



## La Société

For nature, history and  
science in Guernsey



Heath-spotted Orchid (*Dactylorhiza maculata*) at the Bridget Ozanne Orchid Fields, Les Vicheries.

Photo courtesy of Karen Rudge.

### From the Président

After just a matter of weeks in the post, I find myself penning my first “From the President” contribution to the Communiqué. This short period has re-acquainted me with how much La Société does, and what a broad spectrum of subjects the work covers. Natural History has been a huge part of LSG’s work from its inception in 1882. Then, it was all about the study of flora and fauna, but now we are one of the biggest landowners in Guernsey, looking after some of the most precious habitats and species. Quite simply, if it wasn’t for organisations like LSG and our sister organisation the National Trust of Guernsey, things would be pretty bleak. Improvements are beginning to be seen however, and the introduction of the Strategy for Nature has helped to bring Guernsey’s natural capital into the public eye, making people more ecologically aware. I take on the Presidency at the same time as the inception of the Nature Commission, and I am looking forward to the Commission and LSG working closely together. Our Scientific Committee reviews all planning applications and makes representation

when necessary to ensure that environmental issues are taken into account. My personal view is that in the future, housing projects should be planned holistically, with all houses having nest sites for species such as Starling, Swift, and House Martin built into the structure; these are all species that are being displaced from their traditional breeding sites. Where barns and outbuildings are converted, nesting sites for Barn Owls and Swallows should be included; bee bricks should be installed and bats should be provided for, including some buildings having 'bat lofts'. Larger sites should have areas set aside for native woodland and wildflower meadows, and ponds should be considered.

Just recently, it has been suggested by some politicians that planning laws should be liberalised and that redundant greenhouse sites should be dismantled and used for housing. We are told by politicians, architects, landowners, and their agents that these are not economically viable for agriculture, as if that should be the green light for the granting of planning permission. Would we build on our cliffs because they are not economically viable? Although many sites are considered unsightly, nature is gradually reclaiming them and the resultant scrub is a rich resource for wildlife. On an island where so much of our green space is intensively farmed, these areas could be managed to create species-rich habitats. They could also be used for new green lanes and cycle tracks, community woodlands, species-rich grassland, and new wetlands; the environmental benefits for ourselves and our wildlife are endless.

In fact, La Société has proved that old glasshouse sites can be havens for wildlife. Last year our orchard at Jardin de Lorette had a good number of orchids and a fine selection of other wildflowers. Le Marette in the Vale whilst not rich in orchids, has a fine array of plants, associated insects, Wasp Spiders, and a good population of Slow Worms. We are delighted that both sites are shortly to be recognised as Areas of Biodiversity Importance (ABI).

Needless to say, LSG is about more than just natural history.

The Astronomy Section has had several articles published in the Guernsey Press recently, and these have been accompanied by some superb photographs. Going forward, La Société will have articles published regularly that will cover the broad spectrum of LSG's work. I am grateful to Jean Dean for instigating and organising this.

Callum Tostevin-Hall of the Historic Buildings Section gave two very interesting talks on Guernsey's Castles and followed these up with a visit to Castle Cornet. I certainly learned a huge amount including information on the sites of castles I didn't know had existed. Thank you to Callum for explaining everything in such detail.

The Family History Section continues to recruit members from far and wide, and answer requests for information. Negotiations are ongoing to enable all of their records to be available online.

Returning to natural history, various survey work is taking place; Julie Davis is organising the Barn Owl survey, Marine Biology is helping with Eel Grass and Dolphin surveys and the Bat Section have been focusing on 'Winter Tunnels' work. The third year of the Bat Survey is now upon us and Sarah Allez is kept busy ensuring everything runs smoothly. Later in the year, it is intended to organise a Citizen Science slow worm survey.

Please keep checking our website [www.societe.org.gg](http://www.societe.org.gg) for things that are happening over the summer; I hope to meet many of you at these events.

**Trevor Bourgaize, President**

## Ownership

La Société recently took formal ownership of two botanically rich wet meadows, close to the West Coast. These fields, which have been managed by La Société for a number of years, were bequeathed to the society by Mrs Irene Batiste, for which the society is truly grateful. The meadows are particularly rich in Loose-flowered Orchids *Anacamptis laxiflora*, but the sympathetic management regime has ensured that as well as several other species of orchid, many wet meadows specialists are thriving. The wealth of plant life supports a great range of invertebrates, which in turn attract a variety of migrant birds.



Small Copper (*Lycaena phlaeas*).  
Photo courtesy of Trevor Bourgaize.



Photo courtesy of Trevor Bourgaize.

## 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](mailto:secretary@societe.org.gg). If you are unable to get to Candie to collect your Transactions please advise us.

## Donations

We would like to thank Aladdin's Cave who from the 1st of January 2023 will be donating money to us for every carrier bag they sell to the public during the course of the year.

## Viaër Marchi & Seafront Sunday

La Société will be having a stall this year at the Viaër Marchi on Monday 3rd of July. We will also be teaming up with the Alderney Wildlife Trust and having a joint stall at “Seafront Sunday” organised by St John on Sunday 24th September. La Société will showcase “Guernsey Seasearch” and the “BEEP” (Eel Grass survey) together with the DolFin project. We hope you will come along to find out more about these groups and their work. More details to follow.

