Revealed –
the science
behind
Beckham
and lollies

Young scientists of tomorrow learned how to bend it like Beckham (with maths) and how to make ice lollies (with liquid nitrogen) at the University’s first Science at Sussex afternoon on 10 November.

More than 100 pupils from eight Sussex schools attended a series of demonstrations, experiments and talks aimed at inspiring young people to take a fresh look at science education and the exciting opportunities a university degree can offer.

Academics from seven departments – Biochemistry, Biology and Environmental Science, Chemistry, Engineering and Design, Informatics, Mathematics, and Physics and Astronomy – were on hand to offer a taste of what studying science is like at university. Undergraduates were also on hand to give pupils an insight into student life at Sussex.

The aim was to dazzle rather than blind with science, through a series of fun but informative activities that included the multimedia effects used for the weather forecast and how the quantum computer and the gas turbine work. Other science “secrets” uncovered included how to run faster than light.

Pro-Vice Chancellor Professor John Dearlove, who attended the event, said: “These are very exciting times to be studying science at Sussex and this event was lively and enjoyable. All the schools and colleges present asked to be invited back. This can only be positive for the future of science.”

Exciting changes lie ahead for science at Sussex. An enhanced science curriculum for future undergraduates will include new developments in traditional subjects such as maths, physics and chemistry. It will also offer new ways of studying, including learning through solving real-world problems in subjects not usually taught in schools, such as artificial intelligence, biotechnology, engineering and product design.

Alongside traditional single-honours degrees such as the BSc in Chemistry, students can also look forward to programmes such as the MEng in Satellite Communications and Space Systems.

The next Science at Sussex event takes place on 2 December and will include new robotics demonstrations.

Sussex ranked as one of world’s top universities

The University of Sussex is among the top 60 universities in the world, according to influential new rankings.

The World University Rankings, compiled by researchers for the Times Higher Education Supplement (THES), put Sussex in the top 10 in the UK (ninth), the top 20 in Europe (17th) and in the top 60 in the world (58th).

Vice-Chancellor Professor Alasdair Smith said: “I am delighted by this accolade for the excellent quality of teaching and research at Sussex, and the international reputation we have earned.”

The 200 universities featured are drawn from 29 countries worldwide, from the United States and Europe and Australia to those of China, Japan, India, South Korea and the Middle East.

Staff-to-student ratios, overseas recruitment and the intellectual clout wielded by research publications were measured to assess the quality of teaching and research and international reputation. The findings also relied on opinions of 1,300 academics from across the world, who were asked to identify the top institutions in their respective fields.

The emergence of world rankings reflects the growing need for universities to have a strong international profile, as students around the world look beyond their own countries for the best university places.

Harvard is ranked in the listings as the world’s top university. In Europe, Sussex is one of nine UK institutions in the top 20, where Oxford heads the list. In the UK, Sussex joins Oxford, Cambridge, Imperial College London, the London School of Economics (LSE), University College London (UCL), the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS), Manchester, Edinburgh and St Andrews in the top 10 list.

These latest rankings follow recent findings of the Institute of Education at Shanghai Jiao Tong University, which also placed Sussex among the world’s leading universities.

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7 Wild side
It’s not a muddy puddle dogs bathe in, it’s an historic dew pond.
Sussex scientists win awards for Anglo-Japanese collaboration

Two projects led by Sussex scientists are to receive prestigious awards later this month in recognition of their work to build scientific links between the UK and Japan.

Astronomer Dr Seb Oliver and chemist Professor Kosmas Prassides will both be at the Royal Society in London on 25 November to receive a £10,000 Daiwa Adrian Prize. The award recognises significant scientific collaboration between British and Japanese research teams.

Seb and his Sussex colleague Dr Richard Savage are part of a Japanese-Anglo-Dutch satellite project. The satellite is currently being built by the Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency (JAXA) and the ASTRO-F space mission is scheduled to go into orbit in autumn 2005.

It is expected that the satellite will detect more than 10 million galaxies, trace the structure of the Universe out to high redshifts; detect the most luminous objects within the observable Universe; map the structure of the Milky Way in our own galaxy; and detect young stars that are being born.

The UK team are funded by the Particle Physics and Astronomy Research Council (PPARC) to develop software that will be used for processing and analysis of the data.

A delighted Seb said: “We haven’t yet decided what to spend the prize money on. I’d like to say a big celebration party for the launch next year, but I expect we will probably end up using it to improve our computer system in readiness!”

Chemistry Professor Kosmas Prassides and his Sussex colleagues, together with teams at the University of Cambridge and Tohoku University, will receive £10,000 for their research on nanocarbon materials.

The principal aim is to synthesize novel nanocarbon-based solids, thin-films and electronic devices by assembling them together with conventional inorganic and organic materials.

