International Summer School celebrates 10th anniversary

For the next few weeks the University is home to 450 international students taking part in the International Summer School.

Now in its 10th year, the ISS hosts students from 33 countries; many come from the United States as part of a study-abroad programme for four or eight weeks and take one intensive class in each four-week period.

Although many participants come from partner institutions such as the University of California, Penn State University and Clemson University (in South Carolina), others come from more varied backgrounds, including mature students and professionals, and some students in their final year of high school.

This summer, students could choose from more than 60 classes in a range of subjects, from chemistry to English literature to international relations. The most popular class this summer is ‘Introductory Physics’, with nearly 150 students working their way between lectures, labs and workshops.

Other popular classes are ‘English Folklore’, with field trips to Stonehenge and the Long Man of Wilmington; ‘British Theatre’, which visits several productions in London and at the Chichester festival; and ‘Financial Markets and Institutions’, which includes a trip to the Bank of England in London.

Most students live on campus and take part in a social programme that includes walks on the Downs, karaoke at East Slope (a perennial favourite), weekly pub quizzes and organised outings into Brighton. A team of current Sussex students and finalists serve as student guides, introducing the visitors to life at Sussex and in Britain.

A number of optional trips are organised every year including Brussels, Cambridge, an ever-popular trip to Stonehenge and Bath, an overnight stay in Paris, and several trips to productions at the Globe Theatre.

The International Summer School has grown quickly in the last 10 years, after beginning with a handful of students in 1999.

"The financial and, much more importantly, educational success of the International Summer School has been very rewarding over the years," says Dr Penny Chaloner, director and founder of the programme.

"We are now beginning our plans to expand and diversify; continuing professional development, short courses for personal enrichment, and distance learning are all on our horizon. We look forward to welcoming an increasing range of global students to the Sussex summer experience."

Your views wanted on space for teaching and learning

Your feedback is needed to develop and improve a draft Teaching & Learning Accommodation Strategy.

The development of this strategy is timely now because of the stage the University has reached in its campus development. A range of refurbishment of current teaching space has been completed; the construction of a new teaching building next to the Swanborough residences will begin this autumn; and there are exciting opportunities in the proposed new academic building that will be the replacement for Arts D & E.

The draft strategy covers not only rooms for formal events such as lecture theatres and auditoria, seminar and tutorial rooms, PC clusters and teaching laboratories, but also more informally used space – individual study areas and group working areas.

It looks at both the physical environment (how space is organised, the quality of the environment and its accessibility) as well as the way the space functions (including the technology, the fittings and the way space is serviced and booked).

To read the draft strategy and access the feedback form, see www.sussex.ac.uk/vc/accommodationstrategy

The deadline for any comments is 5 September.

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Why musicians make us weep and computers don’t

Music can soothe the savage breast much better if played by musicians rather than clever computers, according to a new Sussex-led study.

Neuroscientists looked at the brain’s response to piano sonatas played either by a computer or a musician and found that, while the computerised music elicited an emotional response – particularly to unexpected chord changes – it was not as strong as listening to the same piece played by a professional pianist.

Senior Research Fellow Dr Stefan Koelsch, who carried out the study with colleagues at the Max Planck Institute for Human Cognitive and Brain Sciences in Leipzig, played excerpts from classical piano sonatas to 20 non-musicians and recorded electric brain responses and skin conductance responses (which vary with sweat production as a result of an emotional response).

Although the participants did not play instruments and considered themselves unmusical, their brains showed clear electric activity in response to musical changes (unexpected chords and changes in tonal key), which indicated that the brain was understanding the ‘musical grammar’. This response was enhanced, however, when the sonatas were played by musicians rather than a computer.

Stefan says: “It was interesting for us that the emotional reactions to the unexpected chords were stronger when played with musical expression. This shows us how musicians can enhance the emotional response to particular chords due to their performance, and it shows us how our brains react to the performance of other individuals.”

The study also revealed that the brain was more likely to look for musical meaning when the music was played by a pianist.

“This is similar to the response we see when the brain is responding to language and working out what the words mean,” says Stefan.

“Our results suggest that musicians actually tell us something when they play. The brain responses show that when a pianist plays a piece with emotional expression, the piece is actually perceived as meaningful by listeners, even if they have not received any formal musical training.”