---

## Philology Section Secretary

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'Assemblaie 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](mailto:secretary@societe.org.gg).

---

# Section Reports

## Archaeology

Three excursions to Lihou Island in February were organised to continue clearing unwanted vegetation from around the walls of the Priory and Dovecote, luckily the weather was kind to us. Due to this and last year's efforts we seem to be preventing further decay to this important structure and enhancing the environment in which it sits. The Guernsey Conservation Volunteers are also making excellent progress in the removal of invasive plants on the headland by Fort Doyle, and we will be monitoring their work throughout the year as they uncover the ruins of the boat house that used to service the Platte Fougère lighthouse and some WW2 installations.



Aerial view of Lihou Priory 2022. Photo courtesy of Digimap.

As we were out that way and were about to get a visit from Dr Matt Pope, a Palaeolithic specialist working at La Cotte de St Brélade in Jersey, we popped over to Omptolle and Hommet Paradis in the hope of finding evidence of very early human activity, unfortunately we were unsuccessful this time. A useful visit to Chapelle Dom Hue after the stormy weather enabled the collection of medieval pottery and flint debitage from the larger of the two Islets and quite a lot of flint debitage eroding out of the smaller Islet. Below is a small selection of some of the prehistoric flint debitage and medieval pottery that was recovered, the piece of pottery in the middle is part of a clay pigeon.



Finds from Chapelle Dom Hue. Photo courtesy of Andy Lane.

Another successful junior forage for archaeological remains took place at Cow Bay in conjunction with Nature Guernsey and the Education team. Roman, Medieval, Post-medieval and modern artefacts were recovered and are back in the office ready for cleaning and identification. We hope to be excavating a Victorian magazine at Fort Richmond in the summer with the help of the Junior's, more information to follow.

**Andy Lane – Archaeology Section Secretary**

## Wanted - Astronomy Volunteers

Do you have an interest in astronomy? The Astronomy Section is looking for volunteers to help with educational outreach, particularly primary-school age. This could be delivering a basic lecture on the Solar System or operating a modern computerised telescope. Lectures are already prepared and training will be given on the telescopes. If you might like to help, please email the secretary (Dr Jean Dean): [astronomy.secretary@societe.org.gg](mailto:astronomy.secretary@societe.org.gg).

## Astronomy

The beginning of British Summer Time brought to a close the 2022/23 outreach season in which we had group visits from the 10th Guernsey Cubs, 12th Guernsey Scouts, Ladies College and Autism Guernsey amongst others. We will recommence outreach in late September when the evenings begin to get dark again. Our new dual use telescope building, which now has a 55" TV screen that was very kindly donated by the Social Investment Fund, has proved invaluable. The new set up has enabled us to engage with more children in each visit and has meant we can divide the visiting parties into two smaller groups. These smaller groups mean it is easier to accommodate a question-and-answer dialogue with each child, as their interest and curiosity arise.



Member Owain Catton teaching the 10th Guernsey Club Pack about the Solar System in our new telescope building. Photo courtesy of Jenny Elliot.

## Members Observations

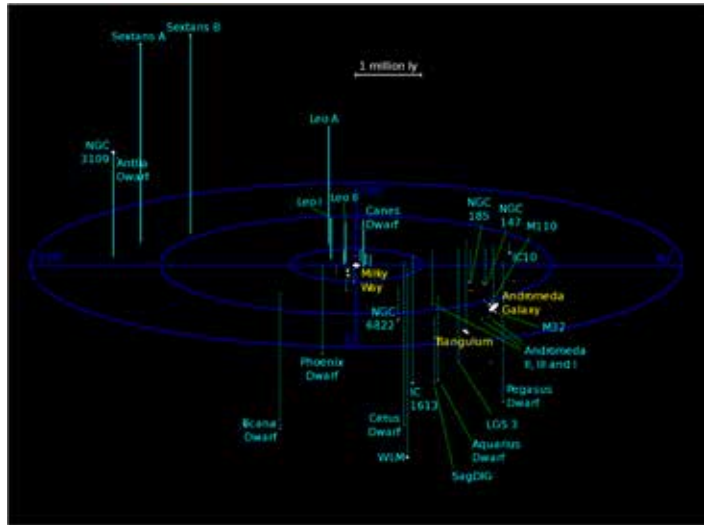
Members have been busy observing and imaging during the day and night. Jacques Loveridge has imaged the spiral galaxy Messier 33, located in the triangular-shaped constellation Triangulum, giving it its common name the Triangulum galaxy. It is about half the size of our Milky Way galaxy and the third largest member of our Local Group of galaxies, following the Andromeda galaxy (M31) and the Milky Way.

