

Annual Report 2013

1913 2013



British Ecological Society

— CELEBRATING 100 YEARS —



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British Ecological Society

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Highlights

Over the next five pages are a few of the highlights from an exciting eight months in the British Ecological Society (BES). Read on to find out more about how the BES has helped to advance ecology and support the ecological community.

December



Annual Meeting

For the first time in over a decade, the Annual Meeting was held in December; it attracted 869 delegates from the UK, Europe and overseas – with 402 talks and 189 posters, eight thematic topics and ten parallel sessions.



Methods in Ecology and Evolution

The journal launched a new submission requirement: Tweetable Abstracts.



Policy

Our popular series of policy training workshops continued, where participants learned how to communicate with policy makers and develop policy-relevant research projects.

January



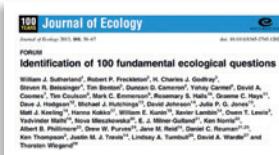
Journal of Animal Ecology

The journal published Charles Godfray's 2011 BES Presidential Address on "Mosquito ecology and control of malaria".



Methods in Ecology and Evolution

The journal moved to publishing 12 issues per year, where it was previously six.



Journal of Ecology

The journal published online "Identification of 100 fundamental ecological questions" by Bill Sutherland et al.

Highlights



February



Functional Ecology

The journal published a Special Feature on "The ecology of stress", guest edited by Rudy Boonstra.



Education

We continued to work with the Society of Biology and SCORE (Science Community Representing Education) on primary science curricula, GCSE and A-level sciences to promote ecological science, practical learning and fieldwork and mathematical techniques within science.

Journal of Applied Ecology

The journal started its 50-year anniversary celebrations with the publication of a Virtual Issue entitled "Fifty years of scientific impact".

March



Conservation & Invasive Special Interest Groups

The Invasive Non-Native Species Symposium saw a collection of speakers explore a range of issues from the local to national.

Functional Ecology

The paper by Mizunuma et al. on the transition of colour in forest canopies featured in the BBC Science & Technology Focus.

Journal of Animal Ecology

The paper on phenotype flexibility in wild fish featured in National Geographic NewsWatch; their paper on migration patterns in polar bears also featured in The Guardian.

Highlights



Grants

March 2013 grant round, we awarded 14 Small Research grant projects, amounting to £61,530. These grants fund new and innovative ecological research and help early career ecologists to establish an independent research career in ecology.



Bulletin Redesign

We celebrated 100 years of British Ecology by giving The Bulletin a major facelift, launched to coincide with the Society's birthday.



Parasite and Pathogen Evolution and Ecology

This SIG collaborated with the British Society for Parasitology on its Annual Meeting symposium "Applying Ecology and Evolution".

April



BES Birthday

In lieu of our big INTECOL party, we held a small celebration for members and selected guests at Charles Darwin House. As is BES style, there was plenty of cake.



Journal of Applied Ecology

The article "Is restoring flora the same as restoring fauna? Lessons learned from koalas and mining rehabilitation" by Cristescu et al. featured in the Australian media.

May



Methods in Ecology and Evolution

The journal started a six month trial with Altmetric – a tool that tracks when an article has been mentioned online on Twitter, Facebook, news sites etc.

Highlights



Journal of Ecology

The journal published the Special Feature "New perspectives on whole-plant senescence".



Education

We funded ten Undergraduate Research bursaries, which enabled students to undertake a six to eight week period of research in, for example, Saltmarsh regeneration in the Eden Estuary to Taxonomic evaluation of cryoconite cyanobacteria.



Festival of Ecology

We created a garden at the RHS Chelsea Flower Show, on the topic of alien species and which had been introduced since 1913. Over 2,000 people came to the stand to learn more about the science of ecology.

June



Journal of Applied Ecology

The journal published the tenth article in the series Practitioner's Perspectives.



Ecological Issues

Ecological Issues was re-launched, and over 100 attendees gathered in Parliament to hear the President describe our many centenary activities and receive a copy of The Impact of Extreme Events on Freshwater Ecosystems.



BES Public Outreach

The first of our entertaining public walks, open to everyone local to Charles Darwin House, focused on urban ecology.

Highlights



Functional Ecology

The journal published a Special Feature on "Plant-Microbe-Insect Interactions", guest edited by Arjen Biere and Alison Bennett.



Tropical Ecology Special Interest Group

We supported the Tropical Biology Association Africa Alumni Group (TAAG) event for students in Kenya, with the aim of building capacity in the next generation of biologists and conservationists within Africa.

July



Journal of Applied Ecology

The journal published the Special Profile "UK National Ecosystem Assessment".



Policy Shadowing Scheme

For the seventh year, early-career members of the BES spent two days with Ministers at Defra, the Welsh Government, MEPs in Brussels and MSPs in Scotland to learn about the role that NGOs, learned societies and thinktanks play in connecting policy makers with science research.

From the President

Georgina Mace

After years of planning, and months of intense activity, we have finally arrived at our centenary events, starting with a distributed set of public engagement activities in the Festival of Ecology, and culminating in INTECOL. We have a lot to be proud of, not only for our 100 year history, for details of which I refer you to the 100 Influential Papers, but also for the current suite of activities in the BES, preparing us for the next 100 years. This year there have been many highlights in our publishing arm, with outstanding successes for the breadth and excellence of our journals. It has also been a pleasure to see the activities of the lively and vibrant Special Interest Groups with new groups emerging and a growing involvement of younger ecologists. Of course, we can also be optimistic about our future. The 100 fundamental ecological questions identified by Bill Sutherland and colleagues (*Journal of Ecology*, 2013. 101(1): p. 58-67.) makes it clear that there is no shortage of often difficult but always interesting science yet to be done in ecology. Last but not least is our policy work. We had a wonderful evening at the House of Commons launching the new Ecological Issues series

with a report of extreme events in freshwater systems, but as all the comments on that occasion made clear, the number and significance of ecological issues in public policy is growing, and we must ensure that we are ready ahead of time.

There are many people I must thank for all of this. BES Council members, Committee chairs and members give their time, expertise and enthusiasm without which none of this would be possible. I have enjoyed working with this group enormously; we are lucky to have such people in our governance structures. Then we must also recognise that none of this would actually happen without the excellent, hard-working staff in the BES office, ably led by Hazel Norman. The past few years have been a roller-coaster of change with new buildings, new management structures and a centenary to deal with. I thank all the staff very sincerely for their professionalism through all of this, and their support that gives us so much to be proud of. Finally, we have a growing and enthusiastic membership, that makes the next 100 years seem likely to be even better than the past.



From the Executive Director

Hazel Norman

This has been a very special year for the BES. We have used the centenary to create a wonderful programme of activities and events to engage with our members and a wide range of external audiences, and you can read about some of those in this Annual Report.

We continue to benefit from the excellent facilities at Charles Darwin House, the home of the Society. We have expanded this hub of the biological sciences in the UK by welcoming the Society for General Microbiology as a new co-owner and purchasing another nearby building to increase office space and conference capacity. The refurbishment of the new building will be complete in Spring 2014.

We were delighted to announce the new partnership with Wiley Blackwell on the open access journal *Ecology and Evolution*. This new venture will help the BES develop its portfolio of open access activities which is especially important at this time of rapid change in academic publishing. All our existing journal titles have done really well this year and continue to disseminate world-class ecological science, something that is at the core of the Society's purpose. We are especially pleased with the

excellent progress of *Methods in Ecology and Evolution* which continues to have a strong influence on the way ecological research is communicated. My thanks to the Publications Team and the Journal editorial teams for all their tireless work in making the BES Journals so special.

You will see from the Education and Policy sections of the Report that it has continued to be a busy time for all those trying to influence policy. The BES External Affairs Team has a wealth of experience in influencing policy makers. The successful re-launch of the Ecological Issues series and the positive developments in the English National Curriculum for biology are just two examples of their great work. It was with great sadness that we learnt this year of the death of our first Policy Manager, Nick Dusic, at the age of 34. He did a fantastic job in establishing the policy work of the BES, putting in place many of the activities we still run successfully today. He was also a lovely person and will be very much missed by all who knew him.

There have been some excellent scientific meetings organised by the BES. The Annual Meeting in Birmingham in December 2012 was very well received by the ecological community



From the Executive Director

with the highest delegate numbers for many years. Many thanks to the Membership Services Team for their hard work on making the Annual Meeting so successful. We have also organised multidisciplinary meetings on marine ecology, global change and the ecology of diseases, held as part of the centenary celebrations. These meetings showed how ecology impacts on a wide range of related disciplines. There has also been much work in the preparation for the INTECOL Congress which has involved staff from all departments within the BES but particularly the Centenary Team. We are looking forward to welcoming the world's ecologists to London in August to celebrate our 100th birthday. We are particularly excited about our next Annual Meeting in December 2014 in Lille, France, with the French Ecological Society, which will be the first time we have taken the Annual Meeting outside the UK.

Special Interest Groups (SIGs) are at the heart of the BES and the dedicated band of volunteers who organise events make a significant contribution to our work. They are also a great way for members to get directly involved in Society activities. Charles Darwin House is proving to be an excellent venue for SIG events but field-based meetings are also a vital component of their work. Do take part in SIG activities, whether it's

attending their meetings at the Annual Meeting, going on a field trip or joining the Group.

The *Bulletin* remains an essential part of being a BES member and Alan Crowden, Bulletin Editor, and Richard English, BES Communications Manager, have worked hard on the redesign which, I'm sure you'll agree, looks fabulous.

Finally I'd like to thank all our members. Without your support the BES could not help foster the ecological community, provide subsidised scientific meetings, publish world class research, get the voice of ecology heard by policy makers or tell the public about our exciting and important science. We have been delighted with the initial results of our membership drive to recruit an additional 1,000 members to the BES but you can still help us reach our target. Please continue to be part of your community by being a member and encouraging colleagues to join.

You'll see from the section on the Centenary and on other areas that the BES has been spreading the word about ecology to a really diverse set of audiences this year. The Society now has a great base on which to launch its activities for the next 100 years.



British Ecological Society 100 years

Julie Hodgkinson, Festival of Ecology Manager
Amy Everard, Festival of Ecology Assistant

At the British Ecological Society's golden jubilee symposium of 1964, J.B. Cragg wrote that "science is essentially an art from in which a handful of inspired pioneers set the pace". The pace of academic ecology in Britain was undoubtedly set by the founders of the British Ecological Society, the world's first academic ecological society.

In the late 19th century naturalists began not only to record what they saw but to try and explain the patterns and distribution of what they encountered and the environment in which they existed. In 1904 the British Vegetation Committee was set up to review, conduct and establish a methodology for vegetation surveys. The impetus behind this Committee and its work led to the establishment of the British Ecological Society on 12 April 1913. This first meeting launched the world's first academic ecological journal, *Journal of Ecology* to its 100 members. Since then the Society has expanded and now publishes five internationally peer reviewed journals, runs educational and policy programmes, grants and meetings and provides a supportive network for over 4000 members.



The Society's centenary was inspired by the words of the first president, Sir Arthur Tansley FRS, in that first issue of *Journal of Ecology*, that the aim of the new Society was to "foster and promote in all ways the science of ecology". The Society has been doing this for the past 100 years and the centenary is a chance to highlight the work of the Society and academic ecologists across the world.

Policy

On 25 June 2013 the Society launched the latest in a series of its Ecological Issues entitled "The impact of extreme events on freshwater ecology". The Ecological Issues are a digest of all the latest research on ecological issues for a policy making audience.

British Ecological Society 100 years

Journals and publications

One hundred eminent ecologists were asked to nominate the paper from the Society's journals that they felt most influenced themselves or the science of ecology. This has culminated in the publication of 100 Influential papers published in 100 years of British Ecological Society journals. The publication shows how the scientists of the past influence the scientists of today and how the science of ecology has developed.

