



La Société

For nature, history and
science in Guernsey



National Trust of Guernsey President Mike Brown and Roy Bisson, President of La Société at La Creve Coeur, a site of future cooperation. Photo courtesy of the Guernsey Press.

From the Président

Among the many questions raised by the campaign to preserve the Valley Field adjoining the PEH was how did such a campaign fit within the Objectives of La Société Guernesiaise?

Well here are the ‘Objects of the Society’ as described in La Société Guernesiaise (Incorporation) Law, 2003.

The objects of the Society shall be the study of all aspects of natural science and local research within the Bailiwick of Guernsey, including archaeology, history, genealogy, folklore, language, geography and geology, and the conservation of fauna and flora, including marine fauna and flora, and of buildings, objects and features of historic interest.

Other functions of Society.

The Society may act to promote and further its objects in such manner as it considers necessary or desirable, and in particular, but without prejudice to the generality of the foregoing, may -

- organise meetings, exhibitions, conferences, educational courses, social functions and visits to places of interest, wherever situated, and other events, to which at the Society's discretion persons other than members of the Society may be admitted;
- maintain study collections, archives and a reference library;
- commission, publish, circulate and sell books, articles of research, journals and educational material in any medium including print and electronic media;
- co-operate, confer and exchange information with, **and proffer advice to, persons, bodies corporate, public authorities, institutions and others, wherever situated;** and
- provide such amenities and facilities as may be conducive to any or all of the objects of the Society.

So I have highlighted the appropriate way foreseen to promote its objects.

I agree with many that La Société is in fact a 'learned society' that exists to promote a group of related disciplines, in our case those associated with the environment and history of the Bailiwick of Guernsey.

Although the campaign strove for the preservation of a single field, the message was that in general islanders did not want any further building on agricultural land. Of course derelict greenhouse sites are technically agricultural land under 'temporary cover' but the long departed horticultural industry petered-out leaving zero capital to pay for the recovery of the vinery sites. Additionally, many owners held on in the hope that their vineries might be re-designated for housing, which would pocket a substantial capital gain. In fact some have been so rewarded.

In pure environmental terms the use of an old vinery site, with its ready-made 'wilding' and extensive biodiversity, may not be a better option. However as a contributor to food production it will always take some time to make it back to full use and socially its redevelopment for essential housing can be more acceptable.

La Société has been commenting on the environmental issues relating to development applications for many years with some success. It is good to hear, in a recent meeting, that The Guernsey National Trust does the same, extolling its values.

Guernsey must begin to make a far better effort at feeding itself. For too long agriculture has been purely milk production and for environmental and health grounds cattle will become less attractive in the future. The government should be subsidising crop growing, particularly vegetables, equally to dairy and meat production. Who else will look after our wonderful and unique countryside?

Roy Bisson, Président.

Guernsey Nature Commission Launches

Following two years of preparatory work, the Guernsey Nature Commission is now seeking non-executive directors to join the board.

Its key aims are to provide a shared voice for nature through a collaborative approach, support the third sector by raising community awareness of climate change, economic resilience, health, and wellbeing, and organise and promote citizen science.

It's envisaged to act as a funding vehicle through which business can contribute to the environment's health.

GNC was conceived by the Guernsey Community Foundation to help deliver the States' Strategy for Nature objectives, with £150,000 committed for three years, as well as two-year grant of £100,000 from the Social Investment Fund.

The Environment & Infrastructure Committee, which holds the political mandate for the Strategy for Nature, has also committed £300,000 over the coming years.

The three current directors – Chair Fiona Bateson, ex-Bailiff Sir Richard Collas, and Jim Roberts – are all Foundation board members, and they would like to hear from prospective candidates to join the Commission's board so the Foundation can take a step back.

The new board can then recruit a CEO and additional staff members.

Ms Bateson said GNC will make a “major contribution” to the promotion of biodiversity and “ensure that consideration for the natural environment informs decisions taken by government and business.

“We want to act as an enabler and a champion, building on the substantial contributions made by existing green charities and amplifying a collective Voice for Nature.”

Speaking as chair of the Guernsey Community Foundation, Sir Richard Collas said: “We began work on the Nature Commission in late 2020, which gives an idea of the scale and ambition of this project.

“As a standalone charity that will work with government, business and charities – and of course the public – we think the Commission is uniquely positioned to channel a growing desire across the community to protect and enhance Guernsey's precious natural environment.”

Roy Bisson, Président.