The Triangulum galaxy's orderly spiral structure displays few signs of interactions with nearby galaxies. However, that could change in the future. Only slightly farther away from us than the Andromeda galaxy, at about 3 million light-years from Earth, M33 is a suspected gravitational companion to Andromeda, and both galaxies are moving toward our own. M33 could become a third party involved in the impending collision between the Andromeda and Milky Way galaxies more than 4 billion years from now. M33 has a relatively bright apparent magnitude of 5.7, making it one of the most distant objects that keen-eyed observers can view with the unaided eye when under exceptionally clear and dark skies.



Messier 33, Triangulum Galaxy. Photo courtesy of Jacques Loveridge.

Jacques explains how he gathered and processed his image: This data was pretty hard to work with since it lacked good quality calibration frames, and the blue colours of M33 were also fairly hard to pull out. I gathered around 2 ½ hours-worth of 2 minute exposures and stacked them together and processed them into the final image using PixInSight and some adjustments in Adobe Photoshop. This was taken with my Sony A7iii, 10" Sky Watcher Newtonian and EQ6-R Pro tracking mount.



Local Group of galaxies with the Milky Way galaxy at the centres and highlighting the Andromeda and Triangulum galaxies.

*Image courtesy of Richard Powell and reproduced under the Creative Commons Licence.*

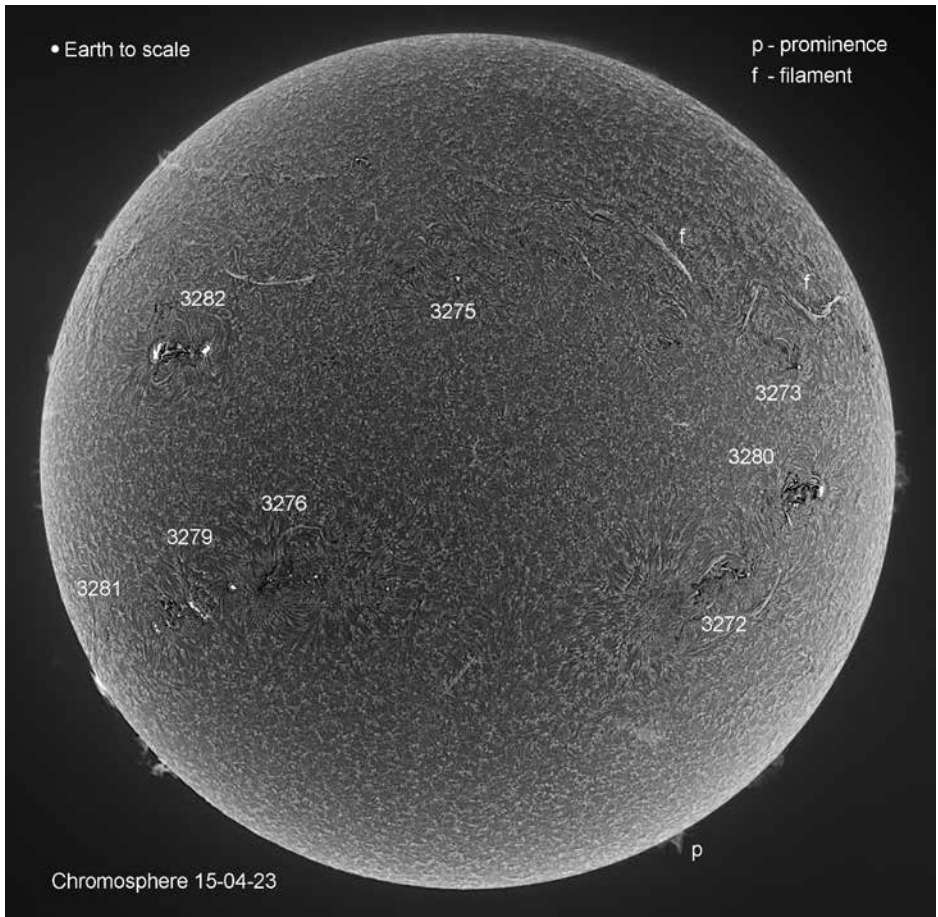
The California Nebula, imaged by Jean Dean, is drifting through the Orion Arm of the spiral Milky Way galaxy, about 1,000 light years distance in the constellation of Perseus. It gets its name because it echoes the outline of California on the west coast of the United States. Our Solar System also lies within the Milky Way's Orion Arm, about 1,500 light-years from the California Nebula. The California Nebula is a classic emission nebula, approximately 100 light-years long. Its most prominent glow is from the hydrogen atoms recombining with lost electrons (yellow colours), stripped away (ionized) by energetic starlight, oxygen similarly causes a teal-coloured glow. The star most likely providing the energetic starlight that ionizes much of the nebular gas is the bright, hot, bluish Xi Persei, just to the right of the nebula.