For scientists

Ecology covers many diverse scientific disciplines, a series of cross disciplinary meetings were held across the UK in the spring on a variety of topics. These were the Marine Ecology Centenary Symposium, in Edinburgh, Global change and biosphere interactions at the University of York and Evolutionary ecology of infectious diseases at the Society's offices in London. Nearly 300 scientists attended the meetings.

INTECOL is the International Ecological Association which hosts a major international scientific meeting every four years in partnership with a national ecological society. From 18-23

August 2013 this meeting will come to London. There will be over 40 symposia on cutting edge ecological research, over 20 workshops on policy, public engagement or skills development and 11 world class plenary lectures. Currently around 2000 delegates from across the globe are registered to attend the meeting.

For the public

Engaging the public in an appreciation and understanding of the science of ecology is a fundamental part of the centenary. From 15 June – 4 August 2013, the Society will be celebrating with its first Festival of Ecology. In partnership with over 60 organisations, the Festival includes over 120 ecological themed events nationwide for all the family. Events range from a celebration of urban trees in Manchester to a bee survey across the north east, learning more about the habitats of Wales, to exploring the marine ecology of the Scottish Islands, ecological workshops from Newtownabbey to Kent as well as exhibitions, talks, activities and walks. Partners include institutions such as the RSPB and Wildlife Trusts to international museums such as the National Museum of Wales to universities and small volunteer-led institutions.

British Ecological Society 100 years

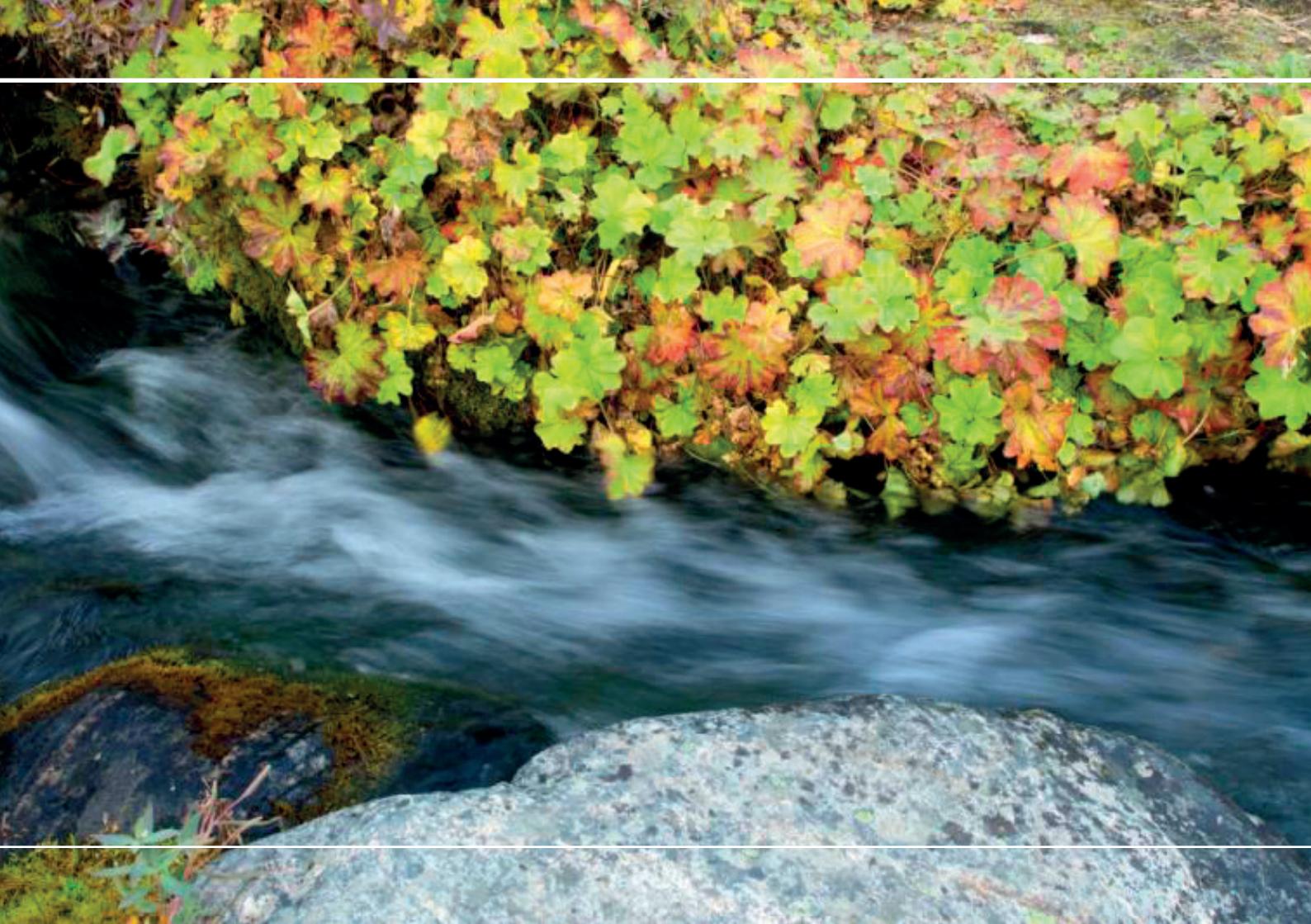
BES members developed some interactive ecological activities and accompanied by a tent and lots of enthusiasm took to the road to deliver the activities at music festivals across the UK. The events entitled Sex & Bugs & Rock n' Roll are scheduled to be delivered to five festivals at the time of printing.

The Society had a garden at the RHS Chelsea Flower Show in May 2013 on the topic of alien species and which of these had been introduced since 1913. Over 2000 people came to the stand to learn more about the science of ecology.

Education

The Society has had great success in producing wall charts for schools and non formal learning groups. These charts highlight certain ecological issues and show the relevance of ecological science across many different disciplines. The wall charts are "Food, food and more food" focusing on food security, "The competition for life on earth" which is concerned with the ecology of pests and disease, "How diverse is life on earth?" on the diversity of organisms and "Is there life beyond earth?" which shows how extreme environments on earth can tell us about extreme environments in other worlds. The charts were accompanied by a series of competitions. Over 32,000 charts have been distributed.

The Centenary celebrations are only just beginning, for more information please go to www.festivalofecology.org



Education

Dr Lesley Batty, Education, Training and Careers Committee Chair, Karen Devine, Education Manager and Cheryl Pilbeam, Policy and Education Assistant



Education Policy

Throughout 2013, we have continued to work with the Society of Biology and SCORE (Science Community Representing Education) on primary science curricula, GCSE and A-level sciences to promote ecological science, practical learning and fieldwork and mathematical techniques within science. We have worked directly with the Department for Education curriculum drafters in advisory capacities and have contributed to a number of consultations including primary science, GCSE curricula and school accountability measures.

The Society has continued to collaborate with the Biochemical Society and the Society for Experimental Biology in hosting Education policy lunchboxes. The Society has formed new collaborations with the Society of Biology and the Society for General Microbiology in taking these forward.

Centenary competition for schools

Launched in September 2012, we received over 300 entries to our centenary competitions. Entries were submitted from across the UK and include school groups, youth groups and individuals. The best pieces of poetry and artwork submitted to the competition "My favourite wildlife" will be collected and produced as a booklet, freely available to all. The winning entries submitted to the competition "My broadcast from space" have been produced and recorded by Funkids Radio to be broadcast in early September 2013. Winners will be presented with their certificates at an award ceremony, the food for which is inspired by the winning entry in the competition category "My regional menu".

Throughout the summer the Society has organised and hosted a number of walks local to Charles Darwin House. These have been open to the general public with a special event for a local after-school club for children aged 4-12.

Education

Supporting career development

The Society attended a number of UCAS career conferences advising students on the qualifications and courses most appropriate to further study in the biosciences, additionally the Society offered bursaries for A-level students to attend 2 week internships within higher education to gain a taste of university life. These internships are offered to students from lower socioeconomic backgrounds who are the first in their family to consider attending university.

The Society's Undergraduate fellowship successfully organised and hosted a comprehensive careers conference for over 100 students considering ecological careers. The fellowship scheme continues to grow and this year has planned additional events for students hoping to progress to postgraduate study and present their research at their first scientific meeting. The contribution of our undergraduate members has allowed the Society to attend more University-based careers events promoting membership of learned societies generally and careers in the biosciences.

The Society funded 10 Undergraduate Research bursaries in the summer of 2013; these bursaries have enabled students to undertake a 6-8 week period of research and have included diverse topics such as saltmarsh regeneration in the Eden Estuary to taxonomic evaluation of cryoconite cyanobacteria: barcoding keystone taxa on glaciers.



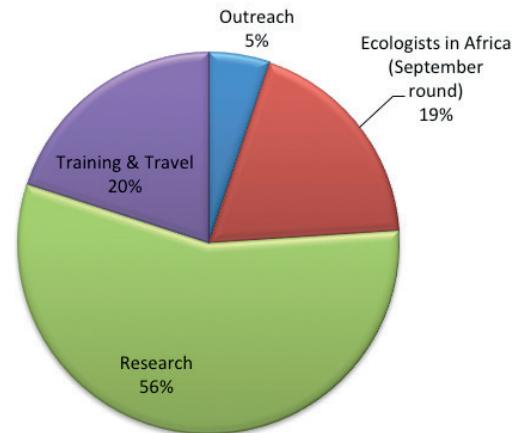
Grants and Awards

**From Richard Bardgett, Vice President and Grants Committee Chair
and Olivia Hunter, Grants and Events Assistant**

September 2012 commenced the first round of the new Grant schemes: Research grant, Training and Travel grant, Outreach grant and Ecologists in Africa. In the September 2012 and March 2013 grant rounds, Grants Committee awarded 8 Outreach grant projects amounting to £14,022; 6 Ecologists in Africa grant recipients (September round only) totalling £50,978; Research grant under £5,000 had 18 recipients amounting to £77,053; and Research grant £5,000-£20,000 was awarded to 5 individuals totalling £74,951. 150 recipients will receive support from the Training and Travel grant to attend INTECOL amounting to £54,279.



Total amount awarded August 2012 – August 2013



Grants and Awards

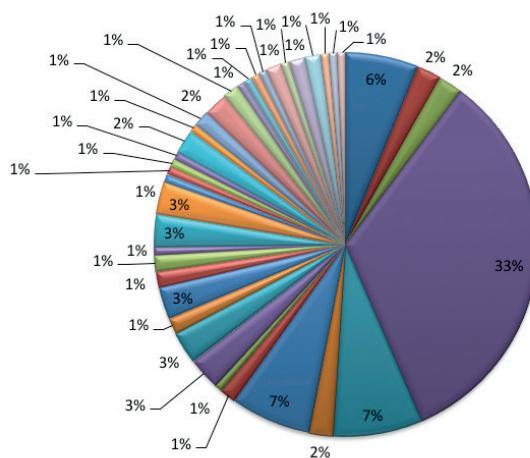
The changes that were made in 2012 with regards to the assessment of grant applications have had great feedback from applicants. The introduction of the the review College and feedback documents have not only enabled the precise scoring of the applications, but also aids the applicant with the future development of their project.