Confidence brings teenagers’ aspirations to life

One hundred local teenagers received support in studying for their GCSE in Health & Social Care at a conference on campus this month.

The programme started with a campus tour, followed by a ‘What’s my Line?’ quiz with healthcare professionals. Lunch was a healthy buffet in Mandela Hall, where national and voluntary agencies set up a ‘market place’ of information stands. The afternoon was filled with a choice of 12 workshops on topics ranging from social work to midwifery.

The conference was organized by Sara McKeman and Lynda Whitty-Eastwood, who work with selected schools and colleges in East Sussex to encourage able students in years 9 and 10 to consider higher education.

Gifted pupils reach for the Moon

Gifted and talented pupils from local schools have been extending their scientific experiences with a series of workshops on campus.

The scheme was set up by David Daniels, head of physics at Hove Park School, in conjunction with the School of Science and Technology.

One of the workshops starts with scientist Dr Jonathan Hare introducing pupils to the Moon’s phases, eclipses and other aspects of our nearest astronomical neighbour. The pupils then go on to make their own Moon clock electronic circuit, which uses 12 LED lights to clock the phase of the Moon.

Next year David and Jonathan will be pushing the Moon project to the limit at Hove Park by trying to connect the school to another on the other side of the world, using a radio signal bounced from the Moon. This will involve building gigantic home-made wire antennae at the schools.

Jonathan is also working with Richard Inskip (Multimedia Development Co-ordinator) and Professor Sir Harry Kroto and Gill Watson at the Vega Science Trust on a project that will link schools to this and other workshops via video conferencing over the web.

Using computers is child’s play

Researchers from the University’s Interact lab took their innovative technology all the way to the west country during the school half-term holiday.

Eric Harris and his colleagues were at Newlyn art gallery in Cornwall to give children an opportunity to program and interact with computers without having to touch a keyboard.

The research team are exploring the use of combined physical and digital environments to extend forms of interaction, play and learning.

Their interactive skipping installation uses a mat with pressure sensors that pick up how fast the children are skipping.
CDEC broadens horizons with new director

"I'm really pleased to be joining CDEC," says Linda Buckham, new director of the Career Development and Employment Centre (CDEC). "What CDEC does, other universities are following. CDEC are real trendsetters, just like Sussex students."

Although CDEC is all new to Linda, campus isn't. Twenty-eight years ago one of her first jobs was "a very lowly clerical post in MOLS (the former School of Molecular Sciences)." Since then Linda has been involved in higher education and careers services in universities as diverse as Brighton and Oxford. She comes to Sussex fresh from Portsmouth University, where she has been running the careers service for the last four and a half years.

Linda intends to spend the next few months finding about Sussex and the way things work. But already she knows of areas where CDEC should be concentrating: "Sussex's strategic direction to be a top-12 university; a focus on careers for postgraduates; linking with regional, national and international employers to create lots of jobs and work experience for Sussex students and graduates; and piloting careers education in the curriculum resulting from the Science Curriculum Review Group proposals."

Getting more students into "graduate-type employment" straight after graduation will certainly help to push Sussex up the league tables. But the popular notion of the Sussex graduate is of someone who spends their first year away from campus either travelling or attempting to become a Brighton DJ or budding author.

While these are clearly not "graduate-type jobs, such graduates often end up in the same careers as others, but perhaps with a broader outlook. So should we be aiming to stop this graduate 'gap year'? "I recognise league tables for their shallowness and lack of rigour," responds Linda. "But league tables are a tool of measurement and we have to engage with them."

Linda is also keen to move away from a view that someone's career should follow a straight line from his or her degree. Instead she believes more in 'career narratives', which involve a more holistic approach to the individual and the role that work plays in their lives. Linda cites as an example famous Sussex alumni such as Jane Root, who studied international relations but now runs the global Discovery television network.

"The interesting thing," comments Linda, "is that 45% of students don't know what they want to do when they leave university. But there's no excuse for Sussex students because CDEC have masses of opportunities which can help them."

One of the Linda's first goals for herself is to broaden her horizon beyond Portsmouth. Still living by the Solent, she is keen to get to Brighton and experience the arts and music here: "I love Brighton because of its tolerance of diversity and creativity in the arts and music. It's wonderful."

36 hours, 15 films

The University has teamed up with the Gardner Arts Centre to hunt out raw talent and find budding student film makers. The challenge for 15 teams of Sussex students is to script, shoot and edit a short film in just 36 hours.

This movie production bonanza will take place over one weekend, starting at Bam on Saturday 27 November and culminating a day and half later with a free movie showing on the Gardner Arts Centre big screen.

At an initial briefing session, each team of three to five students will be assigned a random prop and a location. They will then have just 36 hours to complete a five-minute digital video (DV) film on the theme of 'the 21st-century city'.

