park, Tanzania, East Africa.
- 32 SHELLS GALORE**  
*Cass Bromley, Anglia Ruskin University.* An introduction to the evolution and construction of gastropod shells and a range of marine, freshwater and land gastropod shells – an array of shapes, sizes and colours.
- 33-34 RUTLAND OSPREY PROJECT**  
*Tim Mackrill/ Cass Bromley, Leicestershire and Rutland Wildlife Trust.* The reintroduction of ospreys to Rutland Water and central England.
- 35-36 CARNIVOROUS PLANTS AND OTHER BIZARRE ADAPTATIONS IN THE PLANT WORLD**  
*Clarke Brunt, CNHS.* Carnivorous plants grow in areas short of nutrients, and supplement their diet by trapping insects.
- 37-38 CACTI AND SUCCULENT PLANTS**  
*Paul Hoxey, British Cactus and Succulent Society.* Cacti and other succulent plants have evolved to grow and survive in the desert regions of the world. There is a remarkable diversity of forms usually involving a swollen stem to store water and accompanied with the reduction or absence of leaves to minimise water loss. The exhibit today shows a range of plants which have been grown under greenhouse conditions in the UK.
- 39-40 WICKEN FEN VISION PROJECT**  
*Emma Shepherd, The National Trust.* The Wicken Fen Vision is an exciting plan to create a huge new nature reserve stretching from the existing Wicken Fen all the way into Cambridge, with a mosaic of new wildlife habitats and space for people to explore on foot, bike, horse and boat. The Vision is a long term project aimed at creating a 55 km<sup>2</sup> wildlife haven. Come along to meet National Trust staff from Wicken Fen and learn more about the Vision Project.
- 41-42 ARABLE TO TREES AND GRASSLANDS**  
*Lucy Evans, Magog Trust.* Display of continuing restoration of arable land on the Gog Magog Hills, Stapleford.

- 43 DOG WALK DIARIES, PARADISE AND BEYOND**  
*Anita Joysey, CNHS.* A photographic diary of everyday encounters with nature, mostly made whilst walking the dog.
- 44a ANIMAL EXHIBIT: LEOPARD GECKO**  
*Anita Joysey, CNHS.* Prior to his rescue, Tom the Leopard Gecko lost his tail due to infection and dehydration. He is now a much cherished pet.
- 44b ANIMAL EXHIBIT: COCKATIELS**  
*Anita Joysey, CNHS.* Meet rescued cockatiels Pascal and Shoboh.
- 44c ANIMAL EXHIBIT: GIANT AFRICAN LANDSNAILS**  
*Anita Joysey, CNHS.* Come and meet Charlie & Lola, Giant African land snails and some of their babies!!
- 45 WILDLIFE TRUST - CAMBRIDGE LOCAL GROUP**  
*Anita Joysey, The Wildlife Trust CLG.* Information about The Wildlife Trust with reference to Cambridge Local Group.
- 46 PARASITIC BUMBLE BEES AND SOCIAL WASPS**  
*Henry Berman.* A display on “cuckoo” bumble bees and social wasps, plus specimens and general bumble bee information.
- 48 EDUCATION AT THE ZOO: SHEPRETH WILDLIFE PARK**  
*Rebecca Willers/ Lainie Bazzoni, Shepreth Wildlife Park.* Photos, artefacts and information on our education sessions and discovery centre. Including a captive member of the park...
- 49 JOURNALS**  
*Mandy McCartney, Taylor & Francis Group.* Building on two centuries' experience, the Taylor & Francis Group publishes more than 1000 journals and around 1,800 new books each year, with a books backlist in excess of 20,000 specialist titles.
- 50-51 THE ENEMY WITHIN – PERENNIAL WEEDS IN THE ALLOTMENT**  
*Sarah Cook and Denise Ginsberg, Agricultural Development & Advisory Service, Boxworth.* Information and examples of the most vicious weeds in your allotment and how to control them.
- 52 SCLEROTIAL FUNGI IN THE GARDEN AND ON THE FARM**  
*Peter Gladders, ADAS Boxworth.* Photographs, infected plants and agar plate cultures to show common plant diseases caused by sclerotial fungi.
- 53 SEAHORSES**  
*Helen Scales.* Seahorses are the most enchanting and intriguing ocean inhabitants. For thousands of years they have sparked imaginations, inspired tales of great sea monsters and had people puzzling over what they are and where they came from. Are they baby dragons? Insects? Or prawns with no legs? Find out the truth behind seahorses and their peculiar lives, from their amazing camouflage to the only males in the world that give birth.