Below are some of the activities that received BES funding since August 2012:

- Research grant £5,000-£20,000 were awarded to recipients carrying out projects in New Zealand, England, Spain and Antarctica. This included Dr Salvador Herrando-Perez in March 2013 who was awarded £20,000 for a Research grant titled 'Heat-shock proteins as biomarkers of the thermal niche of Iberian reptiles' to carry out the project in Spain.
- Training and Travel grant this year has been dedicated to those seeking funding to attend INTECOL 2013. The BES received a very generous legacy from the estate of the late Dr James Parkyn which allowed the BES to support students and Research Assistants to attend the meeting. This grant has been awarded to recipients in 37 countries all over the world, including Nigeria, Singapore, Ukraine, Chile, Perú and Venezuela.

Training & Travel Grant Awardees

India	New Zealand	Canada	UK	Germany
Spain	USA	Argentina	Chile	Bangladesh
the Netherlands	Ireland	Nigeria	Pakistan	Singapore
Uganda	France	Italy	Austria	Switzerland
Kenya	South Africa	Australia	Ukraine	Colombia
Mexico	Madagascar	Croatia	Finland	Poland
Belgium	Sweden	Serbia	Perú	Portugal
TURKISH	Venezuela	Iran		



Meetings

**From Andrew Beckerman, Meetings Committee Chair,
Richard English, Communications Manager
and Heather Newton, Projects Officer**

Annual Meeting:

The 2012 Annual Meeting at the University of Birmingham, UK, was the first December meeting in over a decade. The level of the meeting's success took us by surprise; it was an outstanding event, attracting 869 delegates from the UK, Europe and overseas. There were 402 oral and 189 poster presentation abstract submissions, eight thematic topics and ten parallel sessions.

The BES lecture was delivered by Johan Rockström (Director of Stockholm Resilience Centre, Stockholm University), speaking on 'Planetary Stewardship in the Anthropocene: Preserving the Remaining Beauty on Earth for Human Prosperity. We also welcomed Steve P. Ellner (Cornell University, Ecology and Evolutionary Biology), who gave the Tansley Lecture on 'Rapid Evolution: From Genes to Communities, and Back Again?'

The eight thematic topics and invited speakers from around the world provided a showcase for some very high quality



international science, including Insect Pollination, New Directions in Phenology, Biodiversity and Health and Nitrogen Deposition in Artic and Alpine Ecosystems.

Aside from a diverse range of workshops, including 'How to Get Published in an International Peer-Reviewed Journal', 'An Introduction to Datasets', 'The Future of Fieldwork in Higher Education' and 'Informing Climate Change Adaptation: Developing the Links Between Research, Policy and Conservation', we arranged a wide array of networking and fun social events. Our recurring 'Unlocking Your Potential' event gave PhD students and Post Docs an opportunity to hear a range of professionals at various stages of their careers talk about their career paths – contributors included our President, Georgina Mace, Steve P. Ellner, Franciska De Vries (secretary of the new Plants, Soils and Ecosystems group) as well as representatives from science communication. The flagship social event, though, was the BES Christmas party – festive food, music and mingling at Birmingham's famous Jam House.

Meetings

Joint Symposium:

This collaborative event with the Biochemical Society and the Society for Experimental Biology, was an exciting opportunity to bring together scientists from different disciplines to address challenges of understanding complex trophic interactions between organisms above- and belowground. It was organised by Alison Bennett, Alison Karley, Scott Johnson and Tim Daniell and offered a distinctive mix of presentations, from scientists who led in the development and application of specific technology platforms to eminent researchers in the field of aboveground–belowground research.

Charles Darwin House was at capacity for this event, with delegates praising the opportunity to network with colleagues from different disciplines.

Specialist Groups:

Most of the Society's Specialist Interest Groups (SIGs) had another active year and continued to develop a number of activities. Meetings Committee and many of the activities of the Society would not happen – and certainly not flourish – without the considerable input of colleagues in the SIGs.

Currently we have groups covering: Agricultural Ecology, Computational Ecology, Conservation Ecology, Ecological Genetics Ecology, Forest Ecology, Invasive Ecology, Macroecology, Parasites and Pathogens, Peatlands Ecology, Plants, Soils and Ecosystems, Plant Physiology Ecology and Tropical Ecology. We are always keen to support new groups, so contact Richard English if you are interested in establishing a new group: Richard@BritishEcologicalSociety.org

INTECOL 2013:

See the Centenary section for more details.

Meetings

Strategy:

During the past eight months, Meetings Committee continued its long-running objectives to (i) ensure quality and breadth of ecological science at our meetings, including topics from marine, terrestrial and freshwater biomes and reflect the growing interest and importance of evolutionary ecology and climate change; (ii) promote more effectively the sharing of best practice between SIGs, encourage joint activities, and participate in symposia and the Annual Meeting; (iii) develop field and satellite meetings to the Annual Meeting, particularly leveraging the potential of Charles Darwin House; (iv) develop joint meetings with other learned societies; and (v) encourage ecologists from developing countries to attend BES events. We look forward specifically to INTECOL, the increasing activity of SIGs and increasing interactions with Policy and Education objectives.

It should not be forgotten that none of this year's events profile would have been possible were it not for the dedication of all the BES staff. I thank them all and, in particular, Hazel Norman, Richard English, Heather Mewton and Olivia Hunter. Their enthusiasm and dedication to the Society permeates the quality and energy associated with our events.



Membership

From Mick Crawley, Vice President and Membership Committee chair and Bill Bewes, Membership Officer

2013 has been a very busy year for the membership team. Our main focus has been the membership drive and our target to reach 4500 members by the end of the year. Currently we have just over 4200 members, our highest total since 2001. We'd like to say a big thank you to all members who have helped us get this far. The prize draw for the two lifetime memberships will be drawn in December. If you don't win the main prize you can still win £20 vouchers for the NHBS website if two of your friends join up.

Every year in September we always ask Ordinary members to recommend membership to any new students in their departments. This year we will be sending out a PowerPoint slide to help members champion the Society to any new recruits. Thanks again for all your efforts; let's see if we can hit our target by the end of the year!

Another major project for this year is the installation of a new membership database. While this may not seem wildly exciting for BES members, the new system will enable members to check

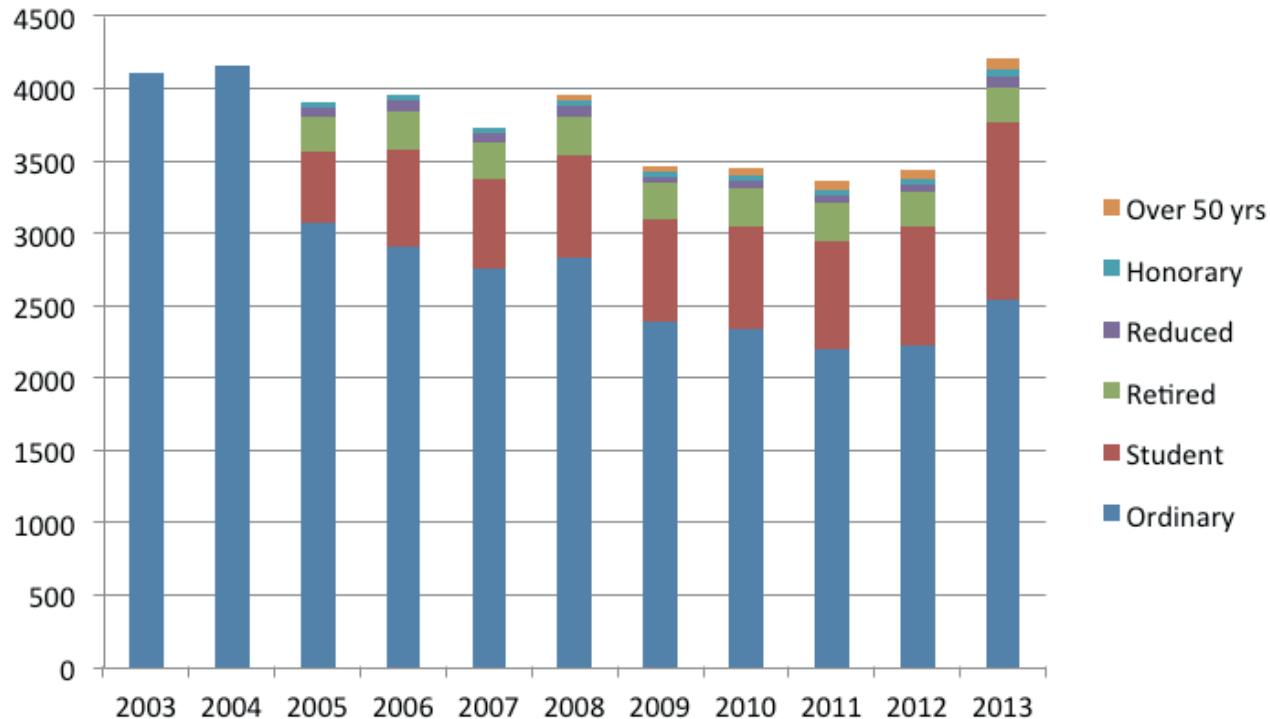
their membership status online, access communications such as receipts and booking registrations, and change contact details. Web portals will link the website and database. Online renewal payments and meeting bookings will be posted directly into the new system, allowing the membership team to concentrate on looking after our members, rather than administration.

We are continuing to develop the website and will be adding content to the members' area over the next few months. This will include an electronic version of the new look BES Bulletin, content from our journal archives, as well as the web forms to check and amend your membership details.

It's been a big year for the BES, with the centenary, INTECOL and the Festival of Ecology. Members have seen a new look Bulletin as well as a re-designed web site. Next year is the first year we will be having our Annual Meeting outside of the UK in Lille, France. Exciting times to be a BES member!



Membership



Policy

**From Juliet Vickery, Public and Policy Committee Chair,
Martin Smith, Policy Manager, and
Cheryl Pilbeam, Policy and Education Assistant**

The centrepiece of our policy work this year was the relaunch of the Ecological Issues series at a parliamentary reception in June. Over 100 attendees, including several MPs, gathered in the members' dining room at the Houses of Parliament to hear the President describe the many centenary activities and to receive a copy of *The Impact of Extreme Events on Freshwater Ecosystems*.

The Ecological Issues series aims to provide policy makers with an introduction to a topical area of ecology and present useful policy recommendations to them. Our first instalment examined the effects of extreme droughts and floods on the ecology of rivers, lakes and ponds and highlighted the need for land management techniques that represented a 'win-win' for the environment alongside properties and businesses. The policy report was supported with a special wallchart aimed at schoolchildren on the subject of freshwater ecology, creating the beginning of a cross-Society approach to the Ecological Issues series. Huw Irranca-Davies MP (Shadow Minister for Food and Farming) launched the series with encouraging words about the importance of learned societies to informing public



policy, and the BES hopes to follow up on this with further documents in the Ecological Issues series, including on topical issues such as tree health.

Meanwhile our policy blog (www.britishecologicalsociety.org/blog) and regular policy digest have continued to keep members up to date, with posts on reforms to the Common Agricultural Policy, biodiversity offsetting and neonicotinoids. We added almost 100 policy blog posts to our website during July 2012 – June 2013, bringing the total to well over 1,000 since the blog began in 2007.

Developing ecological science and scientists

Shadowing Scheme: For the seventh year early-career members of the BES spent two days with Ministers at Defra, the Welsh Government, MEPs in Brussels and MSPs in Scotland. Participants described the experience as 'a fantastic opportunity' and valued the chance to learn about the role that NGOs, learned societies and thinktanks play in connecting policy makers with science research.

Policy

POST Fellowship: The Society continues to support PhD students to spend three months producing a briefing note at the Parliamentary Office of Science and Technology. This year's Fellow, Rory O'Connor (Centre for Ecology and Hydrology) worked on a POSTnote on insect pollinators which is due to be published in September. Rory's experiences of working with scientists and MPs to produce his note are captured on our policy blog (www.britishecologicalsociety.org/blog/2013/05/31/bes-post-fellowship-first-reflections) and provide an insight into how he found working in a fast-moving policy area.