‘Effects of unexpected chords and of performer’s expression on brain responses and electrodermal activity’ was published by PlosOne, the online open-access journal of the Public Library of Science, on 9 July.

Research looks to future of English Channel beaches

Researchers at Sussex studying coastal erosion between Brighton and Whitstable have estimated that some shingle beaches in the region may all but disappear within 50 years unless they are artificially replenished.

The discovery comes from the recently completed and EU-funded project ‘Beaches At Risk’ (BAR) (www.geog.sussex.ac.uk/BAR/).

The five-year study, led by Sussex geographer Dr Cherith Moses, has investigated beach sustainability on the eastern Channel coasts of East Sussex and Kent.

Research partners included East Sussex County Council, Kent Wildlife Trust, and French universities investigating the French side of the Channel.

Shingle beaches predominate along the eastern Channel but, unlike sand beaches, they are little understood yet vital in protecting low-lying land from storm, flood and wave damage.

Predicted sea-level rises, restricted supplies of fresh sediments because of cliff protection and unexpectedly large rates of pebble abrasion present potential difficulties for land protected by shingle beaches on the eastern Channel coasts.

Findings include:
- High water levels in the eastern Channel are increasing faster than low water levels, so over the next 50 years beaches will have to be both higher and wider to provide protection against erosion and flooding.
- Extreme sea levels, linked to global sea-level rise and local storm surges, are predicted to rise over the coming 50 years. Statistical tests indicate that the risk of flooding on the eastern Channel coast may be less than for areas to the west.
- Cliff-retreat rates between Brighton and Beachy Head in East Sussex have actually decreased over the last 130 years, but this means that less material is being added naturally to the beaches.
- Pebbles on beaches are not as durable as previously thought – the annual weight loss of shingle pebbles moved around in the wave zone is almost 2%, which is unexpectedly high and may reduce beach volumes significantly over the next 50 years.

Cherith says: “The results are directly informing decisions made by those who manage our local coastlines.” The BAR team is developing a computer-based ‘toolbox’ to help local authority planners and environmental agencies assess the risks associated with beach erosion and its management in vulnerable areas.

Cherith says: “Changes in beach volumes could have important economic, social and environmental consequences for the region. Shingle beaches erode continually and already almost half the beaches on the Sussex and Kent coastline have been artificially replenished to maintain adequate volumes for coastal protection. This may be a short-term fix that becomes less cost-effective over time.”

She adds: “There are, however, still many ‘unknowns’ when it comes to the management of pebble beaches, in particular how they respond to storms, so funding for further research is vital.”
Council approves strategic plan

Council, the University’s governing body, gave the green light to the draft strategic plan at its meeting on 4 July. The plan was welcomed as a positive statement of the University’s ambition over the next eight years.

The strategy, which has been developed throughout this academic year, sets out goals and strategies across research, teaching and learning, the student experience, and business and the community, and supports plans for human resources, finance and estates.

Council members, both external and internal, were keen to see the strategy cast in positive and forward-looking terms, and to ensure that in all areas the goals are as clear and ambitious as possible. Further work in particular will take place to sharpen up the goals in the section on business and community.

Council endorsed plans to produce a summary version of the plan, accessible in print and on the web, which will be developed over the summer, before full publication of the strategy for internal and external audiences in the autumn.

Annual operational plans will use the strategy as the framework for development.

£100m capital investment

Among the supporting plans approved by Council were plans for capital investment of £100m over the next four years.

This includes:
- a new teaching building next to the Swansborough residences
- a new academic building to replace Arts D and E
- new student residences at North Field
- investment for the restoration of the Gardner Centre
- infrastructure for better retail and catering in Bramber House
- redevelopment of the library space for improved teaching and learning.

Further detail on these proposals are available in the Council papers in Sussex Direct.

New schools

Council also signed off the new academic structures which had been recommended by Senate for 2009, creating 12–14 schools – with academic leadership reporting directly to the Vice-Chancellor’s Executive Group (VCEG).

The posts for heads of the new schools will be advertised internally and externally. The Vice-Chancellor, Professor Michael Farthing, said: “It is important that we treat all of these new positions in the same way, to recruit the best candidates through a fair and open appointment process.”

To begin the process and generate interest, a trailer ad will appear in the educational press in July, with the full recruitment process starting from September to reach out to academics after the summer break.

