



Wallace100 – Alfred Russel Wallace and his Legacy
23rd October 2013, Flett Theatre, Natural History Museum, London

9.00am – 9.30am: Registration and coffee

Session 1

9.30am - 9.40am: Introduction and welcome - Dr Andrew Polaszek, Head of Life Sciences Terrestrial Invertebrates Division, Natural History Museum

9.40am – 10.10am: The Wallace Correspondence Project – Dr George Beccaloni, Curator (Orthopteroidea & Wallace Collection), Life Sciences, Natural History Museum

The Wallace Correspondence Project seeks to locate, digitize, catalogue, transcribe and interpret all surviving letters to and from Alfred Russel Wallace. Additionally, letters from Wallace's contemporaries, like Darwin and Huxley, which make mention of him are also included, as too are a selection of other important manuscript items such as Wallace's notebooks. The project began in October 2010 and has already catalogued and digitized more than 95% of Wallace's known correspondence (c. 4700 letters). These are available on the Web via the project's Wallace Letters Online database. George will discuss what the project has achieved so far and what work still needs to be done in order to complete it.

10.10am – 10.40am: Sarawak 1854-56: Wallace's first venture in the Archipelago – Dr Gathorne Gathorne-Hardy, Earl of Cranbrook

Singapore is an island but, when Alfred Russel Wallace embarked at the end of October 1854 for Sarawak, he was heading for the first time to a true island of the great Malay Archipelago. His journeys in Sarawak will be illustrated by a contemporary map and illustrated by images of current scenes of his main collecting sites. His collections in Sarawak will be discussed and illustrated by surviving examples, mainly those found in the Natural History Museum.

10.40am -11.10am: Alfred Russel Wallace the Botanist – Dr Sandra Knapp, Head of Plants Division, Department of Life Sciences

Better known for his zoological collecting, plants played an important part in making Alfred Russel Wallace the great naturalist he was. From his beginnings identifying the flora of the British uplands to the ferns of Southeast Asia via the palms of the Amazon, botany had a big influence on Wallace's world view.

Morning tea: 11.10 am – 11.40am

Session 2

11.40 – 12.10: A.R. Wallace: Specimen collector (and naturalist) – Dr John van Wyhe, Senior Lecturer in the Departments of Biological Sciences and History and a Fellow of Tembusu College at the National University of Singapore.

The romantic tales about Wallace tend to be the most often repeated - such as the naturalist on a quest to solve the origin of species. It is important not to forget the historical Wallace, not only his accomplishments, but the range and function of his collections and the compelling factors that shaped his collecting career.

12.10 -12.40: "A never failing source of pleasure and occupation": Alfred Russel Wallace's beetle types at the Natural History Museum - Maxwell V L Barclay, Collections Manager, Coleoptera and Hymenoptera, Life Sciences, Natural History Museum.

Wallace and Darwin are both well known for their fondness for beetles, but it was Wallace who wrote an important taxonomic and faunistic beetle paper. His '*Catalogue of the Cetoniidae of the Malayan Archipelago*' discusses 181 species of colourful, charismatic flower chafers, with 70 species new to science. His specimens, including the types, were dispersed by sale, but a proportion have reached the collections of the Natural History Museum. These important specimens, their significance, and how they came to be here, will be discussed.

12.40 – 1.10: Wallace's Sarawak bird collection and the development of his ornithological knowledge – Dr Robert Prys-Jones, Collections Manager, Birds, Life Sciences, Natural History Museum.

Using his Sarawak bird collection as an example, Robert's talk aims to investigate the insights that can be gained into Wallace's developing Asian ornithological knowledge from his notebook specimen entries and bird specimen labels. Wallace's sojourn in Sarawak, between November 1854 and January 1856, came early in his Asian travels, the ornithological reference literature he carried with him was extremely limited and the area was still ornithologically very poorly known. Moreover, a very high proportion of the birds that he collected in Sarawak remain available for study, making this period particularly appropriate for such a comparative analysis.

1.10 – 1.30pm: Additional questions to the speakers and wrap-up - led by Dr Andrew Polaszek.

Afternoon options

Option 1 – The Library's Wallace collections – ALL FULLY BOOKED

A tour of the Museum Library's Rare Books Room, showcasing manuscripts, artwork, publications and insect specimens belonging to Alfred Russel Wallace. Tours at 1.30pm, 2.30pm, 3.30pm (45 minutes duration). Could those people booked on the 2.30pm and 3.30pm tours please meet in the Fleet Theatre foyer 15 minutes prior to their tour time. Those on the 1.30pm tour please assemble immediately after the talks are completed.

Option 2 – follow the Wallace Trail (no booking required, collect a Trail Map from Conference staff)

A chance to undertake the Museum's Wallace100 trail. Discover Wallace the man, his work and his scientific legacy. Pick up a trail map and trace Alfred Russel Wallace's historical journeys through the Amazon and Malay Archipelago. See specimens including birds of paradise, orang-utans, butterflies and a host of other stunning specimens from the world's most important collection of Wallace material. The journey begins in Central Hall, taking in eight locations within the Museum galleries.

