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## Biology Curators Group Newsletter

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Isles. Surely a move to be applauded if it helps to focus the attention of active field botanists to their often neglected (scientifically and sometimes curatorially) local herbaria.

## Information Wanted

Barry Constantine, 4 The Green, Skipsea, East Yorks YO25 8SZ, is wanting to compile reference material of coleoptera, synantropic insects and ectoparasites to assist his researches into the remains of faunas in archeological sites. Barry is particularly interested in acquiring specimens of saproxylic beetles, aquatic beetles and bugs, pests of stored products and bird, animal or human ectoparasites especially any European species no longer found in Britain.

Any information on the whereabouts of any spirit preserved material or manuscript material from the family of the late Basil Bunting (1900-1985) would be welcomed by Colin Simms, Low Woodhead North, Bellingham, Northumberland.

Numbers and distribution of muntjac in Britain is the subject of research by Professor Stephen Harris at Bristol University Zoology Dept., School of Biological Sciences, Woodland Road, Bristol BS8 1UG. Please contact Prof. Harris if you can help with distribution data or survey work.

## Publications

'Standards in the Museum Care of Biological Collections 1992' – now available from the Museums and Galleries Commission, 16 Queen Anne's Gate, London SW1H 9AA price £6 including p&p ( £10 outside the UK ). This important document *will* affect you in one way or another. Short critiques would be welcome for the next newsletter.

'Horse Power: a history of the horse and donkey in human societies' by Juliet Clutton-Brock. £19.95 from the Natural History Museum.

Also from the NHM are two publications to mark last year's centenary of Sir Richard Owen. A 'Richard Owen Commemoration' by Jacob Gruber and John Thackray (£29.95) and 'The Hunterian Lectures in Comparative Anatomy May and June 1837' (£15.95 pbk).

'Scottish Bats'. This new serial is available from South-east Scotland Bat Groups, 9 Brunswick Street, Edinburgh, EH7 5JB. Volume one contains distribution maps of all Scottish species and other articles. Price £3 including p&p.

The 'Checklist of the Plants of Perthshire' by RAH Smith et al is the first account of this superb area since the 1898 'Flora'. A complete flora is planned but meanwhile this annotated checklist will fill you in with the summary distribution of all local species. Price £5.00 pbk.

## At last! – a letter to the Editor.

Dear Editor,

These are difficult days. We read and hear about problems at what we previously considered stalwart natural history museums e.g. Bristol, Glasgow, Sheffield and even the Hancock Museum, Newcastle.

Yet interest in natural history, biological recording, collections, natural history exhibitions and the demand for our services have never been greater and continue to increase.

It is all a question of £££ and image. BCG can continue to play a key role by campaigning and lobbying for both. Every letter and every targetted leaflet helps. BCG's watchdog activities and ongoing campaigns continue to notch up notable successes. It is more important than ever to keep the heat on.

It is the long term security of collections, records and biological archives which worries me most. I sometimes get the feeling that only BCG is out there able to help with an independent voice. I wish the BCG Committee the very best of luck. I shall be with you in spirit if not in body. I think it was Bill Pettitt on the Isle of Man who suggested that we adopt the old Hill Street Blues slogan "Lets do it to them before they do it to us".

*Derek Whiteley, Sheffield, (ex Secretary BCG)*