Editing suites will be open to contestants throughout the film rush, and technical support will be available to them all day Sunday in the Media Services Unit (MSU).

The competition will culminate at 8pm on Sunday 28 November, when the 15 completed films will be screened at the Gardner Arts Centre cinema. Two £100 prizes will be presented on the night, one for the audience's favourite film and the other awarded by a judging panel.

The judges will give equal weight to the story/idea and production values/technical quality aspects. Secondary judging considerations will include imaginative use of prop and location given, the 21st C city as a theme and the film-makers' consideration of genre and audience.

The competition is part of CINECITY, the film festival that is running across Brighton from today (19 November) to 5 December. The Centre for Continuing Education (CCE) is taking part in the festival with a five-week course on 'representations of the urban' in film.

GradFair & LawFair

The Career Development and Employment Centre (CDEC) organised two successful recruitment fairs this month.

More than 850 students attended Mandela Hall on 3 November to speak to 45 graduate and legal employers about opportunities after graduation. Gradfair exhibitors included American Express, who were promoting their funded IT MSc at Sussex; local engineering firms, Ewan and Eurothems; Pricewaterhouse Coopers; and Brighton games company, Babel Media.

The LawFair attracted the London law firms Allen & Overy and Ashurst and several Sussex firms – one of which, Mayo & Perkins, had brought along a new trainee, a 2003 Sussex graduate who was recruited at the Sussex Law Fair last year. Representatives from the Government Legal Service and Crown Prosecution also attended.
Forty years of a great treasure house

As Dennis Cox muses in the early 1960s on the role of a university library, the grade II* listed building we know today was still in the planning stages. As a temporary measure the Library was housed half in Stanner House and half in Failler House - in fact, where Failler Bar is now.

Forty years ago, the Library moved into the building it still occupies. Like most Sussex campus buildings of its period, the Library was designed by architect Sir Basil Spence. In fact, he went as far as to design the furniture - a not altogether successful venture: "The arms of the chairs were too big to slide under the table," recalls Adrian Peasgood, who joined Sussex as an Assistant Librarian in 1962.

After the day drew near for the official opening by Queen Elizabeth II on 13 November 1964, everyone was busily stocking the shelves of the enormous new building. However, says Adrian, it did look a bit sparse: "Someone in management came over a week before the Queen's visit and said, 'This won't do! This has to look like a library!'

For a more comprehensive account of our media coverage, see Sussex in the News: www.sussex.ac.uk/pressandcomms/1-4.html.
What about the future?

An anniversary is always a good time to look forward to the future as well as backwards to the past. As the Library building celebrates its first 40 years, Librarian Deborah Shorey has been reflecting on progress against its strategic plan, which covers the next three years. During that time the Library hopes to adjust its evening and weekend opening hours, increase self-service borrowing facilities and provide more electronic-only information.

"There is always terrific pressure to open for longer," says Deborah. "But I don’t believe 24/7 opening would be a good option for Sussex, because we’re a campus university with a relatively small captive audience. We’re aiming for opening hours tailored to our users’ needs," i.e. ones that make most appropriate use of the Library’s staff resources.

Self-service borrowing is also set to be extended. Although the machines that make this possible are expensive to buy, they save queuing and free up Library staff to do more useful things, such as dealing with complicated enquiries. So look out for more machines in the future – and don’t forget you can now return your books in the same way.

Technology offers the way forward in a number of other areas. For example, periodicals will increasingly become available online, rather than in hard copy. So it won’t matter as much if the Library is physically open or not. "We don’t see the Library as only the building," points out Deborah.

In similar vein, the Library has carried out a couple of pilot projects to digitise course packs (which involves obtaining copyright clearance to make course materials available to students electronically), but cannot afford to do more of this at present.

And one project that won’t be going ahead until money becomes available is a much-needed redesign of the Library’s ground floor, whose current layout is confusing for users.

It is part of the Library’s strategy, however, to improve the availability of books on course reading lists. To achieve this, subject librarians are working closely with academic departments to ensure that Library staff receive reading lists promptly to make the books available to students in good time.

But with research high on the University’s list of strategic priorities, the emphasis of the Library’s own strategy may shift away from students. "The Library has in the past been very good at supporting undergraduate learning," says Deborah, "but perhaps less so where researchers are concerned."

So she is looking at how the subject librarians spend their time, to make sure that appropriate support is given to academic researchers as well. "There are all sorts of ways we can help," she says, "but we need to know what researchers really need."

In a climate of financial restraint, the message for all Library users seems to be: "Talk to us." It is only if students and staff articulate their needs that the Library strategy can effectively direct its limited resources to priority areas.