AGM 2023

The AGM will be held at Candie in the Frossard Theatre on Wednesday 22nd March beginning at 7.30pm for the purpose of transacting the following business:

- (a) To hear the report of the outgoing Président, Roy Bisson.
- (b) To elect a President. One nomination for President has been received, Trevor Bourgaize is proposed by Jamie Hooper and seconded by Andy Marquis. Any other nominations for President should be sent to the Secretary, supported by a seconder, to reach her by Thursday 10th March 2023.
- (c) To receive the annual statement of accounts.
- (d) To elect the officers and members of the Council. The post of Vice-President is vacant. There are three vacancies for Ordinary Members on Council. If any member wishes to propose a Vice-President or Ordinary Member for a seat on Council kindly send the details including an email address to the Secretary at Candie together with the names of the proposer and seconder by Thursday 10th March 2023.
- (e) To appoint accountants.
- (f) To consider any other matters or propositions affecting La Société. Any member who wishes to make a proposal at the AGM should submit it in writing, supported by a seconder to the Secretary to reach her by Thursday 10th March 2023.

A full agenda together with the minutes of the last meeting and a copy of the 2022 accounts will be available to all members who attend the AGM. Details of nominations for Members of Council and all proposals for discussion will be displayed on the Noticeboard at Candie from Friday 11th March 2023.

After the AGM there will be a short break, during which refreshments will be served. Then there will be a short presentation entitled “Guernsey Barn Owls” by Julie Davis, Team Leader of the Guernsey Barn Owl Survey. The illustrated talk about this iconic bird will look at its current status in the island and what the future holds.

Vice President Vacancy

At the forthcoming AGM Roy Bisson will retire from the Presidency as promised, and Trevor Bourgaize will succeed for a two year term and will be eligible for re-election thereafter.

The position of Vice President will be vacant at the AGM and nominations are now being sought.

“The position is not too onerous or time consuming,” says President Roy Bisson. “Like many volunteer roles ‘you get out of it what you put in’”. It allows the holder to continue with previous Société work or responsibilities but gives access and support to the work of the President and Council. From the Société perspective, the office ensures continuity in case of an emergency, it provides a back-up signatory for bank accounts and databases and so is essential to be filled.”

Nominations do not have to currently be on Council but some years of Société involvement will be helpful. Kindly email our Secretary Kate Lee - secretary@societe.org.gg if you are interested.

2021 Transactions

The 2021 Transactions (photo of a white moth on the front cover) are now available for collection from Candie on a Tuesday/Thursday or Saturday morning between 10am and 11.30am. Parking is easier on a Saturday.

If you no longer require Transactions or would prefer to download them from the website in future kindly email secretary@societe.org.gg. If you are unable to get to Candie to collect your Transactions please advise us.

Bill Gallienne

We record with sadness the death of Bill Gallienne on 22 November 2022. Wilfred Thomas Gallienne was born in St. Pierre du Bois in 1937. Like many families, the Galliennes spoke Guernsey-French. In June 1940 the whole family evacuated to England. They returned after the Liberation. Bill worked in horticulture in Guernsey, but when he met and married Doreen, who came from Yorkshire, they settled in Halifax. They returned to Guernsey in the 1980s and in 1986 Bill joined the recently established Island Archives Service as Assistant Archivist.

Bill served as Secretary of the History and Philology Section from 1987 to 2015, and retained the Philology brief until his death. He was President of La Société from 1999-2001 and chairman of the Publications Committee. Bill was shrewd, warm-hearted and unpretentious. He and Doreen, who predeceased Bill, were the most hospitable of hosts when they invited Section members to their home in St. Pierre du Bois. Bill was passionate in his commitment to the preservation of our native language and in forging links with Norman-French speakers in Jersey and Normandy.

Richard Hocart

Philology Section Secretary

The death of Bill Gallienne means that La Société is seeking someone to become Secretary of the Philology Section. The Secretary deals with enquiries about Guernsey-French from within and outside the island. The Secretary is a member of the Council of the Society and advises the Council on matters relating to Guernsey-French. There has not been a Guernsey-French group in the Society for some time. We hope that the new Secretary will form such a group if there is sufficient interest. We also hope that the new Secretary will establish good relations with L'Assemblée d'Guernésiaise and the new Language Commission.

Anyone interested in becoming Philology Section Secretary is asked to contact the Secretary of the Society in the first instance by emailing Kate Lee - secretary@societe.org.gg.

Section Reports

Archaeology

The rear of La Varde prehistoric dolmen on L'Ancrese common was subjected to an excavation to establish if the surrounding stone circle had survived and to what extent, and the relationship of a field boundary that extended to the west of the stone ring, identified and drawn by F. C. Lukis in 1837. A 2m x 5m trench was excavated to a depth of 1.6m. The excavation revealed the construction of La Varde at its outer limits as a build-up of mostly angular stones forming a cairn which was located above the natural granite outcrop where flint, pottery and charcoal were recovered. One of the outer kerb stones was located along with a trench that ran the length of the excavation. The trench produced a German spade head near the base, so presumably it was dug during the occupation as part of the defensive network in the area.



La Varde excavation underway. Photo courtesy of Phil de Jersey.

