



Newsletter No. 253

February 2019

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To find out more about this photo - read on!



**Copy date for the
next Newsletter is
Monday 1 April**

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For enquiries about field and geoconservation meetings please contact the Field Secretary.

To submit items for the Newsletter please contact the Newsletter Editor.

For all other business and enquiries please contact the Honorary Secretary.

For further information see our website: bcgs.info, Twitter: [@BCGeoSoc](https://twitter.com/BCGeoSoc) and [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/bcgs).

Future Programme

**Indoor meetings will be held in the Abbey Room at the Dudley Archives,
Tipton Road, Dudley, DY1 4SQ, 7.30 for 8.00 o'clock start unless stated otherwise.**

Visitors are welcome to attend BCGS events but there will be a charge of £1.00.

Please let Andy Harrison know in advance if you intend to go to any of the field or geoconservation meetings. If transport is a problem for you or if you intend to drive and are willing to offer lifts, please contact Andy with at least 48 hours notice.

Saturday 16 February (Geoconservation Day): Wren's Nest. Directed by the reserve wardens. Meet at 10.30 at the Warden's office, at the end of Fossil View (the road into the new housing estate, formerly Mons Hill College). Parking along Fossil View. The day will involve some scrub clearance and fossil hunting not far from the Warden's base. Bring gloves, stout footwear and a packed lunch. Wardens provide tools, hard hats if necessary and a hot drink. Finish around 2.30.

Monday 18 February (Indoor Meeting): 'Turning Soil into Stone'. Speaker: Dr Steve Wilkinson, Senior Lecturer in Engineering Geology, University of Wolverhampton. Applied geo-microbial technologies are developing fast. We know from historical observation that micro-organisms have affected the properties and behaviours of the ground. In this talk we explore whether we can direct the actions of micro-organisms for engineering/design purposes.

Saturday 2 March (Geoconservation Day): Barrow Hill. Directed by Mark Williams. Meet at 10.30 on Vicarage Lane off High Street, Pensnett (A4101), at the top end near the nature reserve and St. Mark's Church. The day will involve vegetation clearance in the East Quarry. Bring gloves, stout footwear and a packed lunch, and (if possible) tools such as loppers, saws, and rakes for vegetation, and stiff brushes/trowels for rock faces. Finish around 2.30.

Monday 18 March (Indoor Meeting, 7.00 for 7.30 start): AGM followed by **'Rock along the Cut'**. **Speaker: Andrew Jenkinson.** The canal system in Birmingham and the Black Country was included in William Smith's first geological map of England & Wales in 1815, because at the time, canals had been developed to a greater extent than the road and rail networks. Canals in B&BC were developed better to exploit products from the earth such as iron ore, coal and limestone, based on geological knowledge. Canals enabled these products to be moved more easily from one place to another.

Saturday 6 April (Field Meeting): Quaternary of the Severn Valley in Shropshire, led by David Pannett (Shropshire Geological Society). Meet at 10.30 at Lyth Hill car park, GR: SJ476072 (off A5 onto A49 south, after half a mile right fork into Bayston Hill, then straight ahead to the top of Lyth Hill). Introduction to Shropshire Plain, then back to A5 and on to Bicton (David's house) for refreshment and use of facilities. Further briefing at Merton SY3 8BT. Tour of glacial landscape via Bicton, Preston Montford, Shrawardine, and Melverley pub stop (if wanted) and tea at Melverley church, time permitting.

Monday 15 April (Indoor Meeting): 'Europe's Lost World: The Rediscovery of Doggerland'. **Speaker: Professor Vince Gaffney MBE FSA, Anniversary Chair in Landscape Archaeology, University of Bradford.** 8,500 years ago the area that now forms the southern North Sea was dry land. By 5,500 BC the entire area had disappeared beneath the sea as a consequence of rising sea levels. The 'North Sea Palaeolandscape Project' has mapped 23,000 km² of this 'lost world' using seismic data collected for mineral exploration. In mapping this exceptional landscape the project has begun to provide an insight into the historic impact of the last great phase of global warming experienced by modern man and to assess the significance of the massive loss of European land that occurred as a consequence of climate change.