Policy Training Workshops: Our popular series of policy training workshops continued at the Annual Meeting in 2012, and included a presentation from Peter Bridgewater (Chairman, JNCC) entitled 'Badgered by science and fishing for evidence – life in a science-policy interface'. Participants learned about how to communicate with policy makers and how to develop policy-relevant research projects. In May, Mark Reed (Birmingham City University) and Anna Evely (Project Maya Community Interest Company) ran a policy training workshop for researchers based around the Living With Environmental Change knowledge transfer guidelines, including top tips on creating a social media strategy and mapping stakeholders for your research.

Promoting the use of ecological science

The BES wrote to the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) to highlight the contribution that ecological research makes to cost avoidance and to argue that this should be taken into account when assessing the economic impact of the subject and when making the case to the Treasury for protection for the science and research budget.

The Scotland Policy group responded to a Scottish government consultation on the new Scotland Rural Development Programme, and has been working hard to prepare for an event in September that will explore the opportunities and challenges for science in the refreshed Scotland Biodiversity Strategy.

Through the Wildlife and Countryside Link – a collection of NGOs with an interest in the environment – the BES responded to Defra's Triennial Review of Natural England and the Environment Agency. At the end of this period we are in the process of responding to a consultation on the balance of competences between the EU and the UK in the area of the environment, bringing together thoughts on the value of legislation such as the Habitats Directive.

Policy

Building collaborative partnerships

This year the BES worked with the Royal Geographical Society (with IBG) to hold a public event exploring issues relating to the increasing role of environmental economics in policymaking.

Putting a price on the priceless: valuing nature? was held at the RGS and chaired by Fred Pearce (New Scientist), with a packed audience putting questions to panellists including Rosie Hails (CEH, and a member of the government's Natural Capital Committee), Tom Crompton (WWF) and Sarah Whatmore (University of Oxford).

Together with the UK Biodiversity Research Advisory Group (UK BRAG), we held a joint session at the Annual Meeting on balancing food security and environmental concerns.

The BES is a partner in the Natural Capital Initiative (NCI), together with the Society of Biology, the Centre for Ecology and Hydrology and the James Hutton Institute. This year, we recruited Irma Allen as Development Officer for the NCI, and she has been helping us to undertake a strategic review in order to support future fundraising for the NCI.

Bulletin

**Alan Crowden, Editor
and Emma Sayer, Associate Editor**

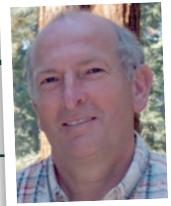
Even during a year as busy as the BES Centenary, The Bulletin has done its level best to inform, entertain and occasionally provoke the members of the oldest ecological society in the world. Looking back through our feature articles, 2013 has been a year of innovation and communication in ecology. An increasing number of female researchers are getting on soapboxes to communicate their science, while others (male and female) have been teaming up with the general public to conduct citizen science, busking at music festivals, or sharing their expertise via open access, research networks, and useful apps for ecologists. We also had plenty of career advice from ecological career planning and climbing the greasy pole to making the world safe for biodiversity without getting fired.

The Bulletin also decided to move with the times – we celebrated 100 years of British Ecology in style by getting a major facelift.



December 2012 saw the last issue with the familiar staid design and trusty white-on-green headings. The brand new Bulletin was launched with the first issue of 2013 – a month later than usual to coincide with the Society's birthday in April. The redesign proved to be a lengthy, complicated and sometimes painful procedure, especially for our esteemed

Bulletin editor, whose efforts to resist any form of modernization were thwarted by the patience and perseverance of Richard English, who cut through his objections with surgical precision. Despite a few teething troubles, all appear to have emerged none the worse for wear and without any visible scars. Some members lament the passing of the old design, but overall the new-look Bulletin has been very well-received. Indeed, the most divisive issue so far appears to be the choice of paper, which we take as confirmation that the BES members still enjoy receiving and reading hardcopies of their favourite society newsletter.



Bulletin

The Centenary year also proved to be an important year for policy, heralded by Bill Sutherland et al.'s epic and informative summary of legislative issues of interest for ecologists and conservationists, which appeared in the first issue of the year. Participants in the BES shadowing scheme gave Bulletin readers a glimpse into the working lives of MEPs, and, in keeping with the subject of the resurrected Ecological Issues series, The Bulletin was flooded with articles on policy briefs, fisheries reform, and conservation management, to name but a few. We also welcomed a number of contributions from other societies and organisations including the Society of Experimental Biology, the Society of Biology, Natural England, the Field Studies Council, and, of course, the newly Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management.

The Bulletin continues to publish excellent contributions from early-career ecologists and was particularly pleased to receive an article from Sarah Johnston, one of the 2012 BES Undergraduate Fellows, who wrote about the future of fieldwork in higher education.

In addition to the consistent and reliable reports from BES staff and articles from faithful contributors John Wiens, Richard Hobbs and Sally Hayns, Markus Eichhorn, a new recruit provided regular rants which were met with sweet reason from Emma Sayer in 'Rant and Reason'.

As always, we are indebted to our regular contributors, the Special Interest Groups and the BES staff, who have all worked hard over the year to keep The Bulletin's readers up to date with the latest news and views. Special thanks go to Richard English for his heroic efforts in moving the redesign forward. Last but not least, many thanks to Peter Thomas and his team of bookworms for providing the reviews with which to form our very own ecological bestseller list.



Publications

**Alan Gray, Publications Committee Chair
and Catherine Hill, Head of Publications**

The BES journals continue to go from strength to strength, thanks to our hugely dedicated team of academic editors, associate editors, reviewers, committed editorial office staff and a great partnership with our publisher, Wiley.

While Impact Factors remain a common way for academics to measure the success of journals globally, they are not so effective at demonstrating the individual impact that our authors' papers have on the ecological community and beyond. It is difficult to define impact effectively but the BES journals are actively exploring a number of different ways in which we might measure this. 2012 saw full-text downloads across the five BES journals increase significantly to 3,022,180 from 2,630,990 in 2011 – a positive sign our journal content is reaching a wider audience. All of the journals are participating in a trial with ReadCube: when opting to read a BES paper as a pdf, select enhanced pdf and you will have access to a wide range of tools via ReadCube, including annotation, personalised article recommendations and altmetric scores for all the articles. Altmetrics scores indicate the level of interest in a paper

through social media and other outlets i.e. the number of times a paper has been tweeted, blogged about, had media interest etc. Again, this is not a perfect way of measuring impact but it offers an interesting way to track uptake of the scientific literature and one that can be measured far more quickly than waiting for citations.

We consistently hear from authors that it is essential for their research to be published as soon as possible. In recognition of this, all BES journals now use the Accepted Article workflow, which allows articles to be made available online in as few as two working days after acceptance. All Accepted Articles have a DOI so can be cited immediately and clearly state on the article that they will be replaced with an edited and typeset version as soon as that becomes available.

Open access has continued to be an important focus for the Society during 2013. The journals are all compliant with the new mandate introduced by RCUK in April 2013 and we are actively exploring further open access options along with our



Publications

publisher and a small open access working group established by Publications Committee. We plan to survey our members and authors to seek views on open access from within the ecological community, both in the UK and internationally, so will be in touch in due course with further information.

During 2013, all of the BES journals have integrated with Dryad, enabling and encouraging authors to deposit their research data when publishing with the BES. The Society feels strongly that this is an important step towards preserving research data in the future and, from January 2014, plans to make it mandatory that anyone publishing in a BES journal should archive their data in an accessible and sustainable repository. Members will be kept informed of progress of this initiative through our Bulletin.

The publications team continue to support our members within the academic publishing process. In 2013, we are running two lunchtime workshops at INTECOL: "Maximising the impact of your research paper" on Monday 19 August and "Writing and publishing scientific papers if English is not your first language" on Wednesday 21 August. Our two Managing Editors, Liz Baker and Andrea Baier, have also produced a booklet explaining the basics of peer review for our early career researchers (or for

those who need a refresher!) There will be limited print copies available at INTECOL or alternatively this resource will be free to download from www.britishecologicalsociety.org/publications/journals

With 18 of our academic editors present at INTECOL, plus a large number of associate editors and BES staff, please do drop by the BES stand to introduce yourself and give us your views on the journals. Alternatively look out for the Editor or Associate Editor name badges around the conference and they will be happy to talk to you about their journals.

Functional Ecology

**Duncan Irschick (Executive Editor), on behalf of Chuck Fox,
Ken Thompson, Alan Knapp, Liz Baker and Jennifer Meyer**

- 
- *Functional Ecology's* 2012 ISI Impact Factor rose to 4.861, placing it 19th out of 136 in the ecology category.
 - Volume 27, Issue 1 featured an editorial providing an in-depth review of the Journal's scope to reflect the changes in ecological research and work published in the Journal.
 - Three Special Features have been published during 2013. The first, "The ecology of stress" in Issue 1 was guest edited by Rudy Boonstra; the second in Issue 3, "Plant-microbe-insect interactions" was guest edited by Arjen Biere and Alison Bennett; and the third, "Mechanisms of plant competition" to coincide with the Journal-sponsored symposium at INTECOL, has been guest edited by David Robinson, Rob Brooker and Clare Trinder.
 - Issue 4 features an 'Extended Spotlight' section on "Responses to global climate change: insights from organismal physiology", coordinated by Steven Chown and Ary Hoffmann.
 - Four new board members were appointed as Associate Editors: Katie Field, Bill Hopkins, Ignacio Moore and Maud Ferrari.
 - The 2012 Haldane Prize for the best paper by a young author was awarded to Ulrike Lampe for her paper "Staying tuned: grasshoppers from noisy roadside habitats produce courtship signals with elevated frequency components".
 - Robbie Wilson and Alan Knapp have increased the number of journal podcasts on the BES iTunes channel with three new interviews recorded this year.
 - The Journal's most recent video on forest canopies has been viewed nearly 800 times and details of the work were featured on the New York Times Environment blog and the BBC Science & Technology Focus publication.
 - The lay summaries continue to be very popular, with statistics showing that the lay summary page on the journal website is the second most visited page.

More information about the Journal can be found at www.functionalecology.org

Journal of Animal Ecology

**Tim Coulson (Executive Editor), on behalf of Graeme Hays,
Mike Boots, Ken Wilson, Liz Baker and Peter Livermore**

- *Journal of Animal Ecology's* 2012 ISI Impact Factor is 4.841, placing the Journal 1/149 in the Zoology ISI Journal Citation Reports and 20/136 journals in the ecology category.
- Five review papers have been published in the Journal during 2013, including the 2011 BES Presidential Address on "Mosquito ecology and the control of malaria" by Charles Godfray.
- Submissions have risen during 2013 by over 60 manuscripts, which is a 13% increase on those received during the first half of 2012.
- The table of contents have been improved to include text alongside the images accompanying each paper.
- At the start of the year the Journal launched a new Vimeo channel which now hosts six videos. The most recent on seagrass ecosystems has been viewed over 700 times.
- The editorial board has recently been enhanced by the appointment of Sonia Altizer, Luca Börger, Kate Jones, Dehau Wang, Dylan Childs and Spence Behmer.
- The 2012 Elton Prize for the best paper by a young author was awarded to Sonya Auer, for her paper "Life histories have a history: effects of past and present conditions on adult somatic growth rates in wild Trinidadian guppies".
- The Journal now has over 1,700 Twitter followers; this figure has doubled in the past six months.
- In March the Journal received extensive media coverage of its paper by Seth Cherry & Andrew Derocher on the migration patterns of polar bears. During the same month, *Journal of Animal Ecology's* paper by Johnny Armstrong & Morgan Bond on phenotype flexibility in wild fish featured in National Geographic NewsWatch.