Musing on the Library

We asked Library users, past and present, to tell us what most sticks in their mind when they think about this heart of academia at Sussex. What do they get up to? What are their gripes? And does anything special happen to them along its hallowed corridors?

"If I need to find my friends I can guarantee they’ll be at the Library. Usually in the Boothle, computer room or on the steps – but never actually sitting at a desk working."

"Looking for a book in the Library is like searching through an enormous mound of books, where the one book you want can never be found. Today I looked up six books on the catalogue and only one was in the right place."

"I carefully choose where I sit so it’s near a radiator in order to keep warm. Unfortunately I then often accidentally fall asleep."

"I always have this great temptation to speak to people whilst in a Silence Zone."

"I really like the Boothle. You can sit with a drink and work."

"The toilet graffiti is always really funny."

"As soon as you walk through the door your whole personality turns into a raging psychopath. It’s like all of the essay stresses of everyone else in the Library descends on you and takes you over."

"Friends of mine thong-spot in the Library. They watch girls bending over and have a competition to see how many things they can count."

"When I was a first year, me and a couple of friends were living in Kent House. We were telling a friend of ours, a mature student, how we knew we weren’t going to get any Valentine’s cards that year. However, the next day we separately went to our pigeonholes and all found we had these heart-shaped cards with a secret code to decipher. The letters and numbers led us to the Library catalogue, which then led us to the bookshelves. I looked around and every book the codes led to had the word ‘love’ in some way in the title. All three of us then bumped into each other in the Library, searching for these books! Some more clues led us back to Kent House, where we all found pink fluorescent Valentine’s cards on our doors. We went to our friend – the mature student – and said ‘you’ll never guess!’ and he smiled and revealed that he’d done it all."

"When I was a student I dared my boyfriend that he couldn’t do anything really naughty in the Library. So he saw it as a challenge and we did something very rude in the remotest, dustiest corner we could find – Italian literature, I think."

GO FIGURE↓

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The Library now</th>
<th>2002/03</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Staff and students registered at Library</td>
<td>14,082</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual visits</td>
<td>829,731</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Books added during the year</td>
<td>13,132</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opening hours per week</td>
<td>76.5 hrs*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library staff</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library expenditure</td>
<td>£3,720,706</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Places to sit</td>
<td>1,186</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computers</td>
<td>120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total space in Library</td>
<td>13,263m²</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Some numbers, measurements and stats to help you get your head round the Library.

Comparing now with 40 years ago

| No. of books in Library | 787,971 | 125,000 |
| Items borrowed each year | 616,368 | 87,260 |

* Term time hours 2004
Obituaries

Joan Astill (1938–2004)

Joan Astill became unwell during the summer and died on 8 November, barely a month into the retirement for which she had made so many plans, including completion of the part-time MA in Creative Writing she began last year.

Joan came to Sussex in 1985 to read Sociology, and after graduating in 1988 held a number of University posts, most recently as Operations and Resources Officer in the new School of Humanities.

For much of her time at Sussex, however, she was an exemplary and highly regarded PA to a succession of deans in the former School of English and American Studies. They depended on her impeccable organisational skills (at least I did) and also reaped the benefit of her knowledge of the University and its ways, her foresight and ability to anticipate problems, and her shrewd and tactful advice.

Her work brought her into contact with many sectors of University life and she was admired and trusted for her many excellent qualities: she was definite but sympathetic, clear-minded but tolerant (though never to a fault). Her good humour never left her and she treated everyone with kindness, even when her workload was at its heaviest. She was always ready, as well, with support and encouragement for younger colleagues, and generous with recognition of their professional achievements.

Professor Andrew Crozier, Dean of English and American Studies 1996–2003


Drew Gartland-Jones, Lecturer in Computer Music in the Informatics department, died peacefully on Friday 5 November following a sudden stroke two days earlier.

He almost single-handedly set up the pioneering new Music Informatics degree, a joint venture between the departments of Music and Informatics, and was a leading light in the computational modelling of creativity, especially with reference to musical composition.

A man of enormous energy and vision, his association with Sussex was all too brief. Just three years ago, after a long period of combining a career as a composer and installation artist with senior positions in the software industry, he arrived to do a DPhil on the application of adaptive computing techniques to algorithmic composition and generative music.

He rapidly decided Sussex was his home and played a leading role in persuading the University that a new interdisciplinary degree crossing the arts science boundary was not just a good idea but a necessity. Naturally he applied for the job to set up the programme.

The pro-vice-chancellor on the appointments panel summed up the feelings of the other members by declaring Drew the most impressive applicant for a lectureship he had ever come across. He became a member of faculty in September 2003.

Using his considerable contacts in the creative arts, Drew was enormously influential in catalysing a range of Sussex-based collaborations between scientists and artists. He recently set up the Creative Systems Lab in Informatics to develop projects that lie at the intersections of the arts, science and technology. He was also co-founder of blip, a highly successful Brighton-based monthly forum that showcases work at the art/science boundary.