Saturday 11 May (Field Meeting): Martley Geo-Village, led by John Nicklin (Teme Valley Geological Society). Meet at 10.30 at Martley Memorial Hall for light refreshments and a pop-up display. Recognised as a Geo-Village, Martley has distinctive geology within its bounds spanning the Palaeozoic and lower Mesozoic. Includes rocks belonging to the Precambrian Malverns Complex, Martley Quartzite, Silurian and Carboniferous mudstones, siltstones and sandstones, Triassic sandstones, and Quaternary sand deposits. By car and/or on foot we will explore local geological sites, finishing around 4.00. Please bring a packed lunch.

Saturday 15 June (Field Meeting): Lydney Cliffs, Gloucestershire: Led by John Moseley (Gloucestershire Geoconservation Trust). Meet 10.30 at Lydney Docks. Good parking at east end of Harbour Road, GR647013. Views of River Severn and south to Aust Cliffs, walk along low cliff to access Lydney Cliff section (caution required!), to examine Pridolian sequences. Lunch in Lydney, or at Parkend, 2 miles north of Lydney. Afternoon: possible underground visit to Hopewell Colliery or Clearwell iron ore caves, or a Carboniferous limestone locality. Finish around 4.00. Bring a packed lunch or there may be an opportunity to buy lunch in Lydney or at the Forest of Dean VC.

Monday 16 September (Indoor Meeting): Details tbc.

Monday 21 October (Indoor Meeting): Details tbc.

Monday 18 November (Indoor Meeting): Details tbc.

Monday 16 December (Indoor Meeting): Christmas Social/Quiz.

BCGS trip to Dorset

Friday 16 to Monday 19 August 2019

The Dorset Geologists' Association Group has kindly agreed to host a weekend visit for BCGS to the Dorset South Coast. Following feedback from interested participants the date of this field trip has been fixed for **Friday 16 to Monday 19 August** with attendees making their own way down. Monday will be optional for those attendees wishing to travel back on the Sunday. Accommodation has yet to be confirmed but will be booked for **20 places**, which are steadily filling. Members wishing to organise their own accommodation should let the Field Secretary (Andy Harrison) know in advance.

We plan to visit the West Dorset and Purbeck Heritage Coasts, including Chesil Beach, Isle of Portland, Durdle Door, Lulworth Cove, Kimmeridge and possibly Studland Bay and Old Harry Rocks. Please get in touch with ideas for other places to visit for what promises to be a very interesting weekend.

Please contact Andy Harrison by Thursday 28 February to express your interest in attending this field visit and to be included on the register. Please also indicate whether you would like to be booked into the hotel or will sort your own accommodation.

andrewcfharrison@yahoo.com, mobile 07973 330706, tel: 01746 781 033



Durdle Door (above), front cover photo: Portland Bill - 'Pulpit Rock'

Procedures for Field Meetings

Insurance

The Society provides public liability insurance for field meetings but personal accident cover is the responsibility of the participant. Details can be obtained from the Secretary, and further helpful information can be found in the [Code for Geological Field Work](#) published by the GA and available on our website. Schools and other bodies should arrange their own insurance as a matter of course.

Health and Safety

If you are unsure about the risks involved or your ability to participate safely, you should contact the Field Secretary. Please take note of any risk assessments or safety briefing, and make sure that you have any safety equipment specified. The Society does not provide hard hats for use of members or visitors. It is your responsibility to provide your own safety equipment (eg. hard hats, hi-viz jackets, safety boots and goggles/glasses) and to use these when you feel it is necessary or when a site owner makes it a condition of entry. Hammering is not permitted unless specific permission has been sought and granted. Leaders provide their services on a purely voluntary basis and may not be professionally qualified.

Other Societies and Events

BCGS members are normally welcome to attend meetings of other societies, but should always check first with the relevant representative. Summarised information for approximately **two months** is given in our Newsletter. Further information can be found on individual society websites.

Warwickshire Geological Conservation Group

Wednesday 20 February: 'Swimming Plesiosaurs and Flying Dinosaurs; Palaeontology at Wollaton Hall, Nottingham.' Speaker: Dr. Adam Smith. (Including references to Chinese dinosaur discoveries.)