More information about the Journal can be found at www.journalofanimalecology.org



Journal of Applied Ecology

**E.J. Milner-Gulland (Executive Editor), on behalf of
Phil Hulme, Marc Cadotte, Mark Whittingham,
Jos Barlow, Andrea Baier and Erika Newton**

- To celebrate the 50th Anniversary of the *Journal of Applied Ecology*, a Virtual Issue was created to showcase the contribution made by authors over the last 50 years in framing and responding to the key applied ecological issues of the time.
- Plans for further anniversary activities organised at INTECOL are well underway and include a symposium “Putting applied ecology into practice: knowledge and needs for the 21st century”; a workshop “How best can international journals support applied ecologists in emerging economies”; and a small awards ceremony.
- The second review, on India, in the series “Applied ecology in emerging economies” was published in Volume 50, Issue 3. The series highlights the key applied ecological issues facing emerging economies and the research that is occurring in-country to address them.
- The 10th Practitioner’s Perspectives article was published in Volume 50, Issue 3. The series was created at the beginning of 2011 to provide a platform for individuals involved in management of ecological systems to explain what is needed to ensure more effective interactions between research and its applications.
- A special profile on The UK National Ecosystem Assessment, guest-edited by Rosie Hails and Steve Ormerod, was published in Volume 50, Issue 4.
- The 2012 Southwood Prize for the best paper by a young author was awarded to Andrew Olds for “Synergistic effects of reserves and connectivity on ecological resilience”.
- Submissions in 2012 increased slightly compared to 2011 and reached over 1,000 manuscripts for the first time.
- The 2012 Impact Factor for *Journal of Applied Ecology* is 4.74, ranking it 21st out of 136 ecology journals indexed in ISI.



Journal of Applied Ecology

- The Journal has welcomed the following new Associate Editors to its board: Joseph Bennett, John Finn and Ian Kaplan. Lesley Batty, Nick Dulvy, Yvonne Buckley and Doug Landis have left the editorial board and we are grateful for all their work.
- Papers published in the Journal continue to attract good attention in national and international media, including the BBC website, The Telegraph, The Scotsman, National Geographic, Radio New Zealand and Los Angeles Times.

More information about the Journal can be found at www.journalofappliedecology.org

Journal of Ecology

**David Gibson (Executive Editor), on behalf of
Richard Bardgett, Mark Rees, Amy Austin,
Andrea Baier and Lauren Sandhu**

- The 2012 Impact Factor for *Journal of Ecology* is 5.431, placing the Journal 14th out of 136 ecology journals and 11th out of 195 plant science journals listed by ISI.
- At the end of 2012 Mike Hutchings left the *Journal of Ecology* team after 27 years' service as Associate Editor, Editor and, most recently, Executive Editor. He steered the Journal with dedication, good humour and the utmost professionalism and over the years has mentored many editorial board members. We thank him wholeheartedly for everything he has given to the Journal.
- In January 2013 David Gibson became Executive Editor of *Journal of Ecology* and Amy Austin took up the role of Editor.
- As part of the BES's Centenary celebrations *Journal of Ecology* published "Identification of 100 fundamental ecological questions" by Sutherland et al. in Issue 1, which is free to access throughout 2013.
- *Journal of Ecology* has published three Special Features in 2013. Sandra Lavorel guest-edited a Special Feature on "Plant functional effects on ecosystem services"; Wim van der Putten guest-edited "Plant–soil feedbacks in a changing world"; and Roberto Salguero-Gomez and Richard Shefferson guest-edited "New perspectives on whole-plant senescence".
- A paper from the senescence Special Feature by Morales et al. has been selected as an Editor's Choice by Science and the NSF has featured the paper by Rapp et al. on the future of whitebark pine trees.
- Ignasi Bartomeus, Caroline Brophy, Yvonne Buckley, Walter Carson, Gerlinde de Deyn, Franciska De Vries, Dan Flynn, Matthew Heard, Sandra Lavorel, Andrew MacDougall, Ryan Phillips, Nathan Swenson and David Wardle joined the editorial board. We thank Marcelo Aizen, Rob Brooker, Thomas Kitzberger and Peter Klinkhamer who have left the editorial board after years of dedicated service.



Journal of Ecology

- *Journal of Ecology*'s blog <http://jecologyblog.wordpress.com/> has grown from strength to strength with blog Editor Scott Chamberlain and others consistently posting a diverse range of content.
- The 2012 Harper Prize for best paper by a young author was awarded to Simon Doxford for his paper "Changes in the large-scale distribution of plants: extinction, colonisation and the effects of climate".

For more information about the Journal or to read the blog, please visit www.journalofecology.org.

Biological Flora of the British Isles

Tony Davy, Biological Flora Editor

- Two new accounts have been published since December. The year started with a substantial account of an invasive alien, Giant rhubarb (*Gunnera tinctoria*). This native of South America was collected by Darwin on his 'Beagle' voyage and is among the largest of herbaceous species. It is remarkable for being the only flowering plant known to fix nitrogen through an intracellular symbiosis with cyanobacteria. The second account was of the rare Alpine Catchfly (*Silene suecica*), known only from two upland areas in the British Isles, where it is often on ultramafic soils (rich in heavy metals). An account of Lungwort (*Pulmonaria officinalis*), another introduced plant, is in press.
- Forthcoming accounts are likely to include False acacia (*Robinia pseudoacacia*), Sea holly (*Eryngium maritimum*), Sea kale (*Crambe maritima*) and Butcher's broom (*Ruscus aculeatus*).
- To date, 272 accounts (including rather more species) have been produced. Increasingly, accounts with a more Europe-wide (or Northern Hemisphere-wide) perspective are broadening our horizons. The flow of offers to prepare

accounts continues to be good. Nevertheless we are always keen to recruit new authors with particular knowledge of species to undertake the many important accounts remaining to be produced. Please contact Tony Davy for further information if you are interested (a.davy@uea.ac.uk).

- I am very grateful for the invaluable expertise and continuing assistance of the Associate Editors (Chris Preston, Michael Proctor, David Streeter and Michael Usher).



Giant rhubarb
(*Gunnera tinctoria*)
Photo:
Margherita Gioria

Methods in Ecology and Evolution

**Rob Freckleton (Executive Editor), on behalf
of Bob O'Hara and Samantha Ponton**

- *Methods in Ecology and Evolution's* 2012 ISI Impact Factor is 5.924; ranking us 12/136 journals in the ecology category.
- We received 398 submissions in the first half of 2013, which is a 62% increase on 2012. To help with the increasing workload and to expand the expertise of the Journal, we have enlisted 12 new Associate Editors: Luca Börger, Stéphane Dray, Jarrod Hadfield, Jari Oksanen, Tamara Münkemüller, Justin Travis, Mike Bunce, Shinichi Nakagawa, Erica Leder, Barb Anderson, Liam Revell and Carolyn Kurle.
- The 2012 Robert May Prize for the best paper by a young author was awarded to Sarah Papworth for, "Movement ecology of human resource users: using net squared displacement, biased random bridges and resource utilization functions to quantify hunter and gatherer behaviour".
- At the end of 2012 we introduced a new requirement to our manuscript submissions site, called a 'Tweetable abstract', which allows authors to describe the key novelty/main finding of their article in less than 120 characters.



- In January the Journal moved from publishing 6 issues per year to 12.
- In May we started a 6-month trial with Altmetric, which is a powerful tool that tracks when an article has been mentioned online on websites such as Twitter, Facebook, Google+, blog sites, news sites and many more.
- Timed for the Evolution 2013 Conference in Utah in June, we put together a Virtual Issue containing selected papers with an evolutionary theme.
- In August we published a Special Feature on "Unifying fossils and phylogenies for comparative analyses of diversification and trait evolution".
- We have published over 20 Applications over the past year, which are freely available to everybody and represent a unique source of citable descriptions of new methods and techniques in ecology and evolution.

Methods in Ecology and Evolution

- A couple of articles have been featured by the press over the past year: "Analysis of photo-id data allowing for missed matches and individuals identified from opposite sides" and "Comparing diversity data collected using a protocol designed for volunteers with results from a professional alternative".

For more information about the Journal, please visit www.methodsinecologyandevolution.org

Ecology and Evolution

Catherine Hill



- *Ecology and Evolution* continues to be supported by the five BES journals, along with eleven other high quality journals covering ecology and evolutionary biology.
- The journal has been awarded its first Impact Factor of 1.184, ranking it 99 out of 136 ecology journals.
- To cope with rising numbers of referrals and direct submissions, the journal has grown its editorial board to 42 members. These board members support the two Editors-in-Chief in assessing papers and conducting a thorough peer review service on any papers that are not transferred with reviews.
- The journal saw over 125,000 full text downloads during 2012 from a wide variety of countries.
- Papers were submitted to the journal from researchers in over 40 different countries and 261 papers were published during 2012.

Ecological Reviews

Hefin Jones and Catherine Hill

- This book series consists of edited, multi-author volumes with each volume providing a synthesis of understanding of a topic that has achieved a critical mass of knowledge in the past five years.
- The three volumes published in 2012, Iason, Dicke and Hartley's *The Ecology of Plant Secondary Metabolites*; Ohgushi, Schmitz and Holt's *Trait-Mediated Indirect Interactions*; and Fuller's *Birds and Habitat*, are all selling well both in print and electronic format.
- *Forests and Global Change*, edited by Burslem and Coomes, is due out later in 2013. This volume will present recent research across temperate and tropical ecosystems, synthesising the numerous ways that forests are responding to global change.
- We have a number of new exciting volumes planned and in discussion over the coming years; however, we are always looking for new suggestions so please feel free to contact us with your ideas.



- We ran an exciting competition earlier in 2013 for BES members where the Editor of *Birds and Habitat* posed the following question for readers: "Name three species of bird that occupy different habitats in Eastern Europe to those they occupy in Britain". One lucky winner received a free membership of the British Trust for Ornithology and a free copy of the book, and two runners up received a free copy of the book.
- Remember, BES members now receive a 25% discount on any of the titles in this series. For more information about any of the titles or for details on how to order, please visit www.britishecologicalsociety.org/publications/ecological-reviews



Special Interest Groups

Agricultural Ecology Group

From Barbara Smith

The Agricultural Ecology Group hosted its first annual meeting in November 2012 during which three members agreed to take an active role in the Committee: Pietro Iannetta (Skills Database) Chantel Davies (Communications); Fran Sconce (Student representative). We now have a Facebook page and Twitter account to complement our existing email list which has 192 members.

In April 2013 the AeG joined forces with the AAB to convene a meeting on the 'Environmental Management of Farmland' principally organised by Nigel Boatman of FERA. This was a three day conference, following on from a previous conference on agri-environment schemes held in 2010. The speakers presented evidence gathered from research and monitoring programmes, and discussed how this informs the potential roles of existing and novel approaches to environmental management in the agricultural landscape of the future. The delegates included scientists, policy makers and farmers and the three day meeting proved an excellent format to facilitate discussion and collaboration.



Special Interest Groups

In June, Beth Brockett, a PhD student at Lancaster University organised an event on the 'Science beyond the Schemes' which, with sponsorship from the AeG and the Ecosystems Knowledge Network, brought twelve farmers, ten farm environment advisors and nine academics together to discuss a range of scientific topics pertinent to livestock farming in the northwest of England. The meeting focussed on understanding and managing soil processes and was a knowledge exchange event. This innovative event received excellent feedback with delegates agreeing that this kind of event is key for communication between all parties. Will Rawlings Chair of the Cumbrian Farmer Network said "I think more events focusing on how sustainable food production can work alongside genuine environmental management systems, would be well received and valued by everyone, it gets us working together and sharing knowledge."

