Welcome to the British Ecological Society (BES) Annual Meeting 2022. This guide will help you get the most out of the conference as well as help you navigate your way around the virtual experience.
OVERVIEW AND PRESENTER GUIDELINES

Agenda and Guidelines

You can view the full agenda on the BES website or on the conference virtual event platform called Whova.

If you are an online attendee, you will be able to filter sessions by the track ‘Online’ so you can clearly see all sessions you can attend. There are more details on this below.

Online Poster Hours

During the conference there are three Online Poster Hours, where we encourage online poster presenters and virtual delegates to be online to view posters and ask questions via chat. This will allow presenters to answer questions in real time.

The Online Poster Hours are (please note that all times are in GMT):

**Thursday 15 December**
- 08:00 – 09:00
- 14:00 – 15:00

**Monday 19 December**
- 18:00 – 19:00

Note: you can also ask questions during other times and the poster presenters can check in on the chat at any point throughout the week.

Speed Networking - for virtual-only delegates

Speed networking offers a fantastic opportunity to get to know your fellow virtual delegates in an informal setting. You will enter a virtual room where you will have a short amount of time to get to know everyone before being moved to a new room with new faces. Make a note of anyone you meet, and you can follow up with a message on the conference platform later.

The speed networking sessions are (please note that all times are in GMT, and that Speed Networking is only available to online delegates – not in-person delegates):

**Sunday 18 December**
- 10:00 – 10:30
- 19:00 – 19:30

**Monday 19 December**
- 10:00 – 10:30

**Tuesday 20 December**
- 17:30 – 18:00
Plenary Lectures and Thematic Sessions

All questions for plenary lectures and thematic sessions will be taken via Whova. Please refer to the Content section below for information on how to ask questions.

Social Media

All attendees are encouraged to join the discussion via social media, so please use the hashtag #BES2022 to ensure that you are part of the conversation.

We understand that some people will not want their research broadcast. We respect that, so have created a ‘do not share’ image for people to download on our website and add to their poster talk or presentation. We hope that fellow attendees will also respect the request and refrain from sharing the talks or posters who show the image. If people do not include this image on their presentation, we will assume that they are happy for their research to be shared.

CONFERENCE APP & PLATFORM

Instructional Video

A short introductory video explaining the Whova online platform can be found on our FAQ page. It contains an overview of the following information and tips about getting the most from the site.

Logging in

Before the conference week starts, you will be able to access the conference virtual event either through an app on your phone or via your desktop. You will receive an email from Whova with a link to the website. The email address this link is sent to must be used to log in. If you have not received the link by Friday 9 December, please check your junk mail. For the desktop version of the conference platform, you do not need to download or install any software, you only need to have access to the internet. We strongly recommend using the Chrome web browser as other browsers may not display the platform correctly.

For the mobile phone app, search for Whova in your app store and download it. Open the app and enter the email address you used to register for the conference. If the event does not show up automatically, you can search for ‘British Ecological Society 2022’ in the search bar, and then click ‘Join’.

We recommend logging in ahead of the first live session to spend some time familiarising yourself with the platform, looking at the online presentations, and getting to know other delegates.

If you are experiencing any issues logging in, or want further information about using the platform, you can find more detailed instructions here.

Landing Page

Once you have successfully logged in, your virtual conference experience begins.
The landing page is the central hub for everything you need. From here, you can navigate to the:

- Agenda
- Attendee list
- Community areas
- Your personal messages
- Exhibitors’ virtual stands & sponsors pages
- Other resources such as recordings of sessions

You can choose these from the list on the left of the landing page, or if you are using the conference app, these options will appear along the bottom of the screen.

Please note that if attending the virtual conference from a different time zone, you can display times in your local time zone by clicking the ‘Switch to local time’ button at the top of your landing page.

**CONTENT**

**Searching Programme Content**

To access all the live and on-demand talks, choose Agenda from the menu on the left, and then Sessions. This will show the full conference programme, including all the open call talks and posters. **These are not live streamed**, so only those attending in-person will be able to view these, but online delegates can still see the abstracts and message speakers if you are interested in their work.