About the speakers

Andrew Polaszek

Andrew is a Researcher in Entomology, and Head of the Terrestrial Invertebrates Division, at the Natural History Museum. He specializes in parasitoid wasps, especially *chalcidoids*, but also has an active interest in bees, ants, and other *Hymenoptera*. He has participated in several classical biological control programs with parasitoid wasps, including the successful introduction of two species into Trinidad against the citrus blackfly, a major pest. From 1990–1994 Andrew was Principal Investigator in the Department of Entomology at Wageningen Agricultural University (The Netherlands) studying cereal pests and their natural enemies in sub-Saharan Africa. In 2004 Andrew was appointed Executive Secretary of the International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature (ICZN) where he helped establish the ZooBank register of animal names and nomenclatural acts. He has authored more than 140 scientific publications, and has co-edited *Journal of Natural History* since 1995.

George Beccaloni

George is an entomologist/evolutionary biologist who is the curator of the Museum's collection of cockroaches and related insects and the Director of the *Wallace Correspondence Project*. George founded the Wallace Memorial Fund in 1999 and in 2002 he played a key role in helping the Museum acquire the world's largest and most important collection of Wallace's manuscripts, books and insect specimens from Wallace's descendants. George co-edited the book "*Natural Selection and Beyond: The Intellectual Legacy of Alfred Russel Wallace*" and he was the historical consultant for the recent highly acclaimed BBC series "Bill Bailey's Jungle Hero".

Lord Cranbrook

Gathorne Cranbrook's first post-graduate job was in Sarawak, as Technical Assistant at the Sarawak Museum (1956-58), thereby finding himself following Wallace's footsteps. The century interval had rather little impact on the environment, means of travel and social conditions in northwest Borneo, so that - even more than today - Wallace's *Malay Archipelago* was truly the best available guide to local conditions. In 1960-61, supported by an Indonesian post-doc fellowship, he was again following his hero's trail in Java, and finally, in 1969, ended up (like the natives of Aru) in a tree witnessing a lek of Birds of Paradise. He echoes Alfred Russel Wallace in that these experiences "constituted the central and controlling incident of my life". He is currently the International Adviser to the Wallace Conference in Kuching, 7 - 9th November 2013.

Sandra Knapp

Sandy is a specialist on the taxonomy of the nightshade family, *Solanaceae*, and has spent much time in the field in Central and South America collecting plants. Her particular focus of research is the taxonomy of *Solanum*, the genus that contains potatoes, tomatoes and eggplants. She has described more than 50 new species of plants, mostly in *Solanum* and from the Neotropics. She came to the Natural History Museum in 1992 to manage the international project *Flora Mesoamericana* - a synoptic inventory of the approximately 18,000 species of plants of southern Mexico and the isthmus of Central America. She is also the author of several popular books on the history of science and botanical exploration, including the award-winning *Potted Histories* (2004) and has authored more than 175 peer-reviewed scientific papers. In 2009 she was honoured by the Peter Raven Outreach Award by the American Society of Plant Taxonomists and the UK National Biodiversity Network's John Burnett Medal. She served as the President of the Nomenclature Section of the 18th International Botanical Congress in Melbourne, Australia in July 2011, where far-reaching changes were made to the rules for naming of algae, fungi and plants. Her current projects include *Flora Mesoamericana*, collaborative research in phylogenetics and genomic evolution of *Solanaceae*, research into various aspects of *Solanaceae* crops and their wild relatives, and conservation and biodiversity monitoring projects in the Neotropics, most recently in Paraguay.

John van Wyhe

John is a historian of science, Senior Lecturer in the Departments of Biological Sciences and History and a Fellow of Tembusu College at the National University of Singapore. He is a historian of science who specializes on Darwin and Wallace. He is the director of Darwin Online and Wallace Online. His latest book, *Dispelling the Darkness* (2013), radically revises the traditional story based on the most thorough historical research programme ever conducted on Wallace in the Malay archipelago.

Max Barclay

Max is the Collection Manager of *Coleoptera* at the Natural History Museum, where he manages a dedicated team of curators and a collection of more than 22,000 drawers and 260,000 species of beetles. Max has been on field trips to remote tropical rainforests and mountain ranges in many countries and has discovered a wealth of new species, fifty of which have been named in his honour by scientists around the world. He is a Fellow of the Royal Entomological Society.

Robert Prys-Jones

After undertaking a D.Phil. on avian ecology and physiology at the Edward Grey Institute of Field Ornithology, Oxford University, Robert conducted post-doctoral research on island birds at the Royal Society Aldabra Research Station, on island and tropical forest birds at the University of Queensland and on avian free-living energetics at the University of Stirling, before being appointed as lecturer at the Percy Fitzpatrick Institute of African Ornithology, University of Cape Town. Returning to the U.K. five years later, Robert became Head of Estuarine and Coastal Bird Research at the British Trust for Ornithology, from where he moved in 1992 to take up his current position of Collections Manager and Head of the Bird Group at the NHM. Since then, his research interests have focused, firstly, on studies aimed at enhancing the information associated with the bird specimens he curates and, secondly, on the evolutionary biogeography of Indian Ocean island birds.