The AeG will be present at INTECOL, the group is sponsoring the symposium Threats to an ecosystem service: evaluating multifactorial pressures on insect pollinators and will follow this up with social event to enable delegates to extend the discussion. The last event of the year will be a two day meeting at Oxford University entitled 'Rethinking Agricultural Systems', an ambitious event which aims to encourage delegates to think outside the box and to consider a wide range of novel approaches to agriculture.

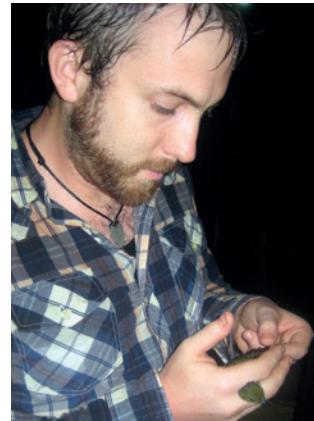
Special Interest Groups

Conservation Group

From Tim Graham

After a rollercoaster year in 2012, we are still increasing our activity. Before mentioning our events, we are still exploring the possibilities for a joint group or joint working with a Society For Conservation Biology UK Chapter. This would help give some identity to the group, and together with working closer with other SIGs, will hopefully help sustain activity and interest in an area that doesn't lack for the ecological science to explore and communicate! This work has also led to the need to thank those who have been giving us time in the group (Rob Brooker and Mick Green) and those who have been involved in trying to get some joint working and events of the ground (In particular Rob Marrs and John Hopkins, but also those who have been interested in getting involved including Sarah Dalrymple, Lisa Yon, Paul Ashton, Nathalie Pettorelli, Sue Goodfellow, Peter Gilchrist and Rob fuller amongst others).

Our first event in 2013 was the Invasive Non-Native Species Symposium organised by John Dutton at University of Worcester. The event in March saw a collection of speakers



Special Interest Groups

explore a range of issues from the local to national. Olaf Booy from the GB NNSS gave the overview in Great Britain, and a focused offering on Crayfish and the possibilities for viable control presented by Paul Stebbing CEFAS. A range of management and ecological issues were explored from various locations across England from American Skunk Cabbage in Cumbria (Rebecca Corrie-Close), Wild Boar in the Forest of Dean (John Dutton and Hayley Clayton), Mink and landscape scale control (Ben Welbourn), Crassula in the New Forest (Catherine Chatters), and catchment scale control in the Avon catchment (Samantha Stork). Jointly supported by the Conservation and Invasive SIGs, the event brought together a significant number of delegates with a large number representing a new audience to BES events.

Further into 2013 and we are planning two more events. The first is supporting the Citizen Science Workshop at INTECOL, led by Michael Pocock at CEH. A great chance to explore current issues and even engage some of the less ‘usual suspects’ in conservation and ecological science. It is also very pertinent with the new Citizen Science SIG as well! Our final event in 2013 is a Welsh Focus Group. After being unsuccessful in organising a workshop in Wales around the consultation for publication of ‘A Living Wales’ we are exploring issues and priorities in Wales. Support from Richard Facey in Natural Resources Wales is helping finalise the event, run jointly with the BES Policy Team. We are hoping to involve BES members, CIEEM and of course the new Natural Resources Wales in the workshop, which may be able to emulate the success found with the Scottish Policy Group.

Special Interest Groups

Computational Ecology Group

From Dylan Childs, Attila Lazar, Matthew Smith and Rick Stafford

The Computational Ecology SIG aims to support the BES membership in relation to the computational aspects of Ecology. It is run by the 4 member committee of Matthew Smith, Rick Stafford, Dylan Childs and Attila Lazar.

While last year we found our feet, by this year we were definitely up and running. We now have an improved representation of Facebook and Twitter, which has grown our outreach. Our Facebook views for posts number 400, we have 100 Facebook friends, 250 active Twitter followers and >120 mailing list members receiving 4 newsletters this year so far.

The workshop for the 2012 BES AGM on “Understanding systems ecology using emerging multidisciplinary toolboxes” brought together around 30 attendees to see 10 poster presentations and a much larger number of people in the evening session. We had a very intense, enthusiastic and loud set of individual discussions and did the best we could with the tight corner we’d been allocated in the poster room.



The event was followed by a SIG dinner attended by 12 people who discussed future plans for the group to help refine ideas about what events would be best organised by the group.

In May the group co-sponsored a workshop on Individual Based Modelling (alongside the Forest Ecology SIG), run by Adrian Newton at the University of Bournemouth and taught by Steven Railsbeek and Juergen Groeneveld. It ran for 5 days (13th-17th) and was attended by 24 people all who rated the meeting as “excellent” in their feedback questionnaires.

Special Interest Groups

The next workshop is co-run by the Macroecology SIG on Spatial Analysis in R (12 July 2013). It will be a one day workshop tutored by Barry Rowlingson from the University of Lancaster. Remarkably all 80 places for this meeting were taken up within 5 days of advertising the event so we expect a lot of enthusiastic attendees.

The two symposia organised by the group for INTECOL 2013 are now fully organised: "Understanding systems ecology using emerging multidisciplinary toolboxes" and "Not just for geeks: broadening scope and participation in predictive ecology". These will be very forward looking and so to also cater for short term needs we will be running two 2-hour workshops at the event: "New Computational Methods in R" and "What makes good code good?".

In October (9th) we will run a one-day workshop on "Good Practice in Species Distribution Modelling" at Charles Darwin House and in December we are co-organising the 2 day conference on "Rethinking Agricultural Systems in the UK" at the University of Oxford.

Special Interest Groups

Ecological Genetics Group

From Paul Ashton

The aim of EGG is to bring together those interested in the impact of ecological factors on natural selection, population differentiation and speciation. The widespread use of molecular markers on the last 20 years has seen the group flourish. This is marked by its long running series of annual conferences. The EGG conference this year, the 57th was held in Northern Ireland for the first time as Queen's University, Belfast acted as host. Proceedings were held in the magnificent Lanyon building and the event was organised by Gemma Beatty and Jim Provan of Queens.

The conference opened with invited speaker Prof Laurent Escouffier's thought-provoking piece on the genetic nature of colonising populations and the extent to which the genetic signature persists within populations. This was followed by additional talks on range changes while the rest of the afternoon focussed upon the genetics of fragmented populations. The sessions on the following day started with adaptation and divergence before a bioinformatics and



Special Interest Groups

NGS centred session ahead of the excursion. In some sense this morning embodied all that is great about EGG. Classic experimental work addressing key questions combined with a developing understanding of the potential of novel techniques. This breadth was maintained with the final morning covering biodiversity and policy followed by species delimitation and phylogeny while the closing session centred upon hybridisation.

Recent extreme weather the previous weekend led to a last minute change of venue for the excursion. However on the day the first sunshine of the year provided a glorious afternoon at the Giant's Causeway. Hence delegates were able to enjoy the location and discuss matters ecological, genetic and otherwise. On return to the host venue the conference dinner followed by the ceili was thoroughly enjoyed by all. A novel social event this year was the EGG heads pub quiz.

As always the standard of talks was excellent and awarding the prizes for Best Student poster and talk was extremely difficult. The Best Poster was won by Lorraine McKendrick (Queens) for her work on 'Microsatellite analysis supports the existence of three cryptic species within *Bombus lucorum* s.l'. James Borrell (QMUL) was runner –up for his work on gene flow between birch species of differing ploidy levels.

In addition Prattana Phuekvilai (Newcastle) and Carl Barker (Edge Hill) were highly commended. In the Best Student Talk category Henry Creissen (John Innes Centre) and Kevin Keenan (Queens) were highly commended. Runner up went to Stuart Desjardins (Leicester) for his talk entitled 'The evidence for *Fallopia x Muehlenbeckia* hybrids occurring in New Zealand' with the winner being Kevin Donelly (Edinburgh) for his marvellous presentation on 'Exposing adaptive differentiation in ancient Scottish pinewoods (*Pinus sylvestris* L.) via the controlled application of water-stress'.

In addition to the organisers thanks are also due to the National Trust for the excellent excursion and to the conference sponsors; BES, Genetics Society, Wiley Blackwell and Source Bioscience.

Outside of the annual conference EGG had a small presence at the annual conference at Birmingham where EGG-minded delegates enjoying a social evening. In addition a joint expedition to the Birmingham botanic gardens with the PEP group was also a success.

The group membership continues to remain steady with almost 200 subscribers to the JISCMAIL service. The membership

Special Interest Groups

primarily consists of academics across the range of professional experience and spans a range of nationalities. It also includes members in statutory organisations. Communication is through JISCMAIL, the BES web site and the group's website.

Next year's annual conference will be held in Newcastle from 14th-16th April, 2014. Ahead of this the group is holding a morphometric workshop at Edge Hill in July 2013 and then will be represented at the INTECOL conference.

Special Interest Groups

Forest Ecology Group

From Markus Eichhorn

The forest ecology group continues to spread its roots within and beyond the BES, reaching almost 500 forest ecologists around the world with its bimonthly Bulletin, alongside a Twitter feed and a Facebook community. We have maintained a wide range of events, reaching numerous practitioners, researchers and students in the UK and abroad.

Three meetings were held this year. In October a workshop on Climate Change Adaptation Strategies in Forestry was held at Charles Darwin House [DETAILS]. In June we were pleased to support the Farm Woodland Forum Annual Meeting in Fife, Scotland. Presentations included work on the ecological impact of grazing in woodlands, as well as hearing from representatives from Natural England and Forestry Commission Scotland on how agroforestry is being considered for the next rural development programme. These were combined with a series of field trips to local estates where it was possible to see many of the principles put into practice.



Farmer Andrew Mylius with his Aberdeen Angus herd grazing in amenity plantations on Brackmont Farm, Fife, Scotland.

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A two-day workshop entitled “Shadows and Ghosts: Lost Woods in the Landscape”, held in May, drew attention to the importance of ancient trees and woods, wood pasture and the ideas of shadows, ghosts and retired veteran trees. This included oral sessions, panel discussions and field visits.

We have also supported the development of younger forest ecologists through a training workshop on agent based modelling techniques in Bournemouth (jointly with the Computational Ecology Group), and by providing travel scholarships for two local students to attend the Advanced Fieldcourse in Ecology and Conservation held at Xishuangbanna Tropical Botanic Gardens.

A strong presence at INTECOL is guaranteed, with one workshop and two symposia supported by the Group, augmenting six whole sessions of forest ecology in the programme. Our calendar of events continues into the autumn and New Year; see the most recent edition of our Forest Ecology Bulletin to find out more.

Special Interest Groups

Macroecology Group

From Nick Isaac & Tom Webb

This year has been a time for consolidation following the success of our inaugural meeting. The group has grown to around 500 unique members on various media, including Twitter (@BESMacrocol) and Facebook. Macroecology was well represented at the 2012 BES Annual Meeting in Birmingham, the highlight of which was a workshop on "Big Data for Big Ecology", which attracted more than 200 delegates over two days.

The group held a two-day meeting at Sheffield University in July 2013, attended by around 50 delegates from six countries, of whom around half were students. The meeting was relaxed and relatively unstructured, with plenty of time for discussion and getting to know one another. The informal structure was popular with delegates, and has helped the macroecology group to develop a strong identity and sense of community.



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We were delighted to host the visit of Ethan White from Utah State University, who gave presentations addressing the full range of conceptual and practical issues around which the macroecology group was formed. On day 1 he presented a keynote address on “Evaluating a General Theory of Macroecology”, and on day 2 introduced us to better practices in scientific computing. In keeping with Ethan’s outspoken advocacy for open science and reproducible research, the slides from both his talks can be downloaded from his figshare site (http://figshare.com/authors/Ethan_P._White/970150).