Wednesday 20 March: 'Analysing the Skeleton of a King.' Speaker: Prof. Jane Evans (BGS). Isotope studies on the remains of Richard III, and the light this throws on the diet and lifestyle of a medieval monarch.

Venue: St Francis Church Hall, 110 Warwick Road, Kenilworth, CV8 1HL. There is a charge of £2.00 for non-members. For more details visit: <http://www.wgcg.co.uk/> or email: WarwickshireGCG@gmail.com. Meetings start at 7.30 with tea/coffee and biscuits available beforehand from 7.00.

North Staffordshire Group of the Geologists' Association

Thursday 14 March: AGM followed at 7.30 by the Chair's Address: **'The formation and evolution of mountains and basins: insights from the modelling of geological processes.'** Dr Stuart Egan (Keele University).

Lecture meetings are held at 7.30 in room WSO.06 in the William Smith Building, Keele University. For enquiries: Steve Alcock, Longfields, Park Lane, Cheddleton, Leek, Staffs, ST13 7JS. Tel: 01538 360431 or 07711 501028. Email: steves261@aol.com More info: www.esci.keele.ac.uk/nsgga/

Geological Society, West Midlands Regional Group

Tuesday 12 February: 'Retreat of the last British-Irish Ice Sheet.' Speaker: Professor Christopher Clark (University of Sheffield).

Tuesday 12 March: 'NMR Logging - mining, water and civil engineering applications.' Ryan Gee (Qttec).

Venue: The Birmingham & Midland Institute, 9 Margaret St, B3 3BS, 6.00 for 6.30. For further details please contact the Group Secretary at: geolsoc_wmrg@live.co.uk

Shropshire Geological Society

Wednesday 13 March: 'Minerals of the English Midlands.' Guest speaker: Roy Starkey, author of Minerals in the English Midlands.

Lecture meetings are held at 7.30 in room 019 University Centre, Guildhall, Frankwell Quay, Shrewsbury SY3 8HQ. A nominal charge is levied for attendance by non-Members. Further info: www.shropshiregeology.org.uk/

Lapworth Museum Events

Monday 18 February: 'Birmingham's giant erratics: Ice Age geoheritage.' Speaker: Professor Ian Fairchild, University of Birmingham.

Monday 4 March: Title and speaker to be confirmed.

Lectures are usually at 5.00 - 6.00. Venue: G29 Mechanical and Civil Engineering Building. There is no admission charge and all are welcome to attend. For more information: <http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/facilities/lapworth-museum/events/lectures.aspx>

Herdman Symposium 2019 - 'Journey from the Centre of the Earth'

Saturday 16 February: This year the speakers will take us from deep in the Earth to the next planet out:

- Dr. Chris Davies (Leeds) - Core/ Mantle boundary
- Prof. Chris Ballentine - (Oxford) Deep mantle
- Prof. Yan Lavallee (Liverpool) Volcanoes and experiments
- Prof. Jennifer McElwain - (Trinity, Dublin) Palaeobotany
- Dr. Sarah Boulton (Plymouth) – Active Neo- tectonics: Moroccan High Atlas
- Dr. Joel Davis (Natural History Museum, London) – ExoMars - Planetary geology

Last booking date for this event is **12 February**. Standard Rate is £15 which includes the Talks, Abstracts, Light refreshments, Sandwich Lunch and Wine Reception. Venue: University of Liverpool. For more information and booking see web site: www.liverpool.ac.uk/environmental-sciences/events/

Woolhope Naturalists' Field Club - Geology Section

Friday 22 March: 'Oil and energy resources in the UK – title of talk to be arranged.' Speaker: Dr. Tony Loy of Merlin Energy Co.

Talks will now be held from 5.30, in the Councillors' Meeting Room, Committee Room 1 at the Shire Hall, Hereford. Non-members of the Club pay £2. Contact Sue Olver on 01432 761693. Email: susanolver@hotmail.com or visit: <http://www.woolhopeclub.org.uk/Programme.html>

East Midlands Geological Society

Saturday 9 March: 'Incredible Ichthyosaurs – A decade studying Jurassic "Sea Dragons".' Speaker: Dr Dean R Lomax, University of Manchester.