You can search for content on the platform in a few ways:

- You can search through the content for each day of the conference by moving through the dates at the top of the screen
- You can add key words such as the session or speaker names in the search bar in the top right of the screen
- You can use the ‘Filter by tracks’ bar at the top of the screen. This allows you to filter for different groups, for example: to see only the online content, select ‘Online’ or to see sessions related to Behavioural Ecology, select ‘Sessions – Behavioural Ecology’
Plenaries & Thematic Sessions

All plenary talks and thematic sessions will be live streamed onto the conference platform and will also be recorded. When you find a plenary talk or thematic session you would like to watch, click ‘View Session’ to find out more.

You can add it to your personal agenda by clicking ‘Add to My Agenda’. You will also get the option to add it to your calendar. Along the top, you will see ‘My Agenda’, and you can view all your saved sessions here.

**Note: on the conference platform, My Agenda will show you your agenda by day, so if you think something is missing try scrolling left and right through the conference days and it should appear under the day it is happening.**

For live streamed sessions, aim to join a few minutes before the start. Any session with a green camera next to its name will be streamed. If it has already started, it will say Session is live in green. Click ‘View Session’ to join. A streaming screen may show up directly, with a blue ‘Proceed’ button, which you must click to access the stream. Otherwise, you may need to press a blue ‘View live session’ button to access it.
To ask a question, on the right of the screen will be a menu with Session Q&A at the top. You will see at the bottom a blue ‘Ask a question’ button. Click this, and type in your question. The Chair of the session will then choose from these questions. You can upvote any questions you think are particularly good, but the Chair will choose from the whole selection.

To catch up on missed sessions, head to the Agenda where you can search for it in the tracks or search bar. Click ‘View Session’ and the recording will be ready to watch.

**Workshops**

You can access the online workshops in the same way as the other live content, but when you click to join you will be taken through to Zoom, rather than interacting on the conference platform. Guidance on using Zoom is available in the ‘Getting the most out of your conference’ section. Please note, these workshops will take questions through Zoom, not through the conference platform.

**Viewing ePresentations**

In the left-hand menu, under Agenda, select ePresentations. This will bring up all the online posters and talks of the conference. At the top of the screen, you can search by presenter names or keywords, or search by category using ‘Filter by’ to select for posters or talks. When you want to view a presentation, click on it. This will allow you to access all of its information:

*Note: If you are an ePresenter, you will need to check your presentation’s chat box regularly, as you will not receive a notification when a question is asked.*
This is the title page of the poster.

During the online poster hours and throughout the conference, ask questions here.

This is the actual poster. If you click on the image, it will bring the poster up in a larger window.

This is the online talk.

Throughout the conference, you can ask questions here.
Voting for ePresentations

If you think the ePresentation you are viewing is good, make sure to vote for it, as the student with the most likes on their presentation will win a prize! You can find out more about the competition at the top of the ePresentation page by clicking ‘View Rules’, and you can vote for your favourite poster by clicking the ‘Vote’ button before you enter it.

Exhibition

Each year we welcome international organisations to showcase what they have to offer our delegates. Make sure to visit them to find out more about them and what they could offer you as an ecologist.

On the exhibitor page, scroll through the list or use the search bar at the top of the page. When you have found an exhibitor you want to find out more about, click the blue ‘Visit Booth’ button. This will bring up that exhibitor’s page.

To talk to the exhibitors, you can:

- Use the chat function on the right
- Leave your own contact information by clicking ‘Get in touch’, which will send them an email with your contact details
- Speak directly to the lead contact by clicking ‘Send Message’ under Booth Staff

Under the Exhibitors & Sponsors section you can also see who the sponsors of the BES Annual Meeting 2022 are, so make sure to check them out too.
Resources

There are a number of additional resources that you can use alongside the controls mentioned above, under the section Resources:

- **Session Q&A** – Questions asked through the conference platform at the streamed sessions will appear here.
- **Video Gallery** – Videos uploaded to the conference platform can be viewed here. This includes plenaries and thematic sessions, which are also available under Agenda once the session has taken place.
- **Polls** – See the polls that have been run during the conference.

