



NatSCA

Natural Sciences Collections Association

<http://www.natsca.org>

The Biology Curator

Title: BCG Committee Report

Author(s): Thompson, S.

Source: Thompson, S. (1996). BCG Committee Report. *The Biology Curator*, Issue 6, 4.

URL: <http://www.natsca.org/article/509>

NatSCA supports open access publication as part of its mission is to promote and support natural science collections. NatSCA uses the Creative Commons Attribution License (CCAL) <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/2.5/> for all works we publish. Under CCAL authors retain ownership of the copyright for their article, but authors allow anyone to download, reuse, reprint, modify, distribute, and/or copy articles in NatSCA publications, so long as the original authors and source are cited.

BCG Committee Report

Although the group has been organising meetings very successfully over the last couple of years, other things have not been running as well as we would have liked. In particular, the production of the journal has not been what was promised, and the cells have not been operating as they should. The last committee meeting gives me hope that these problems are well on the way to being sorted out. A full agenda was nevertheless dealt with comfortably within the afternoon. The appointment of Helen Burchmore to the role of minutes secretary resulted in considerably more comprehensive minutes than I am usually able to take. (I am not able to take minutes and speak to the meeting at the same time, and, as is well known, my brain seizes up if my gob is not operating). The result was the longest list of action points produced in the last three years. While this might not be such good news for those that have to deal with them, it does at least indicate that we are getting on with things.

The principle focus of the meeting was to direct some of the cells into specific tasks. Collections at Risk is to produce an action pack / plan for institutions or curators who feel that their collections may be endangered. We are hoping to present the results or at least bring this work to the attention of the wider community at the MA conference this year. Nick Goff has produced a series of activities which he will undertake for the documentation cell this year, and the editorial team will be seeking to get *The Biology Curator* off to a fresh start, and over the next few issues, evolve it into the journal we have always hoped for. The future of the conservation cell is waiting to see how the new Natural Sciences Conservation Group develops, but the cell leader, Nick Gordon, being on their committee, is in a good position to respond in the most appropriate way. The orphan collections project, which was given a days airing at the 1994 MA conference, has not died but has been progressed behind the scenes over the last few months, and members of both BCG and GCG committees will be getting together in June to take this forward.

In accordance with the principle that we should be helping the less well supported members of our group to be able to get to the most important meetings, we have been able to give substantial subsidies to five people to go to the Cambridge SPNHC meeting, as proposed in the last issue of TBC. Another half dozen or so issues were discussed under the heading of cell activities, including several opportunities to work more closely with related groups, so as to improve communication within the natural sciences community, and makes its activities more effective.

Another important part of all our committee meetings is, of course, the meetings programme. This included another European trip this November, a somewhat lower budget trip, (Cambridge could make this year expensive), re-visiting the museums in Paris to see what changes have taken place as a result of the exciting plans of five years ago. The Cambridge meeting should, of course, be in everybody's diaries. The next beginners specialist meeting, following on in the tradition of the spirit collections, bones and botany meetings, will be on entomology, possibly in Bristol at the beginning of next year. Next year's AGM is to be held in Cardiff in

April, jointly with NSCG. We are also intending to have a slot at both the 1996 and 1997 MA conferences. Finally we are hoping to set up a number of what we have chosen to call Stage 2 meetings, which could be viewed as follow ups to the beginners meetings, for a small number of people at a more specialised level to take place during the summer when it is difficult to organise larger meetings. Watch TBC for further details.

The any other business heading brought up relatively little material, for a change, though the issue of BCG's involvement in the Leicester museum studies course was included. There does appear still to be a need and a desire for BCG to have some form of direct input into the Natural History section of this course, and we are intending to offer an evening session this year as we did last year.

As you can hopefully see, we are busy bunch of bods, and more signs of this activity should become visible over the next year. One interesting comment from a new committee member was that they hadn't realised how much went on behind the scenes, as it were. Which is nice to hear, but perhaps not the best reflection on our communication with the group as a whole.

We always want communication in the other direction as well though. If you have any bright ideas, requests, criticisms or even compliments, please get in touch with myself or one of the other committee members, and better still contribute your thoughts as an item or a paper to TBC. The editors are always after more material. They are also keen to have photographs to put in the journal. (That's for those of us who can't really follow those funny little squiggles that come between the pictures). Anything from comic asides to deep and meaningful academic papers are welcome, (especially the former). We are also looking for feedback on the activities of the committee. We don't have any monopoly on ideas and need to hear yours. In particular, bear in mind the collections at risk activities, orphan collections, ideas for forthcoming meetings, offers of venues, help with cells and ideas for next year's MA conference. We await the flood of replies.

All the best,

Steve the sec.

EDITORS REPORT

Due to the personal circumstances of the Coordinating Editor, BCG members received two issues of the *Biology Curator*, a total of 56 A4 pages of closely printed text plus an index. This is no small achievement for a group that has no full time officers and I would wish particularly to thank those members (and non-members) who sent in their news and contributions as well as those members of committee who chased up those promised contributions that had not appeared as the deadlines approached.

The change to the *Biology Curator* continues to be a great success judging by the comments received by the editor although I would like to stress that filling a minimum of 20 pages per issue is a high target and will depend very much on members willingness to contribute articles. What about the shortcomings? Well, more photographs and drawings