Meetings are at 6.00 in the Geography Dept. of Nottingham University, Sir Clive Granger Building. Non-members are welcome. Further info: www.emgs.org.uk or email: secretary@emgs.org.uk

Teme Valley Geological Society

Saturday 16 March: Field visit to the Erratics and Building Stones of N. Worcs and Birmingham. Guides: Professor Ian Fairchild (University of Birmingham) and Julie Schroder (BCGS).

Monday 18 March: 'Minerals of the English Midlands.' Speaker: Roy Starkey.

Saturday 30 March: Field visit to Coppett Hill with Rosamund Skelton.

Talks are held at 7.30 in the Martley Memorial Hall, on the B4197 by the Sports Ground, Martley. For field trip details and further information contact John Nicklin on 01886 888318 or visit: <http://www.geo-village.eu/> Non-members £3.

Mid Wales Geology Club

Wednesday 20 February: 'Giant Pterosaurs.' Speaker: Bob Loverage.

Wednesday 20 March: 'Geology of the pipeline from The Elan Valley to Birmingham.' Speaker: Professor Michael Rosenbaum.

Further information: Tony Thorp tel. 01686 624820 and 622517 tonydolfor@gmail.com
Web: I'm not sure whether I have enough news for <http://midwalesgeology.org.uk> Talks at 7.30 at Plas Dolerw, Milford Road, Newtown.

The Geologists' Association

Friday 8 March: The Halstead Lecture - 'The Secret Lives of Salt Giants.' Speaker: Sian Evans.

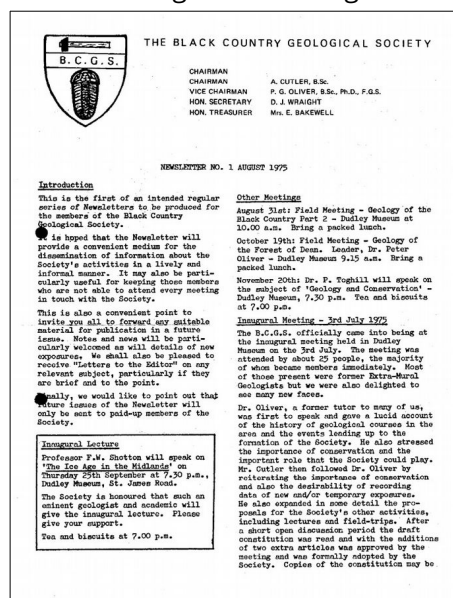
Tea at 5.30 with the lecture starting at 6.00. Venue: Janet Watson Lecture Theatre, The Geological Society, Burlington House, Piccadilly, London, W1V 0JU. For more information see: geologistsassociation.org.uk

Editorial

The world has moved on a lot since John and I took on the mantle of BCGS Newsletter editors exactly 10 years ago. Although it is my name which appears as 'Editor' this is perhaps a timely moment to reflect that we are a team. I am largely responsible for editing the content, and John takes care of the IT. But the Newsletter 'team' spreads far wider than just the editorial team! We rely on you, the members, to provide us with the content. First and foremost the Newsletter is our mouthpiece for keeping you in touch with essential information. In this issue you can see that we have a very full programme of events.

But the Newsletter thrives on its wider 'interest' value, and an essential part of that is the diversity of articles, photos and short geological themed items which you, our members, have been sending to us over the years. Though we have now embraced the fast-moving world of Social Media with our Facebook and Twitter accounts, there is still an important place for the Newsletter, to provide the 'platform' for those longer, more reflective items, and a place to gather these together with a gazetteer of all that's going on in our local and wider geological world.

We have been lucky to have certain regular contributors who faithfully send items on a regular basis. Our editorial predecessor, Bill Groves, continued to write his ever-fascinating 'Geobabble' column for several years, and now we are lucky to have Mike Allen's regular 'Musings' feature, to educate and entertain us with his inimitable wealth of knowledge and wit! Throughout all this time we have had the benefit of Andy Harrison's comprehensive reports of all our field trips and geoconservation sessions, providing a detailed and fascinating archive for the Society. All these can, of course, be found on our website which has a complete archive of our Newsletters dating back to the inauguration of the Society in 1975. So far during my time as Editor no-one has written reports of our indoor meetings, though many other Societies do have such reports in their Newsletters. Maybe this could be an opening for someone?