**Twitter** – Find what is being posted with the conference hashtag, #BES2022, on Twitter. However, for all the latest updates, we recommend following @BritishEcolSoc on Twitter.

## Community

### Your Profile

We encourage all delegates to add information to their profile. Completing your profile means people can find out more about you, and the more information you add, the more likely others will come across you (see Searching For Other Delegates). To edit your profile, click on your name in the top right corner and click ‘My Profile’.

*Note: If you already have information in your profile when you log in, it is because you have used Whova before and it has remembered you. Feel free to update any of the information in this section so that it is more up to date.*
Add or edit your profile photo by clicking here.

Add your top level, key interests in ecology here so that other delegates with the same interests can find you more easily. Some common interests will already be included in a list, so look through these first before typing your own.

Let others know about where you are currently based, or where you have worked or studied in the past.

If your contract or studies are coming to an end and you’re looking for a new job, why not add your CV or resume to your profile.

Want to tell others a bit more about yourself? Add a bit more information here.

If you’ve got a strong online presence, you can start adding in links to your existing social media accounts or webpages.
Searching Other Delegates

Once your profile is complete, you can view the profiles of other delegates. On the bar on the left of the screen, click ‘Attendees’. This will then bring up a page with all the attendees of the conference, whether in person or virtual.

You can browse through the attendees here, or you can search for specific people using the search bar in the top right corner. If you find someone of interest, there are a few things you can do:

With over 1,400 delegates attending the Annual Meeting online and in person, you might want to narrow down what profiles you view. You can do this on the Attendees page via the options along the top of the screen:

- **All** – this will show all conference delegates, both in person and online

If you want to view or talk to someone later, you can bookmark them. This will save them in your Bookmarked section (see below).

This will bring up the person’s profile and will also give you the option of starting a video call.

- **Recommended** – this identifies other delegates you may want to speak to based on the information in your profile and theirs, so another good reason to complete your profile! You can search for people in the same place or organisation as you, or who have overlapping interests. If you are having trouble finding people with similar interests, try selecting some interests from the ones already listed.
- **Bookmarked** – as mentioned above, you can ‘Bookmark’ delegates of interest who you want to contact later, and they will be saved in this section for you.
- **Categories** – this will show delegates separated by their role at the conference.
Communicating with Other Delegates

At BES 2022 both in-person and online delegates have access to the conference platform and app, which means everyone can interact with each other.

As mentioned above, you can send other delegates a message by clicking on their profile and clicking ‘Say Hi’. This will start a conversation with them in your Messages section. You can click on these boxes to send another message, or even start a video call. **Please make sure the contact is aware you are going to ring them before initiating a video call.**

You can also start messaging other delegates by clicking the blue ‘New message’ box in the messages window, and then typing the name of the person you want to message, and then clicking their name when it appears. You can set up group chats in this way, too, by continuing to add names. You can add more people to your group chat later. Enter the group message, and in the top right corner your will see these options:

To add someone else, just click ‘Add person’. Want to leave a group chat? No problem, click the blue ‘Info’ button and it will take you to the information about that group, and at the bottom you can click the red ‘Leave’ button. Alternatively, here you can just turn off the notifications for that group. If you have the notifications on, a notification will appear next to ‘Messages’ in your menu when you receive a new message.

**Community Chat**

As well as direct messaging, you can message in one of the chat topics in the Community section: These include Meet-ups, organiser announcements and job openings

- **Meet-ups & Virtual Meets** – Find out if any other delegates would be interested in arranging a call to chat.
- **Organiser Announcements** – Any reminders or updates will be announced by the Events Team here, so make sure to check it regularly.
• **Job Openings** – Looking for a job, or have a job that you want to advertise? Make sure you post it in the Job Openings channel!