- 55-56 MADINGLEY TOAD RESCUE, WILDLIFE SOUND RECORDING AND MEMORABLE MOLLUSCS**  
*William Seale, Madingley Toad Rescue.* Three subjects (1) Madingley Toad Rescue - a poster board illustrating some of the work at a busy toad crossing; (2) Wildlife Sound Recording Society - CD of wildlife sounds to listen to, and poster board illustrating some of the huge diversity of animal sounds and some of the ways that these can be recorded; and (3) Memorable Molluscs (Giant African Land Snails and an unusual white Large Black Slug).
- 57 STOLEN GENES? MICROBIAL ORIGIN OF PLANT TOXINS**  
*Chris Heron, Cambridge.* Poster outlining my hypothesis that most plant toxin genes originated in microbial symbionts, most of which have since vanished leaving only a few genes behind. Means of testing the hypothesis are suggested, together with known examples of 'plant' toxins being made by symbionts which are passed on in seeds.
- 58 SCIENCE AT THE INSTITUTE OF CONTINUING EDUCATION**  
*Susan Watson, Institute of Continuing Education, University of Cambridge.* Come along to find out more about the science courses which the Institute of Continuing Education runs for adult learners to study at University level on a part-time basis.
- 60 EDIBLE EXOTIC MUSHROOMS**  
*Sandra Chapman, NIAB.* Edible exotic mushrooms are highly valued by the connoisseurs of food and in Asia a plethora of them are consumed on a daily basis. This exhibit focuses on the most popular exotic mushrooms prized for their taste, texture and nutritional qualities.
- 61 EXCERPTS FROM THE TEA PHYTOLOGIST**  
*Library, Dept. of Plant Science, University of Cambridge (Dr. Sylvia Haslam).* Excerpts from the Tea Phytologist; reference copies are in the Plant Sciences Library.
- 62 CAM VALLEY PROJECTS**  
*Charles Turner, Cam Valley Forum.* The Cam Valley Forum supports and promotes a wide range of initiatives by local organisations and individuals for conserving and improving the environment and landscapes of the river Cam and its tributaries.
- 63 LADYBIRDS OF GREAT BRITAIN**  
*UK Ladybird Survey.* Learn how to identify some of Britain's 26 ladybird species, including the alien harlequin ladybird
- 64 NATURE IN CAMBRIDGESHIRE**  
*Vicki Harley, Nature in Cambridgeshire.* Nature in Cambridgeshire is the annual journal on local natural history. Now in our fifty-first year we continue to publish articles, records and reviews on a wide range of topics. Whatever your speciality, you'll find something of interest in Nature in Cambridgeshire.
- 65 DISCOVER WILDLIFE RECORDING IN CAMBRIDGESHIRE & PETERBOROUGH**  
*Samantha Mapfumo, Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Biological Records Centre (CPBRC).* Introducing wildlife recording and information on past, present and future public participation surveys. Also other activities of the records centre that people can get involved in and all CPBRC publications.