*California Nebula. Photo courtesy of Jean Dean.*

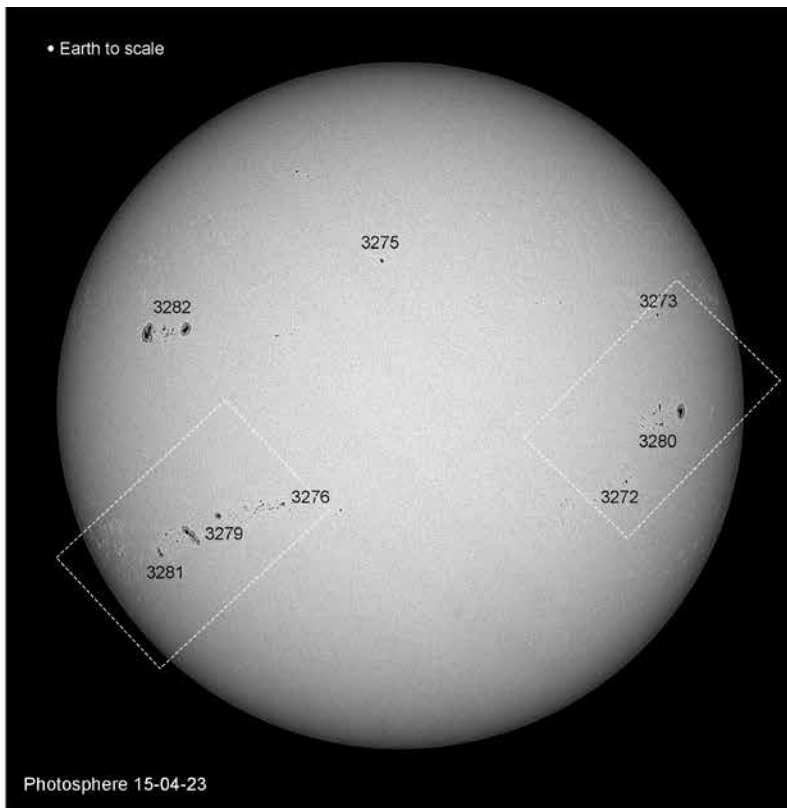
## Solar Activity

Solar activity continues to increase as we move into cycle 25. Images from 15 April show nine active regions. Regions 3279, 3282, 3280 and 3281 contain 18, 17, 14 and 12 individual sunspots respectively. There are many prominences visible around the solar disk – these are great loops of hydrogen plasma, suspended above the chromosphere, but anchored to it by positive and negatively-charged ends. Sometimes the oppositely charged ends can “snap” together (similar to magnets attracting each other) and a large burst of plasma is then hurled into space, some of it reaching us on Earth, causing electrical storms and the aurora. Filaments are also prominences but seen face-on when looking at the solar disk. Their length shows just how large solar prominences are, particularly when compared to the diameter of the Earth.



Sun's Chromosphere, in hydrogen-alpha, 15.04.23. Photo courtesy of Jean Dean.





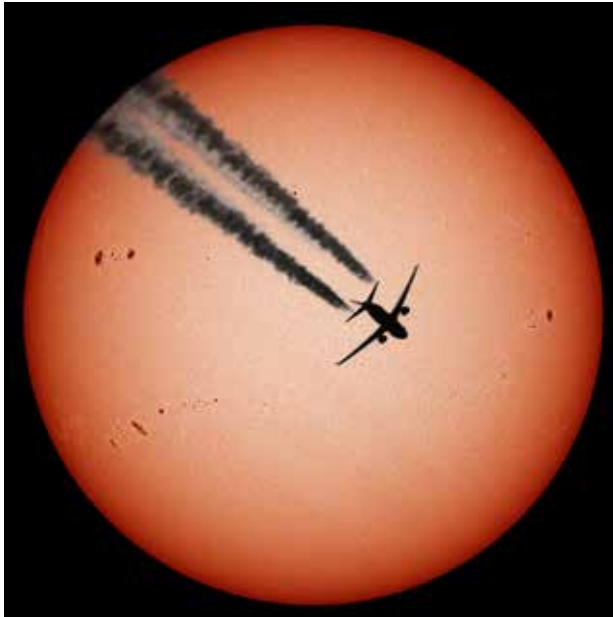
AR 3276, 3279 and 3281



AR 3272, 3273 and 3280

Sun's photosphere, in visible green wavelength, 15.04.23.  
Photo courtesy of Jean Dean.

Satellites, birds, insects and very occasionally aircraft can make an appearance in an image. In this instance a Ryanair 737 flying between Gatwick and Gran Canaria very nicely transited the solar disk!



A 737 aircraft transiting the solar disk, 15.04.23.  
Photo courtesy of Jean Dean.

### Space Mission Update

The European Space Agency's (ESA) Jupiter Icy Moons Explorer (JUICE) successfully launched on 14 April 2023. Jupiter is about 890 million kilometres distance, so it will take the spacecraft 8 years and four gravity assist flybys of Earth and Venus to slingshot the spacecraft towards the outer Solar System! The spacecraft will make detailed observations of the giant gas planet and its three large ocean-bearing moons – Ganymede, Callisto and Europa. Several of the outer Solar System moons are thought to have global oceans beneath a crust of ice, which could be very similar to Earth's oceans in chemical composition, with hydrothermal vent-type activity. Such oceans may harbour life where, in the absence of sunlight, chemosynthesis might play a significant role.