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Why am I writing all this now? Because this issue is short of content from you! We have another splendid Musing from Mike, and a Geopark up-date from our Chairman, Graham Worton. Andy Harrison has no reports for this issue but has been busy organising our forthcoming weekend away in Dorset. A trip with overnight stays is a 'first' for the Society since I joined in 2006, and I'm really looking forward to it. Let's give it our fullest possible support and hope that this will set a precedent for the future. ►

In the absence of other items for this issue, we've gone to town on promoting the wonderful world of geology which is being celebrated by so many societies and organisations around the country. We've given more prominence to a forthcoming GA event in London. We are affiliated to the GA, and we normally promote their annual Festival of Geology, and special conferences like the 'Geology of Mordor' which are held in different parts of the country each year. But they also have a regular programme of lectures which may be of interest to anyone who happens to be able to get there. Hence the notice for their March meeting in this issue. Do have a look at their website.

As usual we are promoting the activities of our more local Geological Societies. Do check these out - they are all very welcoming to visitors, and some are not far away - like the Lapworth Lectures at Birmingham University and the Geological Society's West Midlands group meetings, also in Birmingham.

But please! Keep in touch with us, and don't be reticent about sending anything that you think might be the least bit interesting to your friends in BCGS. Just send me an email and photos if you can - or we can find relevant photos from Wikimedia Commons if that's easier. A volunteer to write indoor meeting reports - even just occasionally - would be a welcome addition to the Newsletter. We rely on you to help us keep the Newsletter thriving! ■

Julie Schroder

The Black Country Geopark bid up-date



The Black Country UNESCO Global Geopark application is now in its final stages of the assessment process. Black Country teams have been working on various aspects of the bid in the last year to strengthen the application, engage more people with it and promote the project as widely as possible. New information and a short geopark film have been added to the website (blackcountrygeopark.dudley.gov.uk). Research work has been undertaken to better understand the geology of the Wren's Nest, and new branded interpretation has been placed on some key sites. Lots of work has been done with local communities and the business sector to raise awareness of the Geopark. Interest is growing internationally in the project and geopark themes are appearing in new developments here and there, such as road names at the new estate at Wren's Nest, and as embodied in the geologically themed window art at the Travelodge next to the archives building. ►



A progress report must go to UNESCO by early May 2019 and a decision will be taken by the Global Geoparks Network later in the year. We will be formally notified about the result of our application in early 2020, when hopefully, if the UNESCO scrutineers are satisfied, the Black Country will become the next UK UNESCO Global Geopark. ■

Graham Worton

Mike's Musings No. 19 - What's in a (Fossil) Name?

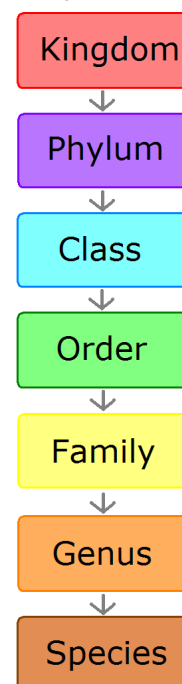
Amongst previous musings I have considered the naming of both rocks and minerals. It is now time for the palaeontological world to receive the same treatment, and we shall see that despite a rather more rigorously structured approach to the naming of fossils (courtesy of the Linnaean system of nomenclature) mischievous geologists have often had rather more fun with this activity!



Carl von Linné, Portrait by Alexander Roslin 1775, Wikimedia Commons

You will recall that rocks and minerals have commonly been named after people or places by means of the rather unimaginative addition of the suffix '-ite', especially in modern times since a classical education has become almost completely redundant. With fossils, it would seem that a reverse trend has become apparent, with far greater imagination being applied these days than in more staid times in the past, and often still demonstrating a familiarity with classical or archaic languages.