Running alongside our excavation the Clifton Antiquarian Club investigated the site known as La Platte Mare #2 which is immediately adjacent to the Platte Mare on the common. The dig mainly revealed disturbed ground caused by the Lukis excavations in the mid-19th century.

During October a round of Junior store tours took place, which incorporated our social and natural history collections as well as a close-up view of the Portinifer skeleton that was excavated in 1984 and was being re-examined by Jenny Cataroche. A star of the tour was the Pufferfish.

Wednesday morning meetings enabled the cleaning and marking from the excavations in Herm and L'Ancrese to be completed and on a wet Wednesday morning in December a few hardy souls went out to survey the extent of coastal erosion and retrieve any finds that may have become accessible due to the eroding coastline at Fontenelle Bay. A good quantity of worked flint was retrieved which will be processed and add to the material that has been previously collected.



Andy Lane – Archaeology Section Secretary

*Pufferfish from the natural history collection.
Photo courtesy of Alan Howell.*

Astronomy

The end of 2022 saw the Astronomy Section return to outreach and public engagement. We held two open evenings in September, unfortunately on both nights it poured with rain! However, the members of the public who attended were given lectures on The Solar System and Ocean Worlds, and Artemis – The Moon and Beyond. Other events have included the 12th Guernsey Beaver Scouts, Monkey Puzzle Playgroup, Head and Neck Cancer Group, Retired Police Officers and the 12th Guernsey Cubs.

During the late summer and autumn months junior member Jacques Loveridge was busy imaging the night sky. One of the targets he captured was NGC 7023, more commonly known as the Iris Nebula as it resembles the delicate blue petals of an Iris. As Jacques explains:

It is a reflection nebulae located within the constellation of Cepheus at a distance of 1,300 light-years from Earth and is about 6 light-years across. Reflection nebulae like NGC 7023 do not emit their own light like many of the bright hydrogen nebulae in the night sky, but instead the interstellar dust, which can be 10 to 100 times smaller than dust particles on Earth, reflects the light of a nearby star. In this case it is the variable double star SAO 19158, which is an extremely bright Class B3V bluish-white star.



Iris Nebula. Photo courtesy of Astronomy Section member Jacques Loveridge.

The Iris Nebula is a bright target making it relatively easy to capture, however the less illuminated, surrounding dust is much harder to capture. The final image represents a total integrated imaging time of 6 ½ hours collected in a single night in August. It was taken with a Sony Alpha A7iii camera, 10 inch Newtonian reflecting telescope and a Skywatcher EQ6-R equatorial mount. Some 200 individual 2-minute exposures were combined to create the final image, the most challenging part was pulling out the colours and fainter dust of the surrounding interstellar dust.

Stargazing in March

As we move into spring, we will lose the planet Jupiter in the night sky and also the magnificent Orion constellation. So, if we get some clear skies, wrap up warm and pop outside and look towards the west at about 10° above the horizon and you will see Jupiter. Look a little bit above it and you will see the unmistakably bright planet, Venus, which is permanently surrounded by a thick dense cloud cover that results in a surface atmospheric pressure of 93 bar, or the equivalent of 900 metres of water above your head! Although Venus is not the closest planet to the Sun, it is the hottest because of extreme vulcanicity it suffered a runaway greenhouse effect. In the 1960's the Russians sent several probes to Venus, the first successful landing on the surface was Venera 7 which survived for 23 minutes before succumbing to the intense heat and pressure. Venera 14 survived for 57 minutes and sent back the last recorded images from Venus.



Surface of Venus. Photo courtesy of the Russian Academy of Sciences, Ted Stryk.

If you look to the south-west at about 60° altitude you will see the unmistakable red planet Mars which once had an atmosphere and oceans and resembled Earth. However, Mars lost its atmosphere and now has an average surface temperature of about -60°C.

To the south-west you will also see the most prominent of all constellations, Orion the Hunter. The constellation straddles the celestial equator and from our latitude we will shortly be losing it from the spring/summer night sky. So now is the time if you would like to take the opportunity for a last look, because although it returns just before dawn in mid-August, it will be late-October before it is visible again at relatively social times pre-midnight in our night sky! Features to spot are its four main stars, the red supergiant Betelgeuse and the blue-white Bellatrix (at the Hunter's left and right shoulders), the smaller slightly less luminous blue-white Saiph and the blue-white supergiant Rigel (left and right feet). Three other prominent stars are Mintaka, Alnilam and Anitak, which make up the hunter's belt. Just below this lies a perpendicular line of fainter stars that represents Orion's Sword, in the middle of which is a fuzzy-like patch visible with the naked eye. This is the Orion Nebula which is an emission nebula that glows because it has been ionized by the four hot, massive central stars of the Trapezium Cluster which sit within a region of about 1.5 light years diameter.



Trapezium Cluster. Photo courtesy of NASA Hubble Legacy Archive, Robert Gendler.