We have lost a wonderful colleague and friend, a man full of ideas and infectious enthusiasm, a man who had so much more to give. But he has left us a great legacy that we must allow to flourish.

Professor Phil Husbands, Informatics

Jo Grigg of the Partnership Office adds:

Drew also worked as academic link tutor with one of the University’s partner colleges, the Brighton Institute of Modern Music (BIMM). His generous and energetic support of this young college helped both BIMM and the Partnership Office enormously, and his positive contribution will be greatly missed.

FIRST CLASS

Dr Pier Stefano Corasaniti, who finished his doctorate in September 2003, has won this year’s £500 Ogden prize, awarded by Durham University for the best thesis in cosmology. His research, supervised by Professor Ed Copeland, was on phenomenological aspects of ‘dark energy’, which causes the Universe to expand more rapidly than previously thought. This is the second victory for a Sussex research student in the two-year history of the prize: the first winner was Dr Sam Leach, supervised by Professor Andrew Liddle.

Q-Soc, the University’s Physics & Astronomy Society, has won the ‘Most Improved Physics Society’ award for 2004 from Nexus, the student wing of the Institute of Physics. The competition was open to all physics and astronomy societies at universities in the UK and Ireland. The prize is £100 cash.

The UK Development Studies Association presented an award for lifetime achievement to 94-year-old Professor Sir Hans Singer (a former president of the organisation) at its annual conference on 6 November. Sir Hans is Emeritus Professor of the University of Sussex and Honorary Fellow of the Institute of Development Studies (IDS). The award was made for his contributions over 70 years to the theory and practice of international development. Before joining IDS in 1969, Sir Hans held a variety of posts in the United Nations (UN). He was closely involved in building the post-war global financial institutional framework.

Molecular Genetics student Claire Strain has won a prize from the Society for General Microbiology for an outstanding piece of undergraduate coursework, which involved the analysis of data from both laboratory and bioinformatics classes. Claire is pictured receiving the award at the Novartis Laboratories in Horsham, where she is currently spending her sandwich year.

A graduate of the University’s Diploma in Dramatic Writing won her way through to the final of a national writing competition this month. Carolyn Thomas was one of six hopefuls featured in the BBC Three TV programme ‘End of Story’ on 7 November. The thousands of entrants were asked to finish a short story started off by Irish author Marian Keyes.

All articles are also featured on the internet at www.sussex.ac.uk/press_office/bulletin
Should leaves be cleared?

I gather from a fascinating nature tour of campus provided by Dr Martyn Stenning that the latest environmentally sound approach to managing woods is to leave fallen trees, branches and so on, thus creating a more diverse natural habitat.

As I write this, staff with leaf blowers are in action on campus. I'm all for clear and safe pavements, but what would happen if we left all the leaf fall on the grass untouched? Are the leafy trees and green grass of Sussex in fact an unnatural, man-made environment? Say it ain't so.

Rob Read, Communications

Andrew Jupp, Head of Facilities Management, replies:

Trees that are felled in the campus woodland areas are normally left to provide a micro environment for plants and animals. A recent example of this is in the woodland to the south of the Freeman Centre, where a fully mature Beech tree snapped at the base during the September storms. The main trunk was left on site to create a natural habitat pile.

Since last year we have left in place fallen leaves in the woodland areas along the Southern Ring Road. This area encompasses a woodland walk, which forms part of a local initiative to improve the quality of the environment and conserve what is a natural area.

This process carries the full support of Dr Martyn Stenning, who has also agreed that leaf clearance from grass areas is a good idea.

If leaves that fell on grass areas were left they would naturally be blown across the site onto the paths and steps around buildings, causing safety problems. In addition, people walk across grass areas where fallen leaves, if left, would be of concern.

Cleared leaves are taken to our grounds compound for recycling on the compost heap, for future use around campus.

Coming soon … Freedom of Information

Did you know that any information that the University holds, including your emails, memos and letters, could potentially be released to the public as part of an information request under new legislation?

The Freedom of Information (FOI) Act, which comes into full effect on 1 January, aims to improve openness and accountability in public life. It will give everyone the right of access to information held by public authorities, including universities.

The overarching principle is that all information held by the University is accessible upon written request, unless one of the exemptions in the FOI Act applies. The Act applies to all written requests for information.

Experience in other countries that already have similar legislation shows that, over time, the Act is likely to lead to more requests for information, including some that are contentious.

As required by the Act, the University has already produced a Publication Scheme detailing the information that it routinely makes available. See www.sussex.ac.uk/central/ps/.

