



## PAISLEY NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY

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### Newsletter November 2016

**Hello,**

It's that time of year again when the society gets together to celebrate the season. But we're ringing the changes this year with a talk instead of our usual games and quizzes, so get out your winter woollies and head down to the museum for the Christmas talk which will feature a whole host of feathered friends from across the pond and maybe even a Christmas card Robin, although most likely an American one.

Also if you're wondering to get your loved one for Christmas *The Flora of Renfrewshire* is being offered at a special Christmas rate (see below).

#### [2016/2017 Talks Programme](#)

#### [Paisley Museum](#)

[7.30pm](#)

**Thursday 1<sup>st</sup> December** **Strawberry Fields Forever: Birding in New York's Central Park**  
by Tom Byars

Covering 843 acres and two and a half miles long by half a mile wide, Central Park is an oasis for migrating birds travelling the east coast during spring and autumn. Central Park is considered one of the best birding spots in the United States, attracting birders from all over the world. More than 280 species have been recorded here in iconic bird-watching sites, such as the Ramble, Cherry Hill, Azalea Pond and Strawberry Fields.

**Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> January** **Entomological Adventures on Mingulay**  
by Jeanne Robinson, Curator of Entomology (The Hunterian,  
University of Glasgow)

Explore the uninhabited Hebridean island of Mingulay through the eyes of a naturalist. Find out more about the most extensive survey of its invertebrates since records began and what makes the place so special.

**Please note the January meeting is on the **second** Thursday in the month, not the first.**

**Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> February    **Blood, sweat and deer(s): using animal DNA evidence to aid wildlife crime investigation**  
by Dr Lucy Webster (Science and Advice for Scottish Agriculture)**

Crimes against wildlife cover a broad range of criminal activity, from illegal trade in endangered species to the cruel treatment of more common species, such as badgers.

As with human crime, forensic analysis of items recovered in trade or from crime scenes can provide investigators with the crucial evidence they require to solve cases and prosecute those responsible. The Wildlife DNA Forensic unit at Science and Advice for Scottish Agriculture was established in 2011 to analyse non-human DNA evidence recovered during wildlife crime investigations.

This presentation will outline techniques used in the unit, along with examples from real casework to illustrate the answers to investigative conundrums that can be found from fur and feathers....

**Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> March    **Scotland's Dinosaur Isle**  
by Dr Neil Clark, Curator of Palaeontology (The Hunterian, University of Glasgow)**

Fragments of fossil dinosaurs from Scotland are rare. The first dinosaur footprint was found in 1982 from the Middle Jurassic sediments of the Isle of Skye. Since then, many hundreds of footprints, some bones and teeth of dinosaurs of various sorts have been unearthed in Scotland, along with some remains of other reptiles such as plesiosaurs, ichthyosaurs, crocodiles, turtles, lizards, fish, sharks and a whole host of animal life.

Scotland is fast becoming a centre for Middle Jurassic research with the Isle of Skye producing new and exciting discoveries nearly every year.

Sadly, there are not enough diagnostic remains of the dinosaurs to name them, but an ichthyosaur has recently been given the first Gaelic name for a marine reptile: Dearmhara, and it is hoped that collaboration between amateur collectors and research scientists will continue to provide exciting new discoveries from Scotland's 'Dinosaur Isle'.

## **Subscriptions**

Please note that if you haven't already paid your subscriptions they are now due for 2016/17 and are as follows: **Ordinary £10, Family £14, Unwaged £4.**

Subscriptions can be paid at the meetings to our Treasurer, Anne Gray or by sending a cheque along with membership form (which can be downloaded from the website) to Paisley Natural History Society C/o Paisley Museum, High Street, Paisley, PA1 2BA.

[www.paisleynaturalhistorysociety.org.uk](http://www.paisleynaturalhistorysociety.org.uk)    [www.facebook.com/PaisleyNaturalHistorySociety](https://www.facebook.com/PaisleyNaturalHistorySociety)

*Nicola Macintyre*