About three million years old, the Orion Nebula cluster was even more compact in its younger years and a recent study indicates that runaway stellar collisions at an earlier age may have formed a black hole with more than 100 times the mass of the Sun. The Orion Nebula's distance of some 1,500 light-years would make it the closest known black hole to planet Earth.

Dr Jean Dean - Astronomy Section Secretary

Bat Section

Bat Box Project

La Société Guernesiais bat section has been busy over the last 6 months, with a new initiative to encourage islanders to welcome bats into their gardens.

Following a generous donation from Islands Insurance, we encouraged people to contact us to suggest locations around the island for bat boxes to be mounted. We had a fantastic response, with over 30 contacts, both from private individuals, church groups and other businesses. We have mounted seven sponsored boxes so far, and have identified perfect locations for a further seven. We have also provided advice to everyone who expressed an interest in funding their own box. The bat box project is now closed for this year, but we hope to continue this work in the future.



A bat box being mounted on a Monterey Pine. Photo courtesy of Andrew Lee.

Bats are a keystone species, and as such form a key part of the balance of ecosystems on the island. Without their tireless work in eating our night flying insects, things would be very different outside at night! Unfortunately, bats are under threat, from habitat loss, light pollution and insecticide use, and need our support. Anyone who wants to find out more about how to support bats is encouraged to look at the fantastically informative “Bat conservation trust” website, Home - Bat Conservation Trust (bats.org.uk) or come along to the next bat section meeting.

Laura Harrison – Bat Section Member

Contact Charles Hurford email bats@societe.org.gg for details of the next Bat Section meeting at Candie. New members are always welcome.

If you find an injured bat please contact the GSPCA direct on 257261 or 07781 104082 (24 hour emergency). Any bat queries can be sent by e-mail to charleshurford@hotmail.com

Botany

Botany Walks – please meet at 2.00pm.

Sunday 5th March – Cliff Tops, Pleinmont – Perry’s ref. page 26,
A. What3words ///hacks.spices.looked

Saturday 1st April – Coastal Grass at Grande Havre – Perry’s ref. page 6, 85.
What3words ///thorax.pull.display

Tuesday 18th April – Bluebell Wood – Perry’s ref. page 25, G4. What3words ///copy.indirect.edge

Saturday 29th April – Orchid Fields, Les Vicheries – Perry’s ref. page 20, B1.
What3words ///dose.excavates.rustles

Saturday 3rd June – please meet at the admin office in Herm at 2.45pm
Herm – What3words ///mafias.dandruff.outsourcing

For further enquiries about the monthly Botany walks please contact Anna or Helen by email:
botany@societe.org.gg

Join the Botany Section’s Facebook page to find details of the monthly walks and recent plant photos.
Once you have joined you can add your own images.

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/1310943042297921/>

Entomology

After several years as Entomology Section Secretary, I have decided to step down from that position, this will help me to focus my efforts in my role as La Société’s next President. However, I will still continue to produce the annual ‘Guernsey Moth Report’, I am grateful to all of the people who have submitted records to me over the years. In these days of climate change, and continuing habitat destruction it is essential that we monitor and record our flora and fauna. Although things are changing slowly, the environment does not feature very highly on the political agenda, and despite the fact we are well in to the 21st century, Guernsey still does not have any species or habitat protection laws. Andy Marquis, has agreed to be the new Section Secretary, those of you that have seen his articles and contributions in the Transactions will know that Andy deals with things that most of us can’t see or didn’t know existed! With the support of ACLMS the Entomology Section was able to purchase specialised camera equipment which means detailed series of photographs can be taken enabling identifications to be made, as you will see from Andy’s first contribution, he is adding many new species to the Guernsey list, the Channel Islands list, and even the European list. Much of Andy’s work includes orders that are not insects but come into the new sub-category colloquially known as “mini-beasts”, in the absence of a Zoology Section these are being recorded by Entomology. I wish Andy all the best in his new role.

Trevor Bourgaize

Strategy for Nature

As reported in the Spring 2022 newsletter, Entomology Section were awarded a grant from the Strategy for Nature Fund to purchase specialist imaging equipment to help with the identification of small insects and other invertebrates. As part of the Strategy for Nature award, the section agreed to assist ACLMS with the surveying of ABI and SSS land in Guernsey which may have been understudied in recent years to bring the record set more up to date.