Other topics may be added during the conference, so keep an eye out. If a topic is of interest to you, you can click the ‘Follow’ button next to the topic and can then filter topics you are following by moving to the Followed tab at the top of your screen.

**Speed Networking**

Under Agenda in the left-hand menu, you will also find the option of Speed Networking. Speed Networking is an excellent way to speak to your fellow delegates and get to know more about them and their work. There are specific times when these are available, mentioned above under Social Events, so be sure to arrive on time to ensure you can join the session. **Please note online Speed Networking is only available to delegates with a virtual registration.**

**GETTING THE MOST OUT OF THE CONFERENCE**

Whether this is your first online conference, or you are now well versed in the world of Zoom, we have put together a few top tips so that you can get the most out of your online conference experience.

**Conference Tips**
• **Try and schedule in conference time** – Conferences are a great way to hear new research, make new connections, and promote yourself and your work. But it’s very hard to do that effectively if you’re trying to work in the background as well. Turn on your out of office email so that people know you won’t be able to get back to them immediately. Book time out of your calendar for talks and social events and immerse yourself in the conference. Having said that...

• **Pace yourself** – Remember, much of the content will be available to view in your own time after the live week, so if you need to take a break, you can.

• **Use social media** – Add your social media accounts to your profile and follow the conference hashtag #BES2022 to see what your fellow delegates are up to!

• **Come to the online networking opportunities** – All work and no play is no fun at all, so try to come along to some of the networking opportunities. Online poster hours are a great way to start conversations with the online poster presenters, and the Speed Networking sessions are the perfect opportunity to speak to your fellow delegates and have a bit of fun.

• **Ask away** – It’s never been easy to go up and talk to someone at a conference, and the idea of asking a question in front of a room full of people can be daunting. But now you can make the most of the online alternative! Make use of the chat if you want to talk to someone, and send in those questions you might normally hold back on in the Session Q&A box in the plenary and thematic sessions.

**Looking After Yourself**

Conferences can be exhausting, and online ones are no exception. But looking after yourself is the number one priority, and that is both physically and mentally.

• **Work in comfort** – Make sure your desk and computer setup is comfortable and safe. Look for Desk Safety Assessments online for advice on how to avoid any pain or discomfort.

• **Take regular breaks** – Whether it’s making a cup of tea, having a short wander, or having a little stretch, make yourself step away from the screen every now and then to rest your eyes and move your body.

• **Refreshments** – You’d normally be supplied with food and coffee at a conference, and that’s what keeps everyone going through the long days. Make sure you’ve stocked up on everything you need (coffee) so that you can replenish your energy!

**Using Zoom for the Conference**

Any online workshops will run through Zoom. Although you can use a browser version of Zoom, we recommend downloading the desktop app, which is easy and free to download on [the Zoom website](https://zoom.us).

If you click the microphone button, it will either turn your microphone on (Unmute) or turn it off (Mute). Click the camera icon to either turn on your camera (Start Video) or turn it off (Stop Video). The organisers will give you instructions on when to do this.
You will often be able to use the chat, where clicking on the ‘Chat’ button will open a window on the right. You can choose to send messages publicly to everyone or to send private messages to individuals. You will not be using the ‘Share Screen’ button as a delegate, so please do not press it.

Some workshops might tell you that they will take question via people raising their hand, using the ‘Raise Hand’ button. You can find this by clicking ‘Participants’ along the bottom, and in the pop-up on the left, at the bottom left you should see an option that says Raise Hand. If you can’t see it, click the three dots and it should appear as an option. If it doesn’t, then the organisers have probably removed it.

During some workshops, the organisers might create breakout rooms. These are rooms where you will be able to interact with a smaller group of people. The organisers will let you know what your tasks are in the breakout rooms, but unless told otherwise you should aim to have your camera and microphone on at this point, as it is a chance to get to know your fellow delegates!

**TECHNICAL ISSUES**

If you experience technical issues during the conference, you can find answers to many questions in the FAQ page on Whova or in their useful guide. You can also get in touch via email at events@britishecologicalsociety.org