Local Group of galaxies with the Milky Way galaxy at the centres and highlighting the Andromeda and Triangulum galaxies.  
Image courtesy of Richard Powell and reproduced under the Creative Commons Licence.

**Dr Jean Dean – Astronomy Section Secretary**

## Bat Section

Bat Section has had a very busy winter with winter bat projects, equipment, meetings and a Channel Islands Bat forum.

The significant project is the Winter Roost Survey in conjunction with ACLMS, LSG and BTO. The project involved putting bat detectors in specific locations around the island where we suspected that bats would be hibernating over winter. As the big question is where do Guernsey bats go for their winter hibernations? I suspect a lot of them high tail it over to France as our maritime climate fluctuates too much and the bats can't get a good winters sleep, so they prefer the colder more stable continent of Europe.

So now we have spring and are going into summer. Bats will have left their winter lodgings in caves, roofs, walls, trees and be busy looking for food and socialising. The females will be preparing to enter maternity roost in June and July, where they have young and help each other rear their pups. The males will be flying around exploring and having fun.

Every year we get notifications of bats entering buildings. If this happens to you do not be disturbed. The bat is only looking for a place to roost and is either a young bat or a solitary male looking for a place to sleep the day. Just keep your window open overnight and it will leave the building. Don't do it any harm as Bats are protected under the Animal Welfare Act in Guernsey. I heard a horrible story of a person who flushed a bat down the toilet that had only entered her house looking for a place to sleep.



A bat which entered a house looking for a roost. The owner assured the bats safety and sensibly released it unharmed. Photo courtesy of Jean Brown.

We are leading a bat walk on Wednesday 2nd August for Nature Guernsey at Sausmarez Park – more details to follow. All welcome.

### Charles Hurford – Bat Section Secretary

Please contact Charles Hurford email [bats@societe.org.gg](mailto: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](mailto:charleshurford@hotmail.com)

## Botany

In January, Botany section set up a formal committee which, I am pleased to report, consists of 10 individuals who are willing and able to give up their time to promote all things botanical.

We began by planning a full diary of events. Historically, we have always held public outings on the first Saturday of each month. However, we decided to change things up a bit, adding some Sunday and evening walks open to the general public. Offered only to paid up members of the Botany section are Recording meetings, held every Thursday morning through the more clement months.

We were delighted to welcome John Poland back to the island following his visit at the back end of last year. John is incredibly generous with his knowledge. His expertise identified *Erophila glabrescens*, Glabrous Whitlowgrass at Pembroke. This plant has not been recorded since 1989 where there was one record at Port Soif. John wanted to see the *Romulae rosea*, Oniongrass, at Le Guet. I am pleased to say that we found it, though the weather was not kind and it was not in flower. We also took him to our newly donated La Gélé Reserve where he found *Carex panicea*, Carnation Sedge, *Carex nigra*, Common Sedge and *Carex demissa*, Common Yellow-sedge. It was invaluable to be talked through identifying this group of plants.

We also walked with John from Petit Bôt south to St Clair Battery. Along the way John gave a quick guide to identifying Roses, following their reclassification in Stace 4. He also introduced us to *Carex caryophylla*, Spring Sedge. On a rocky outcrop beyond the battery, John was delighted to find *Festuca longifolia*, Blue Fescue amongst other maritime plants.

On his 3rd and last morning, we visited Fauxquets valley, courtesy of the Guille family. We were in search of a sub species of *Ficaria verna*, namely *Ficaria verna* ssp. *verna*. In this plant, unlike the common Lesser Celandine, tubers form in the leaf axils looking like little white eggs. We didn't find it, although there are records for it in the valley. However, we did find *Carex paniculata*, Greater Tussock-sedge, previously only recorded at Rue des Norgiots and an area east of Petit Bôt.

Grow Guernsey Natives continues to go from strength to strength with interest in using the plants coming from private landholders and public bodies. More species are on offer this Spring and we hope the project will continue to be well supported by islanders.

If you are not already a member, do consider joining Botany Section to support the study of our local flora – to join please visit our website [www.societe.org.gg](http://www.societe.org.gg).

**Helen Litchfield – Botany Section Secretary**

**Botany Walks – please meet at 2.00pm.**

- |                               |   |
|-------------------------------|---|
| <b>Saturday 3rd June</b>      | – St Germain Reserve – please meet in the parking area in Route de St Germain. What3 words ///trap.vision.risking                                       |
| <b>Saturday 1st July</b>      | – Reservoir – please meet in the East Car Park. What3words ///thrilling.brought.recur   |
| <b>Saturday 5th August</b>    | – Silbe Reserve – no parking on site, please find your own way there. Perry's ref. Page 20, D5. What3words ///boxes.soothe.eaters                       |
| <b>Saturday 2nd September</b> | – La Grande Mare through to Rue des Bergers – please meet in car park opposite La Longue Rue. Perry's ref. page 14, A3. What3words ///pens.pencil.apple |
| <b>Saturday 7th October</b>   | – Grande Pré Reserve – limited parking. Perry's ref. page 7, G4. What3words ///just.mirror.ticking  |

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

The weather has started to pick up now and sunnier warmer days present entomologists with more to search for after the cooler early months of the year. Many insects are emerging and it seems that Oil Beetles are having a good year with many sightings via social media.