The section surveyed a total of 13 sites using a variety of methods including moth traps, sweep netting and the sections new Berlese Funnel. Sites included some larger sections of the South East cliffs down to some small areas within a wider SSS site. A total of more than 1,600 animals made up of over 300 species were identified from those sites, we attempted to identify everything we found and as such included insects and other invertebrates which would normally come under the remit of Zoology Section plus any birds and mammals we came across, the following are records of interest:

<i>Brachyiulus bagnalli</i>	Millipede	New to the British Isles. Native to Eastern Europe
<i>Bryaxis curtisii</i>	Beetle	1st Guernsey Record
<i>Buchananiella continua</i>	Hemiptera	1st Channel Island Record
<i>Cardiastethus basiventral</i>	Hemiptera	1st Guernsey Record
<i>Cozyptila blackwalli</i>	Spider	A very rare and Endangered species known from only two sites in the UK
<i>Cymus clavicolus</i>	Hemiptera	2nd Guernsey Record
<i>Dicyphus stachydis</i>	Hemiptera	1st Channel Island Record
<i>Larinioides cornutus</i>	Spider	1st Guernsey Record
<i>Liorhyssus hyalinus</i>	Hemiptera	1st Guernsey Record
<i>Megalothorax minimus</i>	Collembola	1st Channel Island Record
<i>Pammene gallicana</i>	Moth	2nd record for Guernsey – a micro-moth
<i>Pocadicnemis juncea</i>	Spider	1st Channel Island Record
<i>Stathmopoda pedella</i>	Moth	1st Guernsey record, 2nd for Channel Islands – a Micro-moth
<i>Taeniothrips inconsequens</i>	Thrips	1st Channel Island Record
<i>Viridicerus ustulatus</i>	Homoptera	1st Guernsey Record



Liorhyssus hyalinus. Photo courtesy of Andy Marquis.



Pocadicnemis juncea male pedipalp imaged at very high magnification. Photo courtesy of Andy Marquis.

Andy Marquis – Entomology Section Secretary

Family History

The Family History Room At the Russels, Les Cotils, is open on the 1st and 3rd Saturday each month from 10am until 12 noon. All other times and dates are by appointment only which can be done by sending an email to researchenquiries@hotmail.co.uk

The first talk of the year will be held on Saturday 25th March - "Finding Jayne and the Le Noury Family" by Jayne Cataroche, starting at 10.30am at the Frossard Theatre, Candie. All welcome.

Further talks will be announced when finalised.

Maria van der Tang - Family History Section Secretary

Any general Family History queries should be addressed to The Family History Section, PO Box 314, St Peter Port, Guernsey GY1 3TG. Alternatively email Maria van der Tang
researchenquiries@hotmail.co.uk

Historic Buildings

Events - all talks are held in the Frossard Theatre, Candie and start at 7.30pm.

Visits begin on site at 2.30pm.

Saturday 11th March – a talk entitled "The Restoration of the Town Church" by Eric Grimley.

Saturday 25th March – a talk entitled "The Medieval Castles of the Channel Islands, Part 1" by Callum Tostevin-Hall.

Saturday 8th April – a talk entitled "The Medieval Castles of the Channel Islands, Part 2" by Callum Tostevin-Hall.

Saturday 22nd April – a visit to Castle Cornet led by Callum Tostevin-Hall.

Saturday 13th May – a visit to The Cottage, Castel by kind permission of Mrs Juliette Hall; and La Chaumière (exterior only).

New members are always very welcome to attend, but should contact John McCormack (tel. 720303; e-mail mrjam@cwgsy.net) beforehand in case of alterations or final instructions. Those attending regularly should kindly ensure that they are already members of La Société.

Ornithology

Late Autumn and Winter 2022

AGM and Owl Evening

Finally, the report on the survey will be given to Section members after the AGM on Thursday 2nd March, together with Dave Carre's illustrated talk on breeding Short-eared Owls from 2021. He is an excellent photographer and the evening promises to be informative and enjoyable. Other forthcoming events are listed at the end of this article.

AGM and Owl Evening

A number of dead seabirds, unusually including Puffin, have been washed up during the winter. Many seabirds spend the months out in the ocean and bad storms can create a 'wreck' when many individuals succumb. The last one of note was back in 2014 and there are fears that there could be one happening this winter. Jamie Hooper of Environment Guernsey has stated that this happens when there is continuous rough weather which has not happened so far. There have been storms, but they have been followed by periods of more settled weather.

If you find a dead seabird, please report it. A photo would be valuable, especially if you're not sure of the species, together with the date and location. Reports go the Guernsey Biological Records Centre, either by email or by going to the website:

www.biologicalrecordscentre.gov.gg

These records will be collated with those from the other Channel Islands. People are advised not to touch any dead seabird.

Interesting sightings

Several species of duck overwinter in Guernsey, Teal are the most common and can be seen at most of our wetland reserves. La Claire Mare is worth a visit as there is always a good chance that Wigeon can be observed as well. A few lucky people saw two Pintail and five Gadwall around the middle of December, first found by Mary Simmons.



Male Teal. Photo courtesy of Julie Davis.

Male Teal are easily recognised by their dark chestnut head with broad green stripe along each side. They are small, neat ducks and will leave our shores in the spring as they migrate to their breeding sites in Northern Europe.