- 66-67 GREEN CAMBRIDGE**  
*Laura Watson, The Wildlife Trust.* Find out how the local Wildlife Trust is helping Cambridgeshire's environment. Learn where your nearest reserve is and about the species that live there.
- 68-69 INSECTS ARE WONDERFUL**  
*Roger Northfield, Cambridge.* Photographs and some living insects
- 70 BIODIVERSITY ACTION IN CAMBRIDGE AND PETERBOROUGH**  
*Fabiola Blum, Cambridge and Peterborough Biodiversity Partnership.* Examples of Local Biodiversity Action work in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough: 50 year Wildlife Vision map, Biodiversity Checklists, Farmers Biodiversity Pack, Traditional Orchard Work and the Fenland Drainage Ditch Project.
- 71 CAMBRIDGESHIRE BIRD CLUB**  
*Vicki Harley, Cambridgeshire Bird Club.* Cambridgeshire Bird Club runs a programme of indoor and outdoor meetings throughout the year. We also collect and publish information on the birds of Cambridgeshire. In addition to a copy of the Annual Report, members are entitled to attend all our meetings of the Club and receive a bi-monthly bulletin which includes articles and information on recent sightings of birds within the county.
- 72 A PHOTOGRAPHIC TOUR ROUND A COUNTY WILDLIFE SITE IN NORFOLK**  
*Josephine Brearley.* This traditional Norfolk cattle pasture is home to over 250 species of flowers, grasses and trees; about 60 different birds; many different butterflies and moths; rabbits, moles and other wildlife. It is grazed by cattle during the summer months.
- 75-76 MYXO MAGIC: THE SECRET WORLD OF SLIME**  
*John Holden, CNHS.* An introduction to the natural history of slime moulds.
- 78 FFI IS CONSERVING SPECIES AND HABITATS-YOU TOO CAN FIND OUT**  
*Ken Richard, Fauna & Flora International.* Displays and free information
- 79-80 NANO-NATURAL HISTORY:SUGAR-ELECTRIC ENGINES/PHOTOSYNTHESIS**  
*Henry Tribe, CNHS.* The Natural World magnified two million times is the world of molecules. Many different 'species' of molecule interact to do different things in life in ordered 'eco-systems'. Shown that much magnified are models of the sugar-electric engines which power our metabolism and photosynthesis which powers plants
- 81 DEGRADATION OF PLASTICS**  
*Henry Tribe, CNHS.* Most modern plastics are immune to biological decomposition although some are now chemically programmed to fragment into small pieces within a few years. The older Cellophane, made from cellulose, is readily decomposed by microorganisms. Demonstrated are photographs of micro-ecosystems of such organisms which grew on Cellophane buried in soils.

- 82 CHESTERTON SIDINGS: NATURAL SELECTION IN A VIRGIN HABITAT**  
*Henry Tribe, CNHS.* In 1958 Chesterton Sidings, Cambridge was a hive of railway activity. Later in the century it was progressively abandoned. The initially virgin habitat led to ideal conditions for growth of early colonising plants. Photographs, from 1999 - 2003, show prominent species
- 83 FLY LARVAE CLEANSE WOUNDS**  
*Johanna Bennett, ZooBiotic Ltd, Bridgend, Wales.* Larvae of the greenbottle fly (*Lucilia sericata*) prepared under aseptic conditions and microbiologically sterile are used in wound management for debridement of tissue. Live larvae, posted to arrive on Friday, 10<sup>th</sup> June are shown, together with associated dressings and illustrated application guides
- 87-89 WILDLIFE ARTIST AND NATURAL HISTORY ILLUSTRATIONS**  
*Michael C. Wood, Cambridge.* Wildlife paintings and prints, interpretation panels and wildlife garden designs.
- 91 THE HONEY BEE AND PRODUCTS FROM THE HIVE**  
*Paul Aslin, Cambridge Beekeepers Association.* Live bees in an observation hive, plus a display on the lifecycle of honeybees and beekeeping.

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## NOTES



**Would you like to exhibit at next year's Conversazione? If so, then please sign the visitors' book and indicate that you would like details. Information about Conversazione 2010 will be sent out by Christmas.**

**Contact: [exhibition@cnhs.org.uk](mailto:exhibition@cnhs.org.uk)**

# FLOOR PLAN

## Why not visit ...

**The University Zoology Museum** is open to the public during the exhibition. It is considered to be one of the finest zoological museums in the country, with outstanding displays of specimens from insects to elephants.

### **The Finback Whale**

You can't miss it. Over 21 metres long, and weighing in at 80 tonnes when alive, this is the skeleton of one of the largest creatures alive today.

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

Visit the Society's tree, 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.

### **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: Professor Malcolm Burrows for allowing us to use the zoology laboratory, Neal Maskell for helping the event to run smoothly, the Department of Life Sciences at Anglia Ruskin University for contributing towards the cost of the event, Cass Bromley and Leah Collett for organising the event.

For more information about the Society why not 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, joint meetings with the Wildlife Trust, field trips and surveys.

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, or fill in the form below and send it to:

Dr H.T. Tribe, 198 Gilbert Rd, Cambridge CB4 3PB



.....  
Membership application form

Name (Capitals please) .....

Full address: .....

.....

.....

.....

Telephone .....

Email .....

I would like to join Cambridge Natural History Society.

I enclose a cheque (made payable to Cambridge Natural History Society) to cover my subscription for (*please circle*):

1 Year  
(£5.00)

3 Years  
(£10.00)

Life  
(£100)

Signed .....

Date .....

The AGM of the Cambridge Natural History Society will be held in the Elementary Laboratory of the Zoology Department at 4.15pm on Saturday the 13th of June. All are welcome to attend.