Project management office

Following Council’s sign-off, work is now underway on setting up project-management arrangements to support the establishment of the new schools for 2009. A full-time project manager is being appointed to support VCEG and the Programme Management Board, and to work with academic and Professional Services staff, in ensuring that work is well planned and co-ordinated.

Creating the best Professional Services

Now that plans for the new academic structure for 2009 have been through Council (last week) and Senate (in June), important work is under way to put in place those new structures and the right support for them.

I believe that we have an exciting opportunity to create the right professional support processes and structures for our new academic organisation. We can look collectively at what currently works well and ensure that this continues into the new organisation. We can also look at where improvements can be made, building on current best practice.

I hope that the new heads of school, like the senior executive team, will have high expectations about what we can do together to support the University’s academic plans and goals. As those heads are appointed during the coming year, they will be an important part of this design process.

In working with a dozen or so schools, rather than the current five, I am clear that we must not risk creating fragmented and disconnected services to the University. One important principle we will adopt is consistent standards of quality and focus in Professional Services delivery across all schools.

And I see all colleagues who provide support to the academic mission of the University – whether they are based in central teams, in service clusters or in schools and departments – as part of the “professional services” in their broadest sense, signalling the quality and high standards we all wish to achieve.

At the heart of the process for creating the new structures and processes will be proper project management of the programme of change. These arrangements were set out clearly in the paper presented to Senate and include a broad representative Programme Management Board, chaired by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor.

There will be a number of work strands to the project – covering all the major business and administrative processes across schools, and all the activities we need to undertake between now and summer 2009 in creating the new structures.

We have already started the baseline mapping of current staffing numbers and roles. It bears repeating that this process is not about reducing staff numbers, but about getting the organisation and support right across the Professional Services.

In the coming weeks we expect to be setting up the Programme Management Board and getting dates in diaries for its meetings during the year ahead; appointing the full-time Programme Management Office lead from within Sussex; and working with PricewaterhouseCoopers on workshops to identify the key work strands and the processes we need to map within them. Options and proposals for structures will follow from this mapping of processes.

Once those new structures are developed, a key principle will be to ensure we have a fair and open process for moving from current to new arrangements, in addition to ensuring that staff are supported through the change process.

Part of that support will be keeping staff informed and updated. I have already started a series of meetings with groups of staff in schools, providing an early opportunity to raise issues and ideas.

Finally, we must not lose sight of the fact that 2008-09 will be a transitional year as we maintain current structures and processes while building the new ones: throughout, we need to ensure that a ‘business as usual’ approach is taken and that we maintain a high-quality student and staff experience.
New book examines the mixed-up senses of synaesthesia

Do letters have colours? Does music have flavour? Can you see shapes when you think of numbers? For one in 20 people, the answer to one or more of these questions is “Yes!”

A new book by a Sussex psychologist sets out to explore and explain the phenomenon of linking separate sensations, known as synaesthesia. Dr Jamie Ward, the world’s leading expert in this field, is the author of The Frog Who Croaked Blue, a book that looks not just at the experience of synaesthetes, but poses questions about its usefulness, its purpose and its potential.

Jamie, who heads a research group at Sussex on synaesthesia, says that the traditional view that there are five senses—vision, hearing, touch, tastes and smell—is up for challenge.

“The basic senses can be broken down into several dimensions. For instance, in the ‘vision’ domain, some synaesthetes might experience colour, whereas others might experience shapes, and yet others might experience movements.”

Another difficulty with this formulation, he says, is that synaesthesia can be triggered by things that are not strictly sensory, such as numbers, letters, words and names.

“The number of potentially different forms of synaesthesia is likely to be very big indeed.”

The title of Jamie’s book is taken from a 1922 study of the youngest-known synaesthete, a three-year-old boy, Edgar Curtis, in whom noise produced colour. Other more famous synaesthetes include artists David Hockney and Wassily Kandinsky, and the philosopher Ludwig Wittgenstein.

Although research has continued for several decades, Jamie says there is still much not yet understood about the subject. There is no evidence that synaesthetes differ in their IQ level compared to the rest of the population, but it has been shown that they have a better memory for things in which their synaesthesia colours are involved. There is also some evidence that the brains of synaesthetes respond differently to stimuli.

“When certain synaesthetes hear spoken words then the parts of the brain normally dedicated to colour are used,” points out Jamie. “This suggests that parts of the brain that are normally used to process colour derived from vision are used instead to process colour derived from speech.”