Photo courtesy of Andy Stoaling of one of the Pintail, 'a greyhound among ducks' according to the Collins Bird guide.



Photo courtesy of Andy Stoaling. Gadwall have less conspicuous markings, but a close look shows the beautiful vermiculation – very fine, irregular lines on its plumage.

Mary Simmons found a **Red-throated Diver** at Rocquaine in mid-December. Dave Carre managed to photograph it in sunshine, with its bill typically tilted upwards. The red throat is only evident when the bird is in summer plumage. In winter its throat and neck are largely white!

It is a scarce winter visitor. The last recorded sighting was in 2018.



Jack Snipe have very skulking habits and are uncommon winter visitors, although many are probably overlooked. This species has so far eluded me. Not only did Rod Ferbrache take this photo of one at La Claire Mare back in December, he also managed to include a Snipe, a close relative, to help with comparison. The Jack Snipe, on the left, has a shorter bill and a dark stripe under its eye. It also bobs up and down almost continuously, although this behaviour can also be seen in Snipe.



Mary Simmons had the first sighting of an **Avocet** at Baie des Pecqueries in December. It was seen a few days later at the Colin Best Nature Reserve where Dave Carre took this photo. It is interesting that there are flocks of Avocet in the wetlands around Poole Harbour, but they are rare winter visitors to Guernsey. Judy Down and Jamie Hooper saw five roosting on the scrape at the Colin Best Nature Reserve back in November 2013 but that was exceptional. They are not seen every year and usually just one or sometimes two birds.

Grey Phalarope is another scarce winter visitor. One was observed at Jaonneuse towards the end of December by Andy Marquis and Dave Carre. Andy took a beautiful photo with it backed by a rough sea, but the photo here is one taken by Mike Cunningham back in October 2020 as the bird's features are more easily seen. Their behaviour is a giveaway as they circle round in the water, picking off small food items with that delicate beak.



Forthcoming events

Thursday 2nd March

Indoor Meeting

AGM 7.30pm

(Cash subs of £5 can be handed in from 7 pm)

Illustrated talks The Barn Owl Survey and Short-eared Owls, the Channel Islands first breeding record.

Saturday 25th March

Lihou 1.30pm - 4.30pm

Roping paths. Unfortunately this clashes with an RSPB walk at Fort Doyle but it cannot be easily changed because of the tides.

Friday 14th and Saturday 15th April

Pleinmont 09.00am - 11.00am

Sunday 30th April

Bird Race Day – all day

Tuesday 2nd May

Day trip to Herm, leaving at 09.15am returning 2.35pm, 3.35pm or 5.35pm. Boat fare £15

Sunday 7th May

Saumarez Park for the dawn chorus 5.00am – 6.15am

Julie Davis - Ornithology Section Secretary

Education and Conservation Team

The Education Officers enjoyed a busy and productive winter, having launched the Outdoor Education element of the States of Guernsey's Cultural Enrichment Programme for Reception children at all States schools. Thus far we have delivered the month-long programme to pupils at Vale, St Mary & St Michael, Hautes Capelles, Castel, La Mare de Carteret and La Houquette primary schools, as well as being invited to present the sessions to Melrose pupils. It is proving to be a rewarding and worthwhile project and will inform the way that the Education Team formulates activities for this age group in the future.



*Our new all-weather suits have been a hit with pupils!
Photo courtesy of Becky Ogier.*

We didn't want to forget about older students so we devised some fun and engaging new activities last term to tie in with the geography curriculum and began delivering these to schools – we look forward to tailoring these events to individual schools and their surrounding areas.

The Team continues to work with Youth Commission's Playscheme during school holidays and were grateful to have some breathing space over Christmas to make improvements to our offerings and to plan for the year ahead. We were lucky enough to receive a grant courtesy of the Strategy for Nature which meant that we could purchase additional equipment and resources last year, and we look forward to putting these to good use with exciting new activities for schools, youth groups and corporate volunteers.

Talking of volunteers, we kicked off our three-year term as Investec's charity partner with a varied programme of activities which has seen staff litter picking on beaches and commons, learning to take the vital statistics of crabs and lobsters, and clearing bracken around the Vale Pond. The team removed no fewer than sixty Whisky bottles from the perimeter of the pond, as well as an unopened bottle of champagne!

We are currently matching up corporate volunteers with dates on our calendar of work required on nature reserves – we have plenty to go around so, as although we can't guarantee hedgerow champagne, do get in touch if your company or group are seeking a fun and rewarding volunteer event – contact Becky at ecl@societe.org.gg for our online brochure.