Around 20 delegates presented their work in the form of talks lasting just 5 minutes each. This shortened format was challenging for many presenters, but as usual the students who lead the way in showing how to condense the essence of a research project into a short and easily digestible form. We also heard longer workshop-style presentations on the value of museum specimens for macroecology (Shai Meiri) and the construction and use of phylogenies (Gavin Thomas).

The remainder of the meeting was taken up with breakout groups and larger group discussions. The discussions were initiated by a series of ‘Provocations’, and generated debate on

a wide range of topics, from the philosophical to the practical. Some of these discussions extended into cyberspace with real-time contributions via Twitter. The discussions coalesced around four general themes of data, skills, facilitating networks and how to apply macroecology to societal challenges and policy decisions. Plans are afoot to further develop these concepts into some kind of manifesto for the group.

The two-day meeting was immediately followed by a workshop on “Spatial data analysis in R”, run jointly with the Computational Ecology group and delivered by Barry Rowlingson of Lancaster University. A packed room learnt that R is the Land Rover of computing, as well as how to access the full range of GIS tools using R functions and packages.

The Macroecology group will be active at INTECOL, with activities planned for all five days of the program, which includes four sessions of contributed talks. We are particularly excited about the day-long symposium on Tuesday 20th August on process-based approaches in macroecology, and the lunchtime workshop on Maximum Entropy theory the following day. Do come along to our Macroecology Mixer at 6pm on Monday 18th to find out more!

Special Interest Groups

Parasite and Pathogen Ecology and Evolution Group



From Jo Lello

Brief description of the group

Current membership = 193

The group consists of research and academic staff from a wide range of academic and research institutions. The current demographic is chiefly made up of members from the UK with a few from Europe and further afield. We are currently taking steps to extend our reach particularly into Europe.

The purpose of our group is to bring together all parties interested in the ecology and/or evolution of infection in both plants and animals to:

- Be a central forum for parasite and pathogen ecologists and evolutionary biologists to make and maintain contacts, exchange and discuss ideas and promote useful events. As a part of this aim the group will play a role in encouraging early career development
- Seek collectively to understand the causes of variation in

parasite-host interactions with a focus on the ecological and evolutionary influences

- Form a coherent body of scientists who can act as a force to inform government policy on funding, conservation and health with respect to parasites and pathogens
- Evolve according to the ideas and needs of its membership

List and brief description of our 2012 events

British Ecological Society Thematic "The Ecology and Evolution of Microbiomes" and Social Event. (Birmingham University, December 2012)

This was an excellent thematic on the role of microbiomes in host health and the cross-talk between non-infectious organisms within microbiomes, pathogens, host immunity and environmental factors. Keynote speaker Prof David Relman (Stanford University, USA) presented on "The human microbiome: the 21st century frontier for ecologists". This

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is a growing field of great importance and the meeting demonstrated the current state of the art as well as highlighting that we are really just taking our first tentative steps in this discipline. There is little doubt this is going to be a major and exciting area of future research, with the potential to provide genuine health benefits in animal (including human) communities.

In addition to our thematic, we also held our annual social event in the Colmore Bar and Grill (www.colmorebarandgrill.co.uk) and we started to worry when we'd ordered food for 25 and about 60 folk turned up....but the bar did us proud and the food stretched on and on, as did a fabulous night and there were plenty of participants left when the bar finally closed for the night.

British Society for Parasitology Annual Meeting symposium "Applying Ecology and Evolution" and Social Event (Bristol April 2013). Attracted 80-90 people with an estimated 50% SIG members. We were privileged to have Prof Andrew Read (Penn State University, USA) as our plenary for the meeting, speaking on "Within-host population ecology and the evolution of drug and vaccine resistance". This was the

second such joint activity of our SIG with the BSP and was one of eight symposia (the rest financed by BSP) which we jointly organised with Dr Sarah Reece, giving us a full ecological programme through the meeting and giving a strong boost to our profile as a group. This is certainly strengthening the bonds between BSP and BES and we hope to formalise this relationship in the near future. Our ecology session was one of the best attended for the meeting and our social event was a huge success drawing in non-SIG members, including the BSP President and Vice-President to our very own boat that rocked – the Under the Stars Café Bar on Bristol's Harbourside (www.underthestarsbar.co.uk).

Special Interest Groups

Peatlands Group

From Ian Rotherham

The Peatlands SIG has had a busy year with further regular Bulletins and updates and a series of meetings. Successful workshops were organised on Sphagnum identification and also on Waxcap fungi as indicators of ancient or otherwise interesting grasslands and wood pasture. There will be more workshops this autumn. We held a well-attended and stimulating workshop at the BES Winter meeting at Birmingham. This was titled 'Future Issues & Challenges for Peatland Ecology and Conservation – building towards London INTECOL 2013 and Sheffield Peatlands 2014', and provided a platform to discuss future ideas and initiatives. Prior to this were meetings with former members of the old Mires Research Group, which provided chance to hand over archive materials and also to consider how to link past and future activities. Some of these will, come together at the major international conference 'In The Bog – The ecology, landscape, archaeology and heritage of Peatlands – 3-day International cross-disciplinary conference to examine ecological, cultural & historical aspects of peatlands past and present.'



Special Interest Groups

The main events still to happen in 2013 are 1) WAR & PEAT 3-day International cross-disciplinary conference to examine the impacts of military use on peatlands past and present. September 2013; 2) 1-day workshop and field visit to the Humberhead Peatlands National Nature Reserve to look at peat restoration, water management, policy and politics. October 2013; 3) 2 x linked Sphagnum identification workshops & field visits in the Peak National Park October/November 2013; 4) 1 Waxcap identification workshop & field visit in the Peak National Park October 2013. More information for all these is on the BES website and on www.ukeconet.org.

Meetings have also been held with other potential partner organisation and a very fruitful collaboration is emerging with the International Peat Society. We have also collaborated with the Forest Ecology SIG in organising a 2-day seminar/symposium. This is now leading to a research programme and events such Wilder By Design, a 2-day International workshop/symposium in May 2014 and a major 3-day conference in

September 2014, both with the International Union of Forest Research Organisations. This moves the research concepts to wider landscapes such as peat bogs, fens and heaths and relates them to the ideas of Frans Vera and European grazed landscapes and their histories. We are calling for partners, presenters and discussants for all these events.

Next year we are also planning a continuation of our programme of workshops to introduce the Sphagna and to provide training in identification and an introduction to field ecology at Thorne Moors NNR, a major lowland conservation site. This will aid researchers and researcher students plus others wishing to broaden their knowledge to include this potentially difficult group. Again, in collaboration with the Forest Ecology SIG we hope to be able to organise a 2-day, cross-disciplinary workshop and seminar on Waxcap fungi as indicators of ancient grasslands and wood pastures. This is just a sample of what we hope to cover so please, do get involved and join in.

Special Interest Groups

Plant Environmental Physiology Group

From Matt Davey

The Plant Environmental Physiology Group (PEPG) is one of the special interest groups (SIGs) within the British Ecological Society and the Society for Experimental Biology.

Plant environmental physiology represents the study of short-term acclimation and long-term adaptation of plants to changing environmental conditions. Our traditional goal has been to integrate leaf and plant-level responses to biotic and abiotic stress under field and laboratory conditions. Increasingly, our focus has been either to set molecular physiology in an ecological context, or to provide a basis for scaling root and shoot level responses to canopy, ecosystem and region in the context of climate change, whether for crops or natural vegetation.

Our remit is to:

- Advance and promote the science and practice of plant environmental physiology
- Integrate the plant environmental physiology community and research opportunities within and outside the BES and SEB



Thomas Hasper



Special Interest Groups

- Support, train and liaise with young plant environmental physiologists

The group holds its Annual General Meeting at the BES Annual Meeting – the PEP group is an informal group for physiologists of all ages and career stages, with as much emphasis on social interaction as on academic subjects. It is an excellent forum for meeting people working in similar fields, for socialising as well as general networking. Members interested in holding conferences, meetings, workshops or field meetings can apply through the Group Secretary for BES financial assistance and support for student attendance.

The main secretary is Dr Matt Davey (mpd39@cam.ac.uk) liaising primarily with the BES, and Dr Colin Osborne (c.p.osborne@sheffield.ac.uk) within the SEB, both assisted by Prof. Howard Griffiths (hg230@cam.ac.uk).

PEPG NEWS September 2012 to September 2013:

The PEPG-SIG has gone from strength to strength over the past 12 months!

2012 saw the reintroduction of the PEPG-SIG International Workshop on plant environmental physiology techniques. The aim of the workshop was to provide a unique opportunity for MSc, PhD students and early career post-docs to gain hands-on experience and training in environmental physiology techniques in both field and laboratory environments. The workshop took place at the Quinta de São Pedro study centre located 10 km south of Lisbon during September. As well as funding from the BES and the Society of Experimental Biology (SEB), we were fortunate to attract the sponsorship and involvement of 11 manufacturers who are key players in providing the latest equipment and training for field and laboratory techniques for plant physiology research. The workshop attracted 56 delegates from 17 countries. There was such a global demand to attend the workshop that we ended up with a reserve list of well over 50 people. The presence of manufacturers, who brought a fantastic range of equipment, provided a unique opportunity for the delegates to learn how to use the latest field and laboratory kit. The delegates learnt first-hand how to

Special Interest Groups

use infrared gas exchange units, porometry, soil parameters, chlorophyll fluorescence, eddy covariance tower building, leaf area index and thermal imaging. We are going to repeat this workshop in 2014 and we want to make this THE International workshop to attend if you study plant environmental physiology watch this space for details! Many thanks to the manufacturers; ADC Bioscientific Ltd; Campbell Scientific; Decagon Devices; Delta-T devices; Hansatech Instruments; Li-Cor; Opti-Sciences; PP-Systems; Technologica; Thermo Scientific and Walz; speakers, and a very special thanks to Dr. Tracy Lawson who did a very fine job in organising the whole event!

December saw us host two PEPG events, almost back to back. We co-organised a mini-symposium at Sheffield University to celebrate the substantial contribution that the retiring Prof. Ian Woodward has made to plant environmental science over his career. This was followed immediately by a joint PEPG and Ecological Genetics SIG guided tour of the Birmingham Botanic Garden during the BES 2012 annual meeting. The tour lead us through tropical rainforest, subtropical, Mediterranean, and arid glasshouses, as well as the expansive outdoor gardens. We were even treated to the impressive tropical pool's goldfish collection and lawn aviary! Our guide discussed plants of economic

and ornamental interest and provided a detailed history of the botanical gardens. Importantly, the tour offered a unique opportunity for these two special interest groups to interact. We thank the Birmingham Botanic Garden for the interesting tour. A small gathering of Plant Environmental Physiology group members met for dinner afterwards to discuss opportunities for outreach, workshops, publicity, and expanding membership within the special interest group. Many interesting ideas were made, such as mini-away days, which will be acted upon later in the year so watch this space!

In September 2013, the PEPG is holding its annual mini symposium at the University of Manchester. This year, we are adopting a different model from previous years, with the meeting spread over two days, allowing time for a conference social event on the evening of the 9th September. Presentations from Hendrik Poorter (Julich, Germany) and John Doonan (Aberystwyth) will introduce us to the latest developments ideas in plant phenomics, with Tracy Saoirse presenting work on imaging root systems and David Coomes (Cambridge) and Maurizio Mencuccini (Edinburgh) discussing work on forest ecosystems. In addition, over the 2 half day sessions, there will a number of talks from selected speakers and posters presentations.

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The PEPG will also be present at the 11th INTECOL Congress, Ecology: Into the next 100 years from 18-23 August 2013.