It is also a possibility that we are all born as synaesthetes, but that most of us lose the ability at some stage in our development.

“We know that it can be hereditary—up to 40 per cent of synaesthetes know that a close family member has the same ability,” says Jamie. “But often synaesthetes don’t discuss it. They either don’t realise they have something that others don’t have, or they fear that others will be dismissive.”

If you are a synaesthete and are interested in helping Jamie’s research, see www.syn.sussex.ac.uk

Digital media companies come to campus

Up-and-coming digital companies from Brighton were on campus last month to meet potential new recruits.

Wired Sussex kicked off the Digital Media Event with an overview of the digital media sector and Al Digital continued with a talk on corporate social responsibility.

Club Penguin (Disney), one of the newest companies to locate their European headquarters in Brighton, came in search of French speakers to set up a new team.

NCSott, WPM Internet, Virtuales, Madgex and iCrossing also set up their stalls, ready to explain their business to students.

Most companies were actively recruiting and said they found the day useful and rewarding. NCSott saw it as “a chance to make local students aware of our existence in Brighton, and talk to people interested in the games industry.”

The event was organised by Jacqui Shepherd and Jocelyn Owen from the Career Development & Employment Centre (CDEC).

“With a digital media sector on the doorstep in Brighton and a high percentage of our students wanting to stay and work in the local area, it was an excellent idea to bring these two groups together,” commented Jacqui.
Technology brings education students together

Research students from across the globe are on campus for the fifth International Professional Doctorate (EdD) summer school.

The summer school marks the start of the EdD academic year and brings students and faculty together for intensive study for three to four weeks.

This year 20 new first-year doctoral students have joined colleagues in the second and third year of their doctorates. In addition, students from previous cohorts are participating via video links from locations including Canada, Holland and Namibia.

During the rest of the academic year, the students are supported at a distance through the innovative use of technology including email, Study Direct, and monthly chat room discussions between Sussex faculty and students in their home countries.

Audio broadcast of weekly seminars takes place throughout the academic year: most recently a video broadcast allowed students to participate in plenary discussion from their homes. "In the near future we hope to include communications by web video-telephone," says Dr Máiread Dunne, who convenes the programme.

The programme attracts many senior education professionals working in national ministries, NGOs and education and development organisations in a range of countries including Bangladesh, Canada, France, Ghana, Holland, Indonesia, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Kenya, Lebanon, Namibia, Nepal, Peru, Rwanda, Tajikistan, Turkey, Tanzania, UK and the USA.

The teaching team includes a wide range of faculty from the Centre for International Education and other parts of the School of Education.

Its success also depends on the support, collaboration and co-ordination of a number of units including the Media Services Unit (MSU), Academic Office, Housing Office, IT Services, Finance, Library, Student Systems and Student Accounts.

Sussex student takes play to Edinburgh

A Sussex student is appealing for funds to take a play to this year’s Edinburgh Fringe Festival.

Fiona Bradley, who has just finished the second year of her English degree, has co-written a drama with four former school friends from her home town of Oxford.

Fiona told the Oxford Mail: "The play is called 'The Passion of the Sorors' – and it is something we devised ourselves. 

"The play uses passages from the Bible and we play modern-day runs – things take a darker turn towards the end of the play."

"I have never been involved in the Edinburgh Fringe before and I am really looking forward to it."

The five women will be performing the play from 3 to 15 August and need about £1,500 to hire a venue for two weeks. If you would like to help fund their trip to Edinburgh, email Fiona at fb42@sussex.ac.uk

News in brief

Hotel competition winner

Antonia Drake, who has just completed a BSc in Multimedia & Digital Systems, can celebrate her graduation in style. She has won a night’s B&B for two at the new myhotel Brighton. Antonia went online at www.sussex.ac.uk/about/hotels to find out that the University of Sussex special rate is £95 for a standard room (£105 and £130 for more superior rooms).

Learn to dig at Barcombe

Jason Harrison, a doctoral student in linguistics, has won a free place on an archaeology summer school at Barcombe in a competition run by the Centre for Continuing Education (CCE). For details of courses, see www.sussex.ac.uk/ccs/archaeology

All are welcome at an open day at the Barcombe excavations on Saturday 2 August, from 10am to 4pm.