A successful search by Andy Marquis at Belle Grève Bay in mid-March for the littoral centipede *Hydroschendyla submarina* also turned up many examples of the marine beetle *Aepopsis robinii* which lives in rock crevices in the intertidal zone as well as the True Bug *Aepophilus bonnairei* which is found in the lower intertidal zone, again in rock crevices. The other find of the day was the collembola *Axelonia littoralis* which is new to the Channel Islands.



True Bug (*Aepophilus bonnairei*).

The moth traps have been fairly quiet although a period of southerly winds supported a small influx of migrants on the weekend of 15/16th April with Pearly Underwing (*Peridroma saucia*), Silver Y (*Autographa gamma*) and Turnip (*Agrotis segetum*) showing at the traps along with the usual spring species.

The real gem find of this spring has to be the Large Tortoiseshell (*Nymphalis polychloros*) which has made appearances in several locations. The first reports were on 30th March, when individuals were simultaneously recorded at Silbe (AS) and at Grand Pré (Rachel Ann Ridley). After a lull, a single example was noted above Saint's Bay on 15th April (AS), and a return to Silbe later that day confirmed the presence of two individuals - one male, one female (AS). By the 17th a third example had joined them (Gary Elson/Chrissie Johns), and on the 19th a worn example was present at Le Catioc (Gary Elson/Chrissie Johns). In spite of the supposed stronghold for this species in the Bailiwick being Sark, AS spent three full days 17th to 19th April without finding any there. In terms of Guernsey sightings, 2023 ranks first with sightings at four distinct locations and it is likely that five or more individuals were involved. Previously, 2012 had ranked top with four individuals at three sites recorded by AS and Ian Hall. In that year, the same Silbe field had hosted two, suggesting that it has very good Large Tortoiseshell habitat. Large Tortoiseshells lay eggs in batches, most often on Elm, but larvae can feed on Aspen, Salix (Willows and Sallows), and Poplar. In France they have also been reported feeding on Hawthorn, Cherry and Plum trees. Larvae feed communally near the crown of trees and can cause noticeable defoliation. It will be very interesting to see if there is any evidence of that over the coming months at Silbe. Summer adults generally emerge between late June and, early August, then feed up quickly to enter an early hibernation.



Large Tortoiseshell (*Nymphalis polychloros*).

**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](mailto:researchenquiries@hotmail.co.uk). Please note during the month of August we will be opening the Family History Room every Saturday between 10am and noon for a trial run.

**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](mailto:researchenquiries@hotmail.co.uk)**

---

## Historic Buildings

### Events

- Saturday 1st July** – a visit to the Old House, Le Marais, Baubigny – please meet at 2.30pm.
- Saturday 12th August** – Churches Study Day, looking at the remaining three churches not already studied in this series: the Vale, St. Sampson's and St. Saviour's, with a picnic lunch at St. Peter's Valley. Please ensure that you let the Secretary know in advance if you intend to take part. This will be an all-day event.
- Saturday 2nd September** – a walk around the New Town, St Peter Port, led by Richard Hocart. Please meet at 2.30pm by the oldest post box in the world!
- Saturday 23rd September** – an evening to put together the material collected together during the Churches study Day for publication. Frossard, Theatre, Candie at 7.30pm.
- Saturday 14th October** – a post-mortem on the Section's June visit to Poitou. Frossard Theatre, Candie at 7.30pm.

New members are always very welcome to attend, but should contact John McCormack (tel. 720303; e-mail [mrjam@cwgsy.net](mailto: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

Spring 2023

### National Seabird Monitoring Programme

This is a project that is carried out across Great Britain. It is more important than ever with HPAI (Avian Influenza) taking its toll on seabird colonies last year, some to devastating effect. Aside from the gannetries off Alderney, the Bailiwick is an important nesting area for other seabirds particularly at our two Ramsar Sites: Herm, Jethou and the Humps; and Lihou, Lihou Headland and the Shingle Bank. The islands are used by Herring Gull, Great Black-backed Gull, Lesser Black-backed Gull, Shag, Cormorant, Guillemot, Razorbill, Puffin and occasionally Common Terns.



With the help of ACLMS, the Section was able to secure an emergency grant of £2000 from the Seabird Monitoring Programme to carry out this year's survey. Put simply, without the grant, we would not have been able to carry out the count. It has to be done by boat, even where the gulls nest on the south cliffs of Guernsey, access to headlands to see the nesting areas is difficult. Environment Guernsey will undertake the work on our behalf.



*Shag with young by Steve Levrier. Young shags have a distinctive 'woolly' coat.*



*Lesser Black-backed Gulls by Wayne Turner. Seen here on Lihou.*

### International Intervention to support Balearic Shearwater



The Section had online representation at a recent international meeting in Jersey with Adrien Lambrechts from the French Office of Biodiversity. He is leading an initiative to support the Balearic Shearwater, Europe's most endangered seabird.

