

Minutes of meeting held in the New Walk Museum on Wednesday, 6th February, 2019 from 7.00. until 9.30pm. 30 members and 15 guests attended.

The meeting was chaired by Hazel Graves.

Hazel mentioned that she had provided tonight's refreshments and asked for help with the setting up and clearing away at this and subsequent meetings.

Our next meeting, those of the Geological Section and Parent Body and a talk by Steve Woodward were trailed.

Fliers for the annual vc55 Recorders Conference were displayed, and assistance with our display there and at the Bradgate Park wildlife weekend was requested. Fliers for the 'Hogarth' appeal were mentioned.

Sightings

- Possible Scarlet Tiger moth, *Callimorpha dominula*, 'wooly bear' caterpillars uncovered inside brickwork, Knighton – John Bailey.
- 3 species of winter moth that have flightless females recorded in Queniborough – John Tinning.

Displays

- Photos of flightless moth females on a wall in Bradgate Park – Hazel Graves
- Several pieces of wood brought in by Ivan Pedley. One showing the grain of a 'knee' branch joint which used to be selected for ship building; one old roof timber showing from its rings that it had been sawn from a very large tree, the like of which is rarely used for modern construction; and one showing the passages beneath the bark of Ash Bark Beetle, *Hylesinus*.

Permission was requested to take photos at the meeting for publicity.

Hazel then introduced this evening's speaker, Dr Peter Stroh, BSBI Scientific Officer. Pete was educated at Torquay Grammar School and obtained an English degree at St John College, York. He spent some time working for The Scottish Wildlife Trust where he acquired his plant ID skills. He obtained a Ph.D. in Restoration Ecology from Anglia Ruskin University where he also taught ID skills. He has worked as Scientific Officer for the Centre for Ecology and Hydrology at Monks Wood and as Conservation Officer at Natural England. He has been a Researcher in Wetland Ecology at Anglia Ruskin University. I am not quite sure which order all this came but what a fascinating CV! Currently he is a member of the Science Team at BSBI. Here he has been providing support for Atlas 2020 and has been a lead author on the England Red List. His office is at the Botanic Gardens in Cambridge.

He added that he is now the BSBI England Officer. His talk was about the **BSBI Threatened Plants in Britain and Ireland project**. He explained the purpose and methodology of the project, which compared the findings in the 1970 atlas and 2002 atlas to select, rare and possibly declining species covering a broad range of habitats. Requests to refind and report in some detail on these populations created a citizen science project which ran from 2008 to 2013. The results were then published. The findings indicated varying degrees of losses of sites in all the chosen species, although some sites had increased in population size. Many reasons were thought to be responsible, but one outstanding reason was the present lack of past management of many sites. Pete finished by encouraging us to act locally to attempt to conserve our declining species.

The talk was concluded with a lively question and answer session and Hazel thanked Pete.