Get fit by email

Sussexsport has launched a new service offering staff and students access to an email-based fitness instructor. To make use of the GetFitAdvice initiative, send your exercise, fitness and training questions to GetFitAdvice@sussex.ac.uk and a personalised answer will be sent directly to your email inbox within seven days.

Martial arts on campus

A Shaolin Summer Camp at the Sportcentre from 15–25 July gives you the opportunity to learn Kung Fu and Chi Kung. For details, see www.shaolinsummercamp.co.uk

Sussex graduate contends by-election

Alumna Davena Rankin has been selected as the Conservative candidate in the forthcoming Parliamentary by-election for Glasgow East. She stood for the Tories in Glasgow Cathcart in the 2007 Scottish election. Ms Rankin, who now works at Glasgow Caledonian University, graduated from Sussex in 1994 with a BSc in Medicinal Chemistry.

All articles are also featured on the internet at www.sussex.ac.uk/press_office/bulletin
‘Retiring’ professor celebrated after 41 years at Sussex

A day of talks has been held in tribute to a senior professor who has officially retired after 41 years at Sussex.

Professor Paul Benjamin, who, as an expert in molluscan neurobiology, has dedicated his academic life to studying snails, was honoured in a special event on 25 June.

Almost all of the speakers were Paul’s former students who talked about their scientific achievements since leaving Sussex.

Professor Jonathan Bacon, Dean of the School of Life Sciences, opened the symposium in the BSMS lecture theatre. He said that Paul was a wonderful researcher and had inspired numerous students to follow a career in neuroscience.

He said: “By today’s standards, Paul’s appointment might have been judged as a risky one. 41 years later, and judging by the career Paul has had, I can say it has in fact been a hugely successful appointment. He has been an inspirational teacher and a wonderful friend and colleague.”

“He has been an inspirational teacher and a wonderful friend and colleague”

Paul joined Sussex in 1967 after completing his PhD at Durham University. He will continue with an ongoing research project until 2009 and teaching a course until 2010. After that he will carry on as an emeritus professor.

Jonathan added: “Paul hasn’t really retired and he never will. Like me, Paul has found it easy to come to Sussex, but much harder to leave.”

Two Senate members elected to Council

They will replace the outgoing members, Professor James Fairhead and Professor Fred Gray, on 1 August and continue until their terms end on 31 July 2011.

Pam is currently Director of the Centre for Continuing Education (CCE) and Andrew is a Lecturer in Philosophy.

They are two of four members elected by and from the academic staff members of Senate, joining Professor Chris Chatwin and Dr Alison Sinclair, who began their three-year terms last summer.

Sussex appoints new Director of ITS

lain Stinson, currently Director of Computing Services at the University of Liverpool, is to be the new Director of IT Services. Iain will take up his post at Sussex in October.

Iain is a member of the executive and treasurer of the Universities and Colleges Information Systems Association (the main organisation for IT service departments in UK higher education), having previously led its procurement and infrastructure groups.

He has served on the JISC network committee, was a member of the network development group, and is a member of the e-infrastructure subcommittee.

Iain is presently treasurer of the Russell Group IT directors group (RUGIT), a role from which he will step down when he takes up the position at Sussex.

Another key appointment in IT Services has also been made. Julia Darnell started on Monday (7 July) as Assistant Director (Programme Development Services), responsible for management information and corporate IT systems.

Julia has joined Sussex from Brighton & Hove City Council, where she was Head of Corporate Information Systems. She previously worked at Crawley Borough Council, East Sussex County Council, Ericsson UK and a range of other commercial organisations.
Law conference puts the case for new family values

The complexity of modern family life and the need for the law to keep pace with profound social change and inequality are the themes behind a groundbreaking new conference on campus this week.

The Gender, Family Responsibility and Legal Change conference (10–12 July) is one of the biggest of its kind ever in the UK, attracting more than 120 papers from academics and policy-makers worldwide, addressing pressing issues of family responsibility currently on the agenda for social, political and law reform.

Organised by the Sussex Law School, the conference is the first to explore issues of gender as it relates to family responsibility in law — areas that continue to present problems for the courts and law makers.

Conference organiser and Senior Lecturer in Law, Craig Lidd, says: "Families are changing and the law cannot ignore those changes. The government has just announced legislation to give women priority when applying for jobs — what does this have to do with family responsibilities?"

Family law has to respond to some of life's most difficult — and controversial — experiences. It also needs to evolve and adapt to new experiences involving, for example, youth crime and parental responsibility, immigration, medical advances such as infertility treatments, social change and transformed family structures.