Our informal discussion event on the Monday will focus on the work of the PEP-SIG, the advances made in plant physiology and what we expect to learn over the next 100 years. As an international meeting we hope to discuss the different priorities in this science across the globe.

As the popularity and needs of the group are expanding, we are delighted to welcome four new steering committee members of the PEPG. Carla Turner from Sheffield University is our new communications officer, Lucy Rowland from Edinburgh University is our Postdoc rep and Zoe Harris from Southampton University is our Postgraduate rep so please contact them with any ideas, news or information requests related to MSc, PhD or postdoc research and life. We also welcome Tracy Lawson at Essex University as finance officer and Marjorie Lundgren at Sheffield University and Richard Webster at Aberystwyth University who have joined as a general steering committee member and event organiser.

We have had a very active year on social media outlets with a new facebook page, twitter account and committee blogs. This works well to keep things informal and interactive, we have around 140 followers on facebook and over 50 on twitter where we share up to date plant physiology news, job opportunities and conference details. To follow us go to:

- www.facebook.com/PlantEnvironmentalPhysiologyGroup
- [@PEPG_SIG](https://twitter.com/PEPG_SIG)
- http://plantenvironmentalphysiology.group.shef.ac.uk/?page_id=314

Special Interest Groups

Plant, Soils and Ecosystems Group

From Franciska De Vries

The study of plant-soil interactions is a rapidly growing area in terrestrial ecology. Recent research combining aboveground and belowground approaches has shown that plant-soil interactions are a driving force for primary productivity, nutrient and carbon cycling, vegetation dynamics, and ecosystem responses to global change. In tandem with rapid advances in the area of plant-soil interactions, there is increasing scientific and political recognition that soil processes underpin ecosystem services such as nutrient cycling, food production and climate mitigation, and are central to the restoration of degraded soils and sustainable agriculture. Despite this increasing recognition, and recent technological, methodological, and statistical advances in the field of plant-soil interactions, until now there was no platform for researchers from related disciplines of soil ecology, microbial ecology and plant ecology, to get together to discuss synergies and collaborative research. The new special interest group Plants, Soils, and Ecosystems aims

to provide this platform on plant-soil interactions, with a focus on biogeochemical cycling, community dynamics, and ecosystem functioning. Plants, Soils, Ecosystems saw the light in November 2012.

Aims

- To promote research on plant-soil interactions and their role in ecosystems through workshops, symposia, and events at BES meetings.
- To provide opportunities for networking and collaboration among researchers involved the study of plant-soil interactions and ecosystem ecology.
- To serve as a platform to discuss and share techniques, expertise and data.
- To promote research across scientific disciplines to students, facilitate training opportunities in different techniques, and provide support for early-career researchers.



Special Interest Groups

Committee

The organizing committee currently consists of Franciska De Vries, The University of Manchester (Secretary: franciska.devries@manchester.ac.uk); Emma Sayer, The Open University; Paul Kardol, Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences; Tim Daniell, The James Hutton Institute; Dave Johnson, Aberdeen University; Mike Whitfield, Lancaster University; and Sarah Pierce, Imperial College, as student representative. Richard Bardgett, The University of Manchester, supports the committee in an advisory role.

Activities in 2012

Annual Meeting 2012: Because we had only been existing for one month, we didn't have an official launch event at the 2012 Annual Meeting, but we did have a poster, flyers, and sign up list in the coffee area, and we organised an informal social event in the Slug and Lettuce on Wednesday. This event had a very good turn up, and in addition to drinking beer and eating Mediterranean platters, we also came up with a list of ideas for a workshop to be organised in October 2013.

Member recruitment and interactions: We set up a Facebook and Twitter account, and an email list to which people can subscribe. We regularly circulate job opportunities and other useful information via the email list and social media, and the first PSE Bulletin was sent round on the 5th of June. This Bulletin contained information on future activities, job opportunities, interesting articles and organisations, and conferences. We aim to compose a PSE Bulletin every two months. Currently, there are 97 people subscribed to the email list, 103 people follow us on Twitter, and 68 people like us on Facebook.

Special Interest Groups

Tropical Ecology Group

From Simon Queenborough

The Tropical Ecology Group (TEG) aim to facilitate communication amongst scientists and with other interest groups, support scientific development in all areas of tropical ecology and contribute to skills development. Most of all, we aim to respond to the needs of TEG members and continue to encourage their involvement in proposing future events!

This year, the committee (Daisy Dent, Simon Queenborough, Sophie Fauiset and myself) saw two new additions to the team – we welcome Aisyah Faruk (Zoological Society of London) as social media representative and Frazer Bird (Open University) as postgraduate student representative. Simon continues to edit the popular monthly newsletter, and Aisyah has been keeping members informed of news and up-coming events via the Facebook page and Twitter feeds (@BES_Tropical).



Special Interest Groups

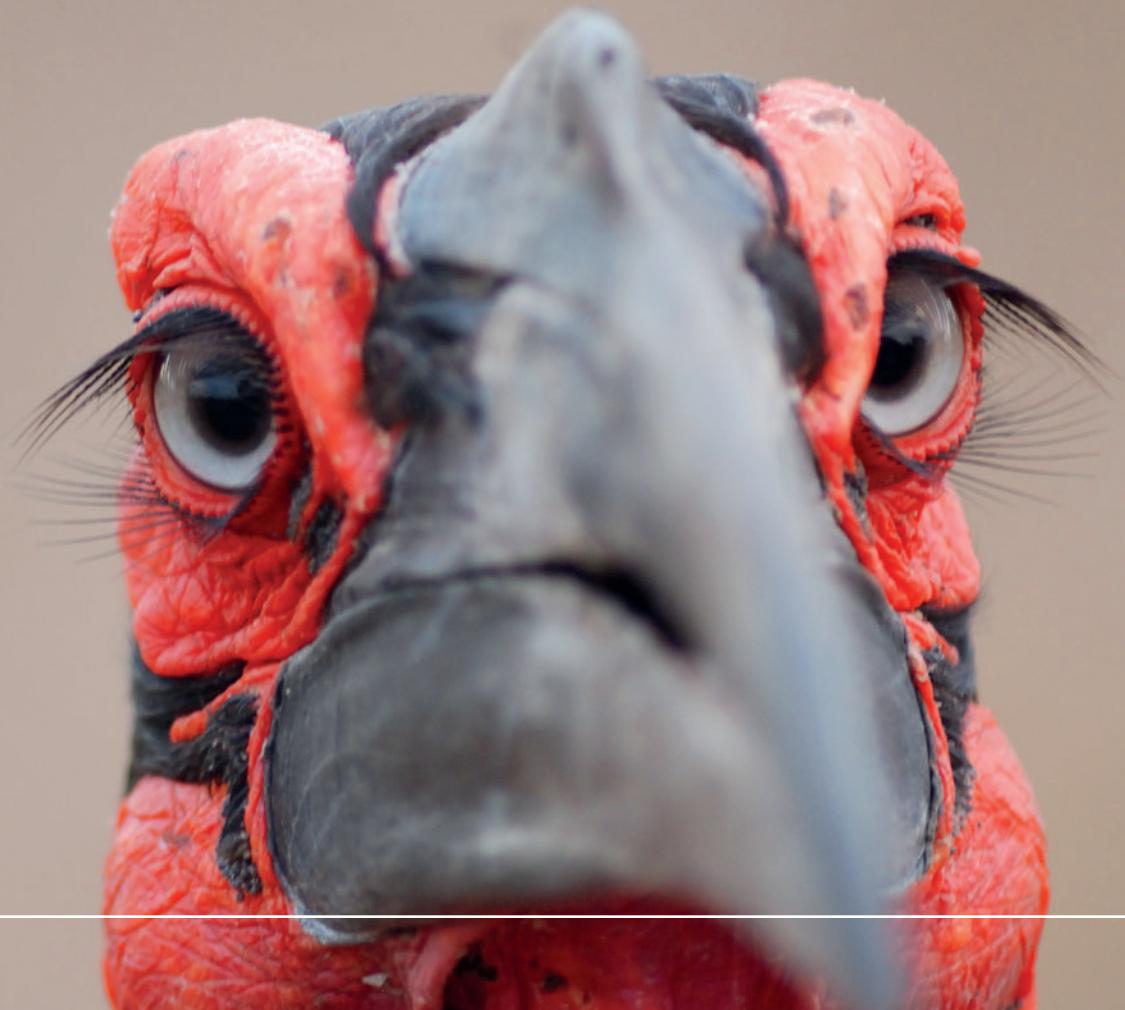
Events

During the BES Annual Meeting in December 2012, Birmingham, TEG and the Forest Ecology Group (FEG) hosted a joint social event at All Bar One. The good food, drinks and conversation were well-enjoyed by over 40 delegates.

In July 2013, TEG provided financial support to the inaugural Tropical Biology Association Africa Alumni Group (TAAG) conference for students in July, Nairobi, Kenya. The theme of the meeting was “Biodiversity in Africa – present state, challenges and prospects for its conservation”, with the aim of building capacity in the next generation of biologists and conservationists within Africa. BES and TEG were thrilled to support this venture, and look forward to hearing about the meeting’s successes.

TEG will be making its presence felt at the INTECOL 2013 meeting, with a symposium on “Natural Forest Succession in the Tropics” and a workshop on “Global Priorities in Forest Conservation” co-organised with FEG. The workshop will culminate in a jointly authored paper and press release by meeting delegates.

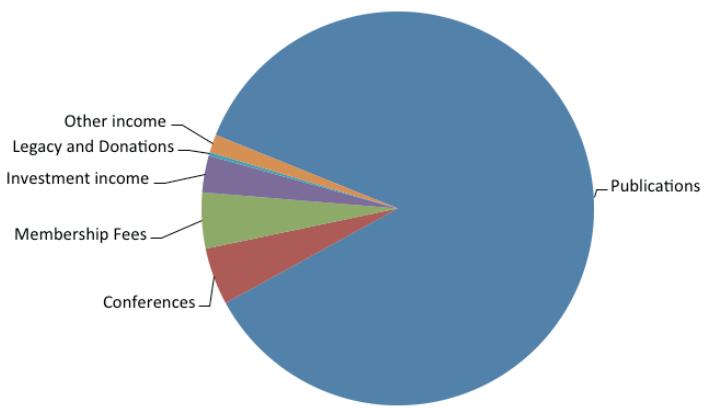
For Autumn 2013 we are planning to host our annual Early Career Researcher Meeting (ECRM) in collaboration with the Parasites & Pathogens SIG. Rather than the usual mini-conference, this year we are developing a skills workshop, covering the all-important topics of project management and grant proposal writing.



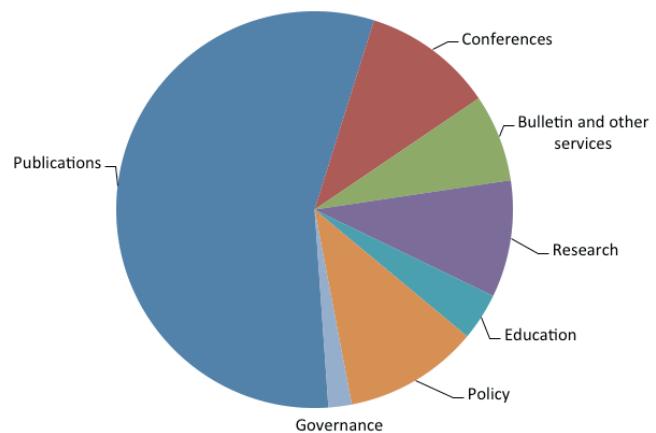
Summary of Financial Information



Income (Total £3.3M)



Expenditure (Total £2.7M)



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