FOI co-ordinators are being appointed in schools and Administration units. Together with the Records and Information Manager (Secretariat), they will support colleagues who are unsure about handling requests for information.

More information about the Freedom of Information Act will be distributed with the 3 December issue of the Bulletin.

Meanwhile, you are encouraged to book a place on one of the FOI awareness raising sessions. Visit the University FOI web pages at www.sussex.ac.uk/foi to find out more.

A walk on the wild side

Readers familiar with the more peripheral parts of campus may have discovered that a new habitat has appeared over the summer. We now have a dew pond. Dew ponds are, of course, a traditional feature of the South Downs that provided a source of water for both sheep and cattle on the otherwise waterless chalk uplands.

Wildlife enthusiasts, such as Professor Trevor Beebee and Dr Martyn Stenning of Life Sciences, have long campaigned for a pond on campus. The opportunity came when the planning consent for the new Medical School building carried a number of environmental mitigation conditions, including the requirement for a pond.

The Sussex Downs Conservation Board have a lot of experience in the restoration and management of dew ponds and Mark Hayward, the Stammer Park ranger, agreed to help choose the site, which is towards the top of the slope to the west of the Gardner Centre, and advise on the technical design.

The pond should add some interesting variety to the campus wildlife and we shall be keeping an eye on this and will report on developments. Trevor has initiated the process by introducing some plants from a neighbouring dew pond, including Water Starwort, Callicritha, and Water Crowfoot, Ranunculus. Some stonewort, Chara, has also found its way there, whether assisted or not we don’t know. We will also be returning to the question of the construction and water source of traditional dew ponds.

An old name for autumn, ‘fall of leaf’, is rarely remembered outside the USA. The dead leaves carpeting campus provide rich opportunities for some animals, but pose problems to others.

Poking among fallen leaves usually reveals small invertebrates feeding on the decaying material. Many are springtails: tiny, wingless relatives of insects that can leap into the air propelled by a Y-shaped ‘spring’ under their abdomen.

These minute inhabitants of leaf litter attract predators, including shrews. Not only can these tiny mammals feast upon the temporary bonanza of prey, but they also hide their frenzied activity from predators by foraging beneath the carpet of leaves. We recently watched Common Shrews and Pygmy Shrews doing this on the lawn at the top of Boiler House Hill, an area that is usually too bare for them to visit.

Common Shrews always remind us of luxury cars with a smart paint job: their dark back is separated from the pale belly by a neat brownish line. By contrast, Pygmy Shrews resemble bad re-sprays: the boundary is incredibly fuzzy.

Few birds can feed on the invertebrates in leaf litter: unlike the Blackbird, most species – even the closely related Song Thrush – rarely move the leaves using their beak or feet. Leaf litter is thus a curse; they cannot find the prey within, and it stops them reaching the soil below. Watch them cheer the grounds-maintenance staff clearing leaves from campus lawns!

The new dew pond near the Gardner Arts Centre should add some interesting variety to the campus wildlife.
Academic events

MON 25 OCT
1pm Colloquium: Emma Hayo, Thomas, title to be announced. Pevi 110.
5pm E-Learning conference: Diana Laufier (Open and Distance Studies). Arts D640.

TUE 26 OCT
12.30pm Life History seminar: Krista Woodrow, Women and drink in mass-observation, Library Meeting Room.

MON 22 NOV
4pm Seminar: Timothy Roscoe, PlanetLab design principles and experiences. Pevi 114.
5pm Seminar: Tony Gallagher, Education in divided societies: Lessons from Northern Ireland. Arts D640.

TUE 23 NOV
1pm IDS seminar: Mick Moore, Does natural resource wealth damage governance? IDS 221.
4.15pm Anthropology seminar: Peter Wade (Manchester), Race, ethnicity and nation in Europe. Arts D510.

THU 25 NOV
4.30pm German-Jewish Studies seminar: Bernard Fox, Towards an understanding of German-Jewish culture. Arts B127.

WED 24 NOV
11am Teaching and Learning conference: Conference Centre, Bramber House. 1pm IDS seminar: Amelia Santos-Paulino (IDS), Aid and trade sustainability under liberalisation in least developed countries. IDS 221.
2.15pm SPRU-CENTRIM seminar: Flis Hennwood, (Brighton), The challenge of successful implementation of IT in the NHS. Freeman Centre G24/G25.

MON 29 NOV
1pm Colloquium: Ivan Kirsch (Plymouth), Hypnosis: A social-cognitive perspective. Pevi 113.
3pm Seminar: Jeppe Strandsberg (Sussex), The cartographic construction of territorial space. Arts C233.
4pm Research on Languages and Linguistics at Sussex seminar: John Sung (Sussex), Structure of hype: A case study of RNA. Arts D301.
4pm Seminar: Ben Varnce (Sussex), Quantum computing. Pevi 114.
5pm Open seminar: Markel Dunne (Sussex) and Fiona Leach (Sussex), Inside out: Theorising gender and schooling in Botswana and Ghana. Arts D640.