However, Craig says: "Making changes to family law is notoriously difficult. Judges and law makers have — individually — very diverse understandings of the social and family responsibilities people have. Resolving them into the uniform patterns that a legal system needs is, therefore, almost impossible."

"At the moment there are a number of problems relating to the family that desperately need legal resolution. But it isn’t just family law that must change — we will also be considering changes in employment law, corporate law, criminal law and immigration law."

The conference is the launch event for the Sussex Law School’s new Research Centre for Responsibilities, Rights and the Law, which will foster research into responsibilities and rights in diverse subject areas ranging from child and family law to European law, and from international law to criminal justice and criminal law.

SciTech works with schools to encourage young scientists

A new initiative to help encourage, support and inspire the scientists and technologists of tomorrow will be launched by the School of Science and Technology (SciTech) on Wednesday (16 July).

An afternoon’s event will kick-start on ongoing collaboration with teachers in London and the south-east, with the aim of easing the transition from school to university of students studying science, technology, engineering and maths (STEM) subjects.

The ‘Ingenious’ event will consist of workshops and small-group discussions, looking at ways to help teachers encourage more young people to continue studying STEM courses.

Participants will pool knowledge and ideas, looking at issues such as changes in exam structure, student support and possible adjustments to university first year teaching.

There will also be talks and an opportunity to tour science and technology labs, workshops and facilities.

The event should be the catalyst for future collaborations, with the aim of creating an advisory group made up of University faculty, teachers and careers advisors.

Professor Benedict du Boulay, Dean of SciTech, said: "Ingenious will help provide a forum where we can explore how to make the student transition from school to university smoother."

"It will provide professional updating for science teachers in new areas of the A level curriculum, and it will help to establish long-lasting relationships between the University and key schools and colleges."

Ingenious is being hosted in association with the Specialist Schools and Academies Trust (SSAT).

More information, including a programme, is available at www.sussex.ac.uk/ingenious

A walk on the wild side

David Harper
Life Sciences

David Streeter
Life Sciences

High summer is the best time of year for watching insects in areas of long grass on campus.

Look out for Small Skippers' small, with their bodies a rapid, darting flight, weaving their way acrobatically among grass stems. When they settle, their forewings are held at an angle to their hind-wings, giving them a characteristic appearance. The males are especially frantically chasing after all insects that fly near them in their quest for sex. The females are much more sedate while they fly between clumps of grass, where they lay small batches of eggs on the leaf bases, especially those of Yorkshire-fog. The caterpillars hatch in August and almost immediately hibernate until spring, when they will gorge themselves on the growing grass.

There is an extremely similar species on campus: the Essex Skipper, named after the county where it was first discovered in Britain. It is best identified by looking at the undersides of the club-shaped tips of the antennae, which are glossy black as if dipped in ink; on a Small Skipper, they are orange-brown. This difference is not as hard to spot as it sounds: obligingly, both species often rest with their bodies pointing upwards at about 45 degrees. There are slight differences in their behaviour as well: Essex Skipper eggs do not hatch until spring, and they tend to be laid on the leaf bases of Cock's-foot.

Attraction: Male Small Skipper drinikng nectar to re-fuel before chasing females.

Both Yorkshire-fog and Cock's-foot are among our commonest grasses. Cock's-foot gets its name from the shape of the inflorescence that consists of four main branches that separate to resemble the shape of a bird's foot, each branch ending in a tight cluster of florets. The base of the plant is distinctly flattened, consisting of the tightly packed leaf bases, and it's these that provide the Essex Skipper's eggs with the protection that they need to survive the eight months from late summer, through the winter, to the following spring.

Yorkshire-fog is a different kind of grass altogether. The whole plant is softy downy all over. The base of the shoot often has purple stripes, which enable it to be easily identified, and students have long called it 'stripy pyjamas'!

Its real English name is more of a puzzle and a few years ago prompted a long correspondence in the pages of the Botanical Society of the British Isles' Bulletin. From a distance and when growing on masses the pale flowering shoots waving in the breeze do look a little like mist hanging over the fields.

However, it was the association with Yorkshire that proved the more controversial, some natives of that splendid county taking exception to the implied slur on their weather! We have definite views on this, having just returned from a field class in the Dales when it rained for five days out of six!
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