But first it is important to note that there is a well defined protocol to follow when seeking to name a newly discovered organism (both living or fossil). This formality began with the work of Carl Linnaeus (known as Carl von Linné after his ennoblement). It seems to have stood the test of time in establishing a hierarchical taxonomy for all living things, and was subsequently also applied to the fossil world. I alluded to



this in another recent musing on the subject of taxonomy, which also pointed out that whilst Linné's work wasn't the first attempt to introduce a formal methodology, his is the system which survives to this day.

The hierarchical method has several tiers, ranging from 'Kingdom', through 'Phylum', 'Class', 'Order' and 'Family', to 'Genus' and 'Species' (with various less familiar intermediaries). One mistaken belief I held until researching this article was that, for obvious reasons, it is not permitted to duplicate an established binomial, but apparently this rule only holds true within a single kingdom, so both an animal and a plant, for instance, may indeed share the same binomial. To give an example, *Agathis montana* is both a parasitic insect and a type of conifer. ►

We thus establish that names amongst the living world are defined by the genus and species, and it is always the rule to present both parts of this name (hence 'binomial' nomenclature), with the genus capitalised, the species never so, and both either italicised or underlined (or both?). This is followed by the surname of the person who first established it and the year when they did so. For example: *Homo sapiens* Linnaeus 1758 and *Tyrannosaurus rex* Osborn 1905 (also now well known simply as *T. Rex*). These are perhaps the two best known names in everyday vocabulary. In some instances it is only the specific name that has become familiar e.g. *E. coli*, and the namer and year are seldom presented except in formal script. (The *E.* is the generic mouthful *Escherichia*, which might explain why it hasn't caught on!)

There are, incidentally, some differences in detail between the methods adopted by the zoological and botanical authorities. For instance, animal binomials may use the same name at both generic and species levels (e.g. *Pongo pongo*, our close relative the orang-utan), but plants must have different generic and specific names. Note also how often in loose everyday speech (even by folk who ought to know better) people talk about the 'species' when they are really talking about the 'genus'.



Jean-Baptiste Lamarck. Portrait by J. Pizzetta, 1893. Wikimedia.

The remainder of this article, then, concerns itself with binomials mostly from the fossil world. I shall also in most instances drop the namers and years as they will already have been referred to in the general narrative. The following is a fairly random collection of examples that have caught my fancy for no good reason, but they do catch the essence of how times and behaviours change!

When Linnaeus introduced his system in the mid-18th century, binomials were commonly based on some descriptive attribute of the organism in question. Of course this preceded the development of palaeontology as a scientific discipline, but once fossils began to receive the same treatment during the 19th century the same classification system dominated. The well known fossil oyster *Gryphaea*, better known to many as 'Devil's toenails', was first named by the well known, but misguided evolutionist Jean-Baptiste Lamarck in 1801. Of the many different species 'sensibly' named, '*arcuata*', '*gigantea*', '*depressa*' and '*dilobotes*' all reflect physical characteristics that may be surmised, and that differ between the species. Others are named after people or places: '*maccullochi*', '*crickleyensis*'.



Darwinius masillae. Wikimedia.

Individuals, especially the discoverer, might often be honoured at the species level, occasionally at generic level and more rarely still at a higher taxonomic level, if their scientific contribution has been particularly outstanding. Thus Charles Darwin has had over 300 taxa named after him (not all amongst fossils) including certain groups of ostracod above generic level: family '*Darwinulidae*' and infra-order '*Darwinulocopina*'. Perhaps more celebrated still is '*Darwinius*'. This superbly preserved fossil, with a somewhat murky provenance, created a storm when first introduced to the world amidst much hype in 2009. Is it or is it not 'our' oldest direct primate ancestor? Nicknamed 'Ida', after the daughter of its champion who secured the specimen from a collector for a cool £465,000, it originates from the celebrated 47 Ma Messel site in Germany. It seems somehow appropriate that such a controversial specimen should be named after Darwin who, after all, created arguably the greatest controversy in scientific history. ►

During the 20th century one can find elements of humour, at times bordering on the mischievous, creeping into fossil nomenclature. In 1904 the entomologist Kirkcaldy was fond of adding the Greek suffix '-chisme' (pronounced 'kiss me') to several genera of insect. This might not appear to be the pinnacle of hilarity, but when coupled with prefixes such as 'Oh', 'Poly', 'Doli' and 'Peggi', the humour begins to shine through, especially for Edwardian times. Such frivolity is (and was), of course, to be officially frowned upon, but not strongly enough to prevent the appearance of a fly of the genus '*Carmenelectra*' entering the nomenclature with the specific name '*shechisme*' almost a century later in 2002!