TUE 30 NOV
4.15pm Anthropology seminar: Nigel Eltis (Sussex), Inverting "International Community" in post-genocide Rwanda. Arts D510.

6.30pm Professorial lecture: Michael Ramsey (Sussex), Sampling the environment. BSMS lecture theatre.

WED 1 DEC
1pm IDS seminar: Andrea Cornwall (IDS), Recontextualising feminisms in development. IDS 221.
4pm Migration seminar: Martin Ruhs (Oxford), The ethics of Labour migration policy. Arts C233.
4.30pm History of Art seminar: Philippa Woodcock (Queen Mary, London), The French governors of Milan, 1499-1522. Arts A103.

THU 2 DEC
4pm Colloquium: Charles Antaki (Loughborough), Conversation analysis of psychotherapy. Arts D640.
5pm Development lecture: Trevor Manuel (Minister of Finance, South Africa), Africa's economic renaissance. BSMS lecture theatre.

FRI 3 DEC
2.15pm SPRU-CENTRIM seminar: Jim Steer (Strategic Rail Authority), Neither government nor industry. The experience of the SRA. Freeman Centre G24/G25.

SAT 4 DEC
10am CCE lecture: Dorothy Sheridan (Sussex) and Alistair Thomson (Sussex), Reflections on life history research today.

Small ads

For sale: Hammond XB2 £400. Leslie 145, £350. Kong Toneworks G4 Leslie simulator: £125. E.J.hulitson@sussex.ac.uk, ext. 7104.

Wanted: Au pair position with family in Bilton or Hove for Hungarian woman (25). E.3ch36@sussex.ac.uk.

For sale: Large silk bomber-style jacket, kingfisher/real colour: £5. Brown angloispeye: £2. Black leather A4 portfolio: £3. Album, pink satin cover, holds 120 6x4" photos: £3. E.G.woodwin@sussex.ac.uk.

To let: House in Preston Park station. Owner wishes to retain small room for storage and occasional access. £600 pcm. T. Kate on 07799 111689.

Wanted: Old Yellow Pages phone books for recycling. Bring to rm 340 Sussex House (Student Systems) or E.M. carter@sussex.ac.uk for collection.

For sale: Rover 620 SDLi turbo diesel. P reg. (1997). FSH, recent MoT + service, 7 mths tax. £1,100. E.3ch664, E.a.l.baroni@sussex.ac.uk.

For sale: Citroen Xantia LX 5-dr hatchback, 1994, 78k miles, new MoT. £750 ono. E.3ch696@sussex.ac.uk.

For sale: Honda Jazz SE, 1.4 litre, 2 yrs old, 20k miles. 50mpg, ABS, twin air bags, air con., electric front/rear windows, central locking, £650. E.todt@sussex.ac.uk, ext. 8434.

Arts events

PERFORMANCE

Wed 24 - Sun 27 Nov 7.30pm Sussex University Drama Society (SUDS) - Macbeth A clear cut, exciting and easy-to-understand production of Shakespeare's tragedy. GAC.

FILM

Sun 21 Nov 6pm Wem Gehörd die Welt? (To Whom Does the World Belong?) (PG). GAC.
6pm Die Ehe der Maria Braun (The Marriage of Maria Braun) (PG). GAC.
Sun 28 Nov 8pm 36 Hour Film Rush Screening of films by Sussex students who have taken up the challenge to make a film in 36 hours. GAC.
TUE 30 Nov 8pm Father & Son (PG). GAC.

EXHIBITIONS

Until Fri 26 Nov Mon - Sat 10am - 6pm Trish Morrissey: New Works Photographs inspired by family photos albums and family relationships. GAC.
In this issue of the Sussex IP newsletter we introduce a new member of staff, report on our successful workshops and look at opportunities for funding.

New staff member

We welcome new Commercialisation Executive, Dr. James Walsh, who joined us on 18 October.

James will work as part of the Biotechnology Exploitation Platform of the Universities of Surrey and Sussex, where he will actively audit the School of Life Sciences intellectual property portfolio. Working closely with the University of Surrey, his job is to identify potential commercial partners for University intellectual property rights and to examine the scope for linking complimentary bioscience at the two Universities.

Prior to joining Sussex IP, he was Technology Commercialisation Manager at Brunel University, West London.

James obtained a BSc in Microbiology and Genetics from the National University of Ireland and a PhD in Genetics from Imperial College, London. His research interests were in the area of inherited genetic disorders and he has a number of high profile publications in the fields of sensory dysfunction and mammalian neurogenesis. He has also a Masters Degree in Intellectual Property Management from Queen Mary, University of London.