Becky Ogier – Education & Conservation Leader

Juniors

Autumn 2022 offered our Juniors a superb selection of events. In September, we invited our members to join us for a beach clean at L'Eree as part of the **Great British Beach Clean** week! This is a national citizen science event where hundreds of beach cleans take place up and down Britain. Thousands of people take part to clear up beaches to keep them beautiful and safe for wildlife. Our local beach clean was very successful with 7 buckets of rubbish and plastic pollution being collected. Some of the more notable finds were a squirrel cuddly toy, some very long (and dangerous) fishing equipment and a lone shoe!



Our beach clean at L'Eree as part of the Great British Beach Clean week. Photo courtesy of Sarah Allez.

October's event was in collaboration with the Archaeology Section and our Juniors were invited to book an exclusive tour of the Guernsey Museum stores. This event was very popular and spaces quickly filled up. The tour comprised all sorts of unique and interesting collections, including archaeology finds, natural history and artefacts from Guernsey and around the world. Although all the items were of interest, it seemed that the blowfish and the whale's bone were the biggest hits!

In November, our event was a drop-in session to make a bug hotel out of recycled and natural materials to help our local wildlife as we moved into the colder months. Bug hotels are a brilliant addition to any garden or outdoor space as they provide a home for insects and in return, the insects will increase biodiversity, pollinate plants and prey on pests. With natural habitats under increasing pressure and many already lost or damaged, created bug hotels provided our Juniors with an opportunity to give nature a helping hand throughout winter. This event was again widely attended by our members, as well as non-members who dropped in to get a taste of what our events were like. In total we made over 35 bug hotels at this event and gained some excellent local coverage.



One of the many bug hotels made. Photo courtesy of Sarah Allez.

Our final event of 2022 was an eco-friendly wreath making workshop to kick off the start of the festive season! We put on two workshops which were both fully booked. The wreaths were all made out of local foliage and decorated with all natural materials.

In 2022, the Education team held 14 Junior events covering a wide variety of topics, and in total we had 188 Junior attendees these. We'd like to again take this opportunity to thank the Section secretaries and members for volunteering their time to help us organise these brilliant events which engage children with our natural environment, as well as our members who attend and support these events.

We are looking forward to hosting more Juniors events in 2023 and hope to see some of you there!

If you are interested in joining the mailing list or would like to hear more about our Junior events, please email Sarah at eca@societe.org.gg. The details of our events are sent out to all members of La Société for whom these activities are free of charge.

Sarah Allez – Education Conservation Assistant

Projects

Conservation Herd



Escapee finds fresh bale of hay. Photo courtesy of Dave Bartram.

The Herd remain in their winter home at La Moye however they managed a great escape recently over the electric fence and found fresh hay which they helped themselves to. Within a couple of hours volunteers had managed to get them back within the electric fence.

Dave Bartram, Herd Manager, says he is looking forward to the delivery of two new calves later in February who will join the herd later in the year once they are settled in.

Dave Bartram

Conservation Herd Manager

Tel. 07781 168529 email conservationherd@societe.org.gg

Annual Bursary

La Société Guernesaise - Grant Application Information 2023

Thanks to a generous donation, La Société Guernesaise, is able to continue with the annual grant scheme. The grant is a single payment of £2,000 and is intended to support;

- i. a student who is studying or researching a subject related to biodiversity and conservation of the natural environment, or;
- ii. a citizen scientist. Citizen scientists typically are not professional scientists. Instead they are people who collaborate with professional scientists in ways that advance scientific research on topics they care about. For example, County Recorders can be professional scientists or citizen scientists.

For further information and to download an application form please go to www.societe.org.gg. Queries and completed application forms should be sent to science@societe.org.gg

Corporate Social Responsibility

Would your workplace welcome an easy, fuss-free way to organise CSR days? Would you like an interesting and fun day out with your colleagues? La Société has introduced an expanded range of corporate offerings for companies seeking a useful and enjoyable way to use their Corporate Social Responsibility hours. These activities include something for everyone, from dolphin surveying to bird hide restoration, and are a terrific team-building exercise - perfect for re-bonding after a difficult start to the year and a great opportunity to try something new together. Should your organisation be looking for volunteer opportunities, please contact Becky Ogier on 725093 or at ecl@societe.org.gg for our e-brochure.

Volunteer Vacancies - Section Secretaries.

We are currently looking for Section Secretaries for the following Sections: Climate Change, History and Zoology. A Section Secretary is responsible for arranging meetings, talks and outdoor events for Members. They have the use of the Section room at Candie for meetings and the Frossard Theatre for talks. Section Secretaries have a seat on Council. For further information kindly contact the Secretary Kate Lee via email secretary@societe.org.gg.

2023 Subscriptions

Please note subscriptions for 2023 are now due. Thank you to those who have paid by Standing Order or Direct Debit. If you have not already paid your subscription for this year kindly send a cheque to Candie or pay using Paypal via our website www.societe.org.gg. We thank you for your continuing support.

