

CURATOR'S REPORT 2022

Another year in which there is little to report has passed, though access to our building has been restored and I began to attend open days again from July onwards, after an absence of more than two years. I was consequently present on seven such occasions, at most of which support was provided by Marc Taylor, to whom I am grateful for his interest in facilitating use of the building by members. Attendance of the open days has so far been low, and it seems that some members who attended regularly prior to the suspension of our activities have yet to realise that our programme has resumed.

As in the previous two years I continued to rely on Ian Sims, Jon Cole and Martin Albertini for their regular inspections of the building and for keeping me informed. There has been no confirmed recurrence of the infestation reported in 2020, but a further complete check of all parts of the collection will soon be necessary.

In September we were approached by Sophia Reinisch, who was co-curating with Maria Dragoi an exhibition expected to take place in the Crypt Gallery at Euston on the 10th-14th January 2023. The plan was to focus on insects, their social strategies and adaptability, and connect this to the social history of the London Borough of Camden. We were asked to supply insect specimens to include in their displays, with an emphasis on social bees and wasps, and they both joined the Society to facilitate visits to our building to discuss their requirements. We were unable to help with their initial wish for nests and early stages of social insects. However, when they had an opportunity to view our collections, they requested that coverage be extended to solitary bees and wasps, and to hoverflies that are bee or wasp mimics. Then some other miscellaneous insects, from mole crickets to shield bugs, the thistle gall fly, ant lions and *Nemoptera* were added, as well as their selection of moth caterpillars and pupae (12 species of Sphingidae, Notodontidae and Lasiocampidae), to increase the interest of the exhibits. Consequently, I supplied four display drawers containing 76 species of insects of which only 19, in one display case, were social bees and wasps. Sophia has reported that the exhibits were popular with visitors to the exhibition and contact details for the Society were given to a number of them, so some new members might result from this event.

It is to be hoped that members will make full use of our building in 2023.

PETER CHANDLER