Numbers are declining and unless the present rate is slowed or reversed this species will become extinct towards the end of this century.

### Interesting Sightings

The spring migration was delayed due to cold north-easterly winds. We were not alone as Portland Bird Observatory had disappointing numbers until the second half of April.



*Balearic Shearwater by Tony Loaring*

**Night Heron** will be one of the sightings of the year. Mark Lawlor found it at Rouse on 13th April. Quite a few birds overshot their breeding ground in southern Brittany with records in Devon, Dorset and the Isles of Scilly. There are just a handful of records for this species locally and it was last seen in 1997. The most extraordinary year was 1990 when twelve were seen at Pulias on 15th March. 14 were counted by Vic Froome as they flew over his house. They then dispersed around the island, with one staying until 3rd May.



*A rare Night Heron, by Dave Carré.*

Jamie Hooper and Dave Spicer saw the first Swallow on 29th March at Fort Hommet.

Many people have enjoyed seeing Ring Ousels and Yellow Wagtails, particularly at Pleinmont.



*Ring Ouzel by Chris Wilkinson*



*Yellow Wagtail by Rod Ferbrache*

## **Forthcoming events**

**Thursday 1st June** - Indoor meeting 7.30 pm at Candie

**Friday 9th and Saturday 10th June** - Boat trips around Herm. The Friday trip is fully booked. The Saturday trip is open to all Société members. Please email [ornithology@societe.org.gg](mailto:ornithology@societe.org.gg) if you would like to book tickets.

**Julie Davis - Ornithology Section Secretary**





## Ornithology Guernsey

Part of La Société



*Mike Cunningham*

### **Around Herm and the Humps Saturday 10th June 5.30 - 7.30 pm**

Meet at entrance to the Fishermen's Quay,  
(Perry's Guide 25 H1, [///stored.scanner.tulip](http://stored.scanner.tulip))

Section members £19, Bring cash to pay on the day

Weather dependent - members will be emailed if the trip has to be cancelled .

## Education and Conservation Team

The Education Team have been extremely busy over the past weeks due to the arrival of Spring! We have enjoyed a flurry of requests for Corporate Social Responsibility events, particularly maintenance work on La Société's Reserves and surveying, and outdoor activities with schools and youth groups. Our calendar for the new term has been filling up rapidly and at the latest reckoning we have three free days between now and the end of July!

The past few weeks have seen us removing bramble at La Marette with Cooper Brouard and BDO, surveying ormers at Belle Grève with Investec and removing sour fig at Fort Doyle with a team of volunteers from St Sampson's High School. The latter led to the discovery of two large piles of the invasive plant which had mysteriously appeared in the area, one of which we managed to cram into our skips with volunteer help from Vision. We have numerous activities lined up with a wide range of businesses in the coming months and, as always, please contact Becky at [ecl@societe.org.gg](mailto:ecl@societe.org.gg) should you or your company like to donate your CSR hours to La Société.



St Sampson's High School volunteers remove Sour Fig from Fort Doyle. *Photo courtesy of Becky Ogier.*



Notre Dame pupils learn about seed distribution. *Photo courtesy of Becky Ogier.*

The most recent phase of the Cultural Enrichment Programme took us to St Martin's and Forest primary schools and this term's sessions have just begun – we'll be working with Amherst and Notre Dame primary schools until half term. We also received a request from Elizabeth College to deliver the programme to Reception pupils at Acorn House for the best possible reason – a teacher's son had attended the lessons at Forest school and very much enjoyed them!

Finally, we were delighted to join in with Nature Guernsey's spring events – the Rockpool Ramble at Belle Grève and Crabs and Crocks at Cow Bay were great fun as always. We look forward to getting involved with more Nature Guernsey activities in the summer - hopefully we'll see you there!

**Becky Ogier – Education & Conservation Leader**

## Juniors

The Education Team decided not to host any Junior events early in the year, as we wanted to focus our efforts on our work in schools helping to deliver the States of Guernsey's Cultural Enrichment Programme.

Our first Junior event of the year was in March which was a wildflower walk kindly led by the Botany Section and Raymond Evison OBE. This took place along the Petit Bôt cliffs where we used our spotter sheets and loupes to look at the beautiful flowers already out in bloom. The event went very well in glorious sunshine, and we look forward to our next botany walk later in the year.



Our wildlife walk along the Petit Bôt cliffs.  
Photo courtesy of Sarah Allez.



Our spotter sheet of the wildflowers we were looking for at Petit Bôt. Photo courtesy of Sarah Allez.

Our April event was in collaboration with Nature Guernsey and the Archaeology Section in which we were in search of 'Crocks and Crabs' at Cow Bay (the beach below the walls of Castle Cornet). We had a brilliant turn out for this event, as well as some fantastic finds from Roman and medieval shipwrecks and marine life!



A Furrowed crab (*Xantho hydrophilus*) found at the “Cocks and Crabs” event. Photo courtesy of Emma Boughey.

We have some exciting events lined up for the rest of the year and as normal, we will be hosting one event a month based on a different area of the environment or conservation for our young members.