Follow the funding

Last month saw our first intellectual property workshops for Life Sciences and Science and Technology staff. Held jointly with IP Pragmatics, these sessions covered all aspects of IP, from basic definitions through the intricacies of funding body policies to implementing best practice.

Below Mike Shaw reports on one of the sessions and highlights the BBSRC’s Follow on Fund.

Last year the University of Sussex received approximately £1.5 million from the BBSRC, the Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council, to support our research. In recognition of their continued support Dr. Donald Mair, Head of the Business and Innovation Unit, was invited to give the keynote speech at the IP workshop organised for the School of Life Sciences on the 21 October.

Dr. Mair described how the BBSRC delegates IP management to the universities they fund and that they make no claim on or impose any preconditions upon IP that may arise. In return, however: “The BBSRC needs to be assured that universities have an IP exploitation mechanism in place”.

In this respect he remarked that: “the workshop and the resources of Sussex IP are a clear indication of Sussex’s capability to manage and exploit IP arising from BBSRC funded research”.

Particular attention was paid in Donald’s talk to the difficulty in taking early stage IP opportunities forward in a commercialisation process because of the need for further funds to help improve an IP position, to gain market information for a new product or identify potential licensee or opportunities for joint ventures.

He went on to describe the BBSRC’s Follow on Fund, designed to enable scientists to advance ideas with commercial potential to a stage where commercial opportunities can be secured. These grants are typically in the range of £25 to £60K and are open to all existing BBSRC grant holders. A call will go out in November and the BBSRC encourages staff who are interested to talk with Sussex IP and develop a proposal for submission.

Enquiries from all those interested in applying should be made to either Sussex IP (H.Kaptein@sussex.ac.uk or J.Walsh@sussex.ac.uk) or direct to the BBSRC (business.unit@bbsrc.ac.uk).

If you would like us to run a session for your group or would simply like more information on IP please call us on x3000.
Creative investor

What do a micro-pump for administering insulin, a showcase for jewellery manufacturers and a revolutionary method for re-growing teeth have in common?

They've all been funded by NESTA, the National Endowment for Science, Technology and the Arts.

Set up by Act of Parliament in 1998, NESTA uses the interest on a National Lottery endowment to pioneer ways of supporting and promoting talent, innovation and creativity. Investing in a diverse range of people, from scientists and inventors to filmmakers and teachers, NESTA has already made more than 500 awards nationwide. They aim to give individuals the time, space, money and support to push at the boundaries of knowledge and practice.

Their unique approach applies to both the kinds of projects they fund and the way they fund them. This is reflected in their award programmes which all invite or commission projects in different ways while keeping the emphasis on both creative and commercial value.

Previous University of Sussex award recipients have included Prof. Terry Clark, Dr. Jonathan Hare (above on the BBC’s Rough Science programme) and Prof. Sir Harry Kroto.

So if you have an inspired idea that needs funding, or would simply like to find out more about NESTA, call them on +44 (0)20 7645 9538 or visit their website: www.nesta.org.uk

University of Sussex wins bid to join Karolinska project

The Pan-European Network of Excellent Research Competence is a project led by the Karolinska Institutet, and will involve leading universities and cluster organisations in the Biosciences field.

Each partner on the project will develop one of the key themes, and the University of Sussex will be responsible for the theme of Joint International Marketing Strategy.

Regional Development Manager Sharon Phillips, and SEEDA Officer Dr Tiziana Boyland, are delighted with their successful bid for the University to join the project:

“The Joint International Marketing Strategy will promote the Competence Network to other global regions and highlight the expertise and research skills within European Biotechnology” says Sharon.

The South East England Development Agency (SEEDA) is a co-financing partner for the Competence Project, and in the future will link its work on promoting HE expertise in the SEEDA region, to the internet-based competence platform developed by the project.

As Dr Boyland explains: “Where centres of excellence in Biotechnology exist already, either within HE organisations or specific cluster groups, the project will aim to link to these in order the spread the Network even further”.

The overall aim of the Competence Network will be to strengthen the collaboration between leading Bioregions in Europe, and create easier accessibility to research competences for scientists and industry. Our European partners include: the Karolinska Institutet, Leiden University, University of Oslo, MedCoast, ARTEB, and Semelweiss.

Peter Brooks, Director of the Research & Regional Development Division, Sharon and Tiziana visited Stockholm at the end of October to meet the European partners and kick-start the project, and a high profile Pan-European launch event is scheduled for July 2007, when the project is completed.

Sharon Phillips and Tiziana Boyland are based within the Regional Development Office, Ashdown House, University of Sussex, and can be contacted on 01273 877800.

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Every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of the information contained in this newsletter, but no responsibility is accepted for errors or omissions.