Ozophora picturata, aka *Peggichisme*,
Kirkcaldy, 1904. Wikimedia

A more definite 'no-no' is the introduction of vulgarity or rudeness, especially when directed at specific targets, and consequently I am unable to give any examples that have slipped through the net! But frivolity does still occur from time to time, as in the shellfish '*Abra cadabra*' (1957) and the beetle '*Agra vation*' (1983).

One popular, and relatively modern, trend has been to name something after 'celebrities' (I use the term advisedly!). Thus a new dinosaur discovered in Madagascar in 2001 rejoices in the name '*Masiakasaurus knopfleri*'. You need a working knowledge of the local lingo, Latin and a familiarity with big names in the pop music world to appreciate that this translates as '(Mark) Knopfler's vicious lizard', but no doubt all you Malagasy-speaking Dire Straits fans will have been one step ahead of me there!

Arguably the most celebrated fossil known is the aforementioned '*T. rex*'. The binomial name derives from the Latin for 'king of the tyrant lizards'; many dinosaur names include the suffix '-saurus' as they were all regarded as lizard-like reptiles. Some fifty specimens of '*T. rex*' have been recovered. The most complete (around 85%) has become well known in part because of the complicated dispute over legal ownership, but perhaps more so because of the application of a simple, and therefore more memorable, nickname 'Sue', after the discoverer Sue Hendrickson.



Lucy replica. Senckenberg-Museum, Frankfurt am Main.
Wikimedia Commons

Another famous fossil nickname, and one that commonly features in any respectable documentary on the origins of our own species, is 'Lucy'. Discovered in the Afar region of Ethiopia in 1974 by a team led by Donald Johansen 'Lucy' is known in scientific circles as '*Australopithecus afarensis*' ('southern-ape from Afar'). This 3.2 million year old hominid probably owes much of its fame to having a catchy nickname, given because the celebrations accompanying the discovery included endless playing of the Beatles' number 'Lucy in the Sky with Diamonds' - or so the well-known story goes. Once again it is pop music that has contributed to this name, and I can only conclude that some palaeontologists are eager to show their 'trendy credentials' in a modern world where this seems to improve one's image. I have been unable to find examples of binomials inspired by Beethoven, Brahms or Liszt, but do write in if you know otherwise. ►



Rollinschaeta myoplana. A new fireworm from the Cretaceous of Lebanon. Wikimedia Commons

And finally, one name I recently chanced upon in my light reading (!) concerns a particular fossil annelid, more specifically a polychaete 'fireworm', discovered in Cretaceous rocks of the Lebanon in 2015. A singular endowment of this minimal beast was an extremely well preserved and detailed musculature. So, how to recognise this attribute in the name? The first suggestion was '*Arnoldo-chaeta schwarzeneggeri*'! But then it appears that politics got in the way: the several co-authors weren't fans of the USA's Republican party but were fans of a punk band called 'Black Flag' and, noting the attributes of their well-formed lead singer (stage-name Henry Rollins), decided on the name '*Rollinschaeta myoplana*'. This, then, is now established as the accepted name for this small contribution to wormy prehistory; the 'plump-muscled Rollinsworm'! Again pop music raises its fashionable head, but at least there's more than a bit of classical education in there too!

Clearly times and cultures change. I just wonder whether Carl von Linné would entirely approve? ■

Mike Allen

Subscriptions 2019

Your subscription for BCGS was due on **1 January 2019**. Thank you to those of you who have renewed your membership already.

Please will those that haven't yet renewed, post your subscriptions to the Hon. Treasurer:

Alan Clewlow,
19 Manor Court Road,
Bromsgrove,
Worcestershire,
B60 3NW.

Cheques should be made payable to '**The Black Country Geological Society**'. Thank you. ■

Subscription rates:

Individual	£20 per annum
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Full time student/Unemployed	£5 per annum
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