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](mailto: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

The herd have left their winter home and made their way to L’Ancrese Common where they are enjoying the grass for the first time in months. They will be on the common for a couple of months before beginning their journey around the west coast. The calves are growing fast and have stopped their morning milk feed now and are eating solids, their coats have been removed as the weather has warmed and they are fully out in their field nibbling grass and learning to be future grazers.



Photo of the Conservation Herd. Photo courtesy of Andrea Holford.



Photo of the Conservation Herd. Photo courtesy of Andrea Holford.



# BIRD NESTING SEASON



## *A guide to hedge cutting*

The June cut between 1 and 15 June is required by law. It is also a legal requirement not knowingly to disturb nesting birds.

- Earth banks with native hedging are part of Guernsey's traditional landscape.
- They host many species of plants which give food and shelter to birds, insects and small mammals.
- Together with non-native hedging, they can be used by nesting birds

### LSG recommends

- Check the hedge before cutting.
- Where there are nesting birds, if possible, lightly cut back the surrounding roadside growth by hand.
- Leave the cut of the inside of the hedge until the end of August, to reduce disturbance.
- Leave 100mm or 4 inches of vegetation on a bank. Cutting back to bare earth can cause erosion.



**La Société**

For nature, history and science in Guernsey

Find out more about how LSG supports the Island's biodiversity [societe.org.gg/wp](https://societe.org.gg/wp)

## Associated Groups

Name of Group	Contact	Contact Details
Alderney Wildlife Trust	Roland Gauvain	822935
Bailiwick of Guernsey List of Accredited Guides	Margaret Murphy	MGsy@outlook.com bluedolphinssac@gmail.com
Blue Dolphins Sub-Aqua Club	Delga Arnold	delga20034@yahoo.co.uk
Channel Islands Occupation Society (Guernsey)	Sue Sweet	info@friends.org.gg
Friends of the Priaulx Library	Angela Salmon	721163
Guernsey Conservation Volunteers	Martin Crozier	237766
Guernsey Meteorological Observatory	Steve Byrne	257261
G.S.P.C.A	Jo Birch	832788
La Société Serquaise	Chris Dye	chris.dye@mailmcgill.co
Le Cercle Français	Dr Harry Tomlinson	255891
Lé Coumité d'la Culture Guernésiaise	Andy McCutcheon	07781 110180
Guernsey Trees For Life	Jemma Charlotte Field	07781 106461
National Trust	Tattie Thompson	239444
Plant Heritage (Guernsey Group)	Jo Arendt	arendtjo@g.mail.com
Royal Society of Biology ( <i>local members group</i> )	Karen Hill	823222
The Alderney Society & Museum	Damian Harris	07911 721785
The Guernsey Beekeepers' Association	Cathy Morgan	07911 732912
The Guernsey Botanical Trust	Michael Paul	253858
The Guernsey Society	Roy Bisson	07781 100296
The Victor Hugo in Guernsey Society		

## 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 0QD

Tel: (07781) 166924

Email: [jamie.hooper@cwgsy.net](mailto:jamie.hooper@cwgsy.net)  
[gsybiorecords@gmail.com](mailto: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:
<b>Officers:</b>			
President	Trevor Bourgaize		president@societe.org.gg
Vice President	Vacant		
Secretary	Kate Lee	235380	secretary@societe.org.gg
Honorary Treasurer	Dave Christopher		treasurer@societe.org.gg
Membership Secretary			membership@societe.org.gg
Editor of the Transactions	Richard Hocart	254693	editor@societe.org.gg
Reserves Committee			
Chairperson	Lesley Bourgaize		reserves@societe.org.gg
Communications Officer	Pierre Ehmann		communications@societe.org.gg
Land Management & Conservation Officer	Jamie Hooper	266924	jamie.hooper@cwgsy.net
Volunteer Co ordinator			
Reserves	Becky Ogier		ecl@societe.org.gg
Archivist & Librarian	Richard Hocart		editor@societe.org.gg
Science Committee			
Chairperson	Trevor Bourgaize		science@societe.org.gg

### Education Officers:

Education & Conservation Leader	Becky Ogier		ecl@societe.org.gg
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
Botany	Anna Cleal & Helen Litchfield		botany@societe.org.gg
Entomology and Zoology	Andy Marquis		entomology@societe.org.gg
Family History	Maria van der Tang	248538	researchenquiries@hotmail.co.uk
Geology and Geography	Andrew Dorey	252123	
Historic Buildings	John McCormack	270303	mrjam@cwgsy.net
Marine Biology	Mike Paige		marinebiology@societe.org.gg
Natural History	Lesley Bourgaize		naturalhistory@societe.org gg
Ornithology	Julie Davis		ornithology@societe.org.gg
Philology	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 Guernesiale, Candie Gardens, St Peter Port, Guernsey, GY1 1UG.

**Email:** [societe@cwgsy.net](mailto:societe@cwgsy.net) **Website:** [www.societe.org.gg](http://www.societe.org.gg) **Tel:** 01481 725093

© La Société Guernesiale

Articles in the newsletter for which the author is named do not necessarily reflect the views of La Société.