PARTICIPANTS NEEDED: CHANNEL ISLAND ENGLISH STUDY

The study aims to compare the attitudes of Channel Island residents towards Channel Island English. Some research questions are, among others: *does the English spoken on Guernsey still differ from the English spoken in Jersey? Does the respondents' sense of national identity differ according to the island they inhabit?*



We are looking for people who:

- ⇒ have lived on Jersey, Guernsey, Alderney, or Sark for at least **5 years**
- ⇒ speak **English**

To participate, please scan the following QR code or open the link in your web browser:

<https://forms.gle/NGVSu5YamcAAkXEK9>



Win 3 x **Amazon vouchers** of 100 £ / 50 £ / 25 £*



**Universität
Zürich** ^{UZH}

*Drawn among all participants who indicate their email address

This study has been approved by the English Seminar at the University of Zurich.

Associated Groups

Alderney Wildlife Trust	Roland Gauvain	822935
Blue Dolphins Sub-Aqua Club		bluedolphinssac@gmail.com
Channel Islands Occupation Society (Guernsey)	Liz Boxall	candielodge@cwgsy.net
Friends of the Priaulx Library	Sue Sweet	info@friends.org.gg
Guernsey Conservation Volunteers	Angela Salmon	721163
Guernsey Meteorological Observatory	Martin Crozier	237766
G.S.P.C.A	Steve Byrne	257261
La Société Serquaise	Jo Birch	832788
Le Cercle Français	Geoff Mahy	263029
Lé Coumité d'la Culture		
Guernésiaise	Dr Harry Tomlinson	255891
Guernsey Trees For Life	Andy McCutcheon	07781 110180
National Trust	Jemma Field	emc@nationaltrust.gg
Plant Heritage (Guernsey Group)	Tattie Thompson	239444
Royal Society of Biology (<i>local members group</i>)	Jo Arendt	arendtjo@g.mail.com
The Alderney Society & Museum	Karen Hill	823222
The Guernsey Beekeepers' Association	Damian Harris	07911 721785
The Guernsey Botanical Trust	Cathy Morgan	07911 732912
The Guernsey Society	Michael Paul	253858
The Victor Hugo in Guernsey Society	Roy Bisson	07781 100296

Legacies and donations in lieu of flowers

Members are reminded that it is possible to make La Société a beneficiary of their will. Money or property can be left for general use, or if desired for a specific purpose.

They are also reminded that donations in lieu of flowers can be made in memory of members who have died.

Guernsey Environmental Services Limited,
1 Trinity Cottages, Torteval,
Guernsey, C.I., GY8 oQD

Tel: (07781) 166924

Email: jamie.hooper@cwgsy.net
gsybiorecords@gmail.com



Environment Guernsey
 Environmental contracting & consulting

Environment Guernsey is the wholly owned company of La Société Guernesiaise

We manage La Société's nature reserves and undertake numerous land management contracts for various States of Guernsey Departments, the National Trust and private individuals. We also run the Guernsey Biological Records Centre and provide an environmental consultancy service.

For all aspects of conservation advice and contracting, please contact us.

Officers & Council Members

Title:	Name:	Telephone:	Email:
Officers:			
President	Roy Bisson		president@societe.org.gg
Vice President	Trevor Bourgaize		vicepresident@societe.org.gg
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Membership Secretary			membership@societe.org.gg
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Communications Officer	Pierre Ehmann		communications@societe.org.gg
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Reserves	Vacant		
Archivist & Librarian	Richard Hocart		editor@societe.org.gg
Science Committee			
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Education Officers:

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Education & Conservation Assistant	Sarah Allez	eca@societe.org.gg

Section Secretaries:

Archaeology	Andy Lane		archaeology@societe.org.gg
Astronomy	Jean Dean		astronomy@societe.org.gg
Bat Section	Charles Hurford		bats@societe.org.gg
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Climate Change	Vacant		climate.change@societe.org.gg
Entomology	Trevor Bourgaize	710737	entomology@societe.org.gg
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Geology and Geography	Andrew Dorey	252123	
Historic Buildings	John McCormack	720303	mrjam@cwgsy.net
Marine Biology	Mike Paige		botany@societe.org.gg
Natural History	Lesley Bourgaize	710737	naturalhistory@societe.org gg
Ornithology	Julie Davis		ornithology@societe.org.gg
Philology	Vacant		
Zoology	Vacant		

Projects:

Conservation Herd	Dave Bartram	conservationherd@societe.org.gg
Guernsey Seasearch	George McClellan	guernseyseasearch@gmail.com

Other Council members are: Jamie Hooper (co-opted), Angela Salmon & Hubertus Lau.

Office hours:

Our office at Candie is open on Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday morning between 10am and 11.30am.

Address: La Société Guernesiaise, Candie Gardens, St Peter Port, Guernsey, GY1 1UG.

Email: societe@cwgsy.net **Website:** www.societe.org.gg **Tel:** 01481 725093

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