

Nature Matters Workshops

The following workshops are available during the Saturday morning session, and places for these can be booked by ticket holders (we'll send you the details and the workshop booking links once you have booked).

Nature as Soundscape: What do we hear in birdsong? What does it mean? Where does it take us? Can music transcend the species divide? A group dialogue on the emotional impact and cultural value of sound in the natural world. Participants should submit a topic or motif and come prepared to open themes of discussion by speaking on this briefly for a few minutes. Geoff Sample will have his sound library to hand for sonic vignettes. Chaired by **Peter Cowdrey** and **Geoff Sample**. Peter is a composer and director of Planet Birdsong, whose work explores musicality in nature. Geoff is a wildlife sound recordist and author of the best-selling Collins Bird Songs & Calls.

Listening to a Landscape: This workshop by **Katrina Porteous** will explore how poets connect to the physicality of landscape through sound. Beginning from silence, we will look at poems which focus intensely on the local and particular. There will be a chance to try a couple of exercises based on the natural voices around us that lead us towards 'a sense of place'. Katrina Porteous lives on the Northumberland coast and is best-known for her radio poetry. Her latest collection is *Two Countries* (Bloodaxe 2014).

The sense of place in fiction: This workshop by **Sharon Blackie** will focus on developing a powerful sense of place in fiction. The idea of place, as we will work with it, means more than just a physical landscape or location: it is a multi-layered concept which incorporates ecology and geology, human culture, and the culture of the nonhuman others who share our places with us. It is also about knowing the myths and folklore of place. Using readings and exercises, we'll explore the difference between a 'sense of place' and 'setting', working on a variety of ways to bring place to life in your writing, and to vividly convey your characters' relationship with it. Sharon Blackie is a writer whose work sits at the interface of ecology, psychology and mythology; she is also the co-editor of the nature writing magazine *EarthLines*. Her recent book, *If Women Rose Rooted*, is an exploration of contemporary problems of place and belonging, and examines the wisdom which can be derived from the stories and the wild landscapes of Europe's Atlantic fringes.

Printmaking: A small taster with **Carry Akroyd** to see how printmaking with a screen and simple paper stencils can be done. No need to bring any materials. Carry Akroyd is a painter and printmaker whose subject is the landscape, with a particular interest in history and wildlife. A member of the Society of Wildlife Artists, she is the jacket artist for British Wildlife Publishing's *The British Wildlife Collection* series of books, and illustrated *Tweet of the Day*, the book of the Radio 4 series. She has also illustrated three books of John Clare's poetry, and continues to create a seam of work relating to the 'Peasant Poet' and his relevance to today. Carry curated and edited *Wildlife in Printmaking*, and has written a book about her own work and inspirations, *natures powers & spells: Landscape Change, John Clare and me*. She exhibits regularly in a few small galleries. www.carryakroyd.co.uk

Introduction to film-making: Come to this workshop with accomplished filmmaker **James Murray White**, who is offering the opportunity to find out more about the process of making films from finding the subject, to creating the storyboard alongside the practicalities of filming the natural world. This workshop will also allow you the opportunity to get practical advice on projects you may have. James Murray White started his career making theatre in Cambridge: after theatre performance/directing/writing across the UK & Eire, with a diversion as an environmental journalist in the Middle East, where he made his first documentary about 5 years amongst the Negev Bedouin tribes, he has come full-circle and is currently Cambridge-based again, making a range of documentaries and multi-media films. Recent subjects include the poet John Clare, neuroscience and dementia (filmmaker in residence within the CU/NHS dementia research network), shamanism and clowning, community projects within Cambridge, and Ackroyd & Harvey's exhibition within the David Attenborough Building. He is passionate about using the arts as a catalyst for change, be it for social justice, climate and cultural change, or simply for public engagement with science, or for a deeper relationship with the natural world.

Building a compelling narrative for photography: Understanding your motivations, audiences, publishing options and stylistic approach to photography will give every image or project a purpose and structure. This workshop by **Toby Smith** is for photographers of any ability that want to take and use images more strategically either personally or professionally. This is a workshop based on concept and will not include technical or equipment advice. Toby Smith is based in Cambridge and works internationally on projects concerning landscape, environment, industry and science. He graduated with a Masters in Contemporary Photography from London College of Communication in 2008 and is the Artist in Residence of the University of Cambridge Conservation Research Institute for 2015/16. His work is exhibited internationally and editorial clients include National Geographic, The Sunday Times Magazine, TIME, Fortune, The New York Times and The Guardian. Broadcast credits include the BBC Natural History Unit, Al Jazeera, Sky News, BBC Radio 4 and the BBC World Service. Notable projects include studies of hydroelectricity and landscape in Scotland, renewable energy technology across China and India, and illegal logging and mining in Madagascar.

Nature Writing Workshop: This is a creative writing workshop led by the nature writer **Richard Kerridge**, director of the MA in Creative Writing at Bath Spa University. We will talk briefly about what 'the new nature writing' is, and then focus on questions of style and approach, looking closely at samples of writing. There are twelve places, and participants are asked to send a 500-1000 word piece of writing two weeks in advance of the session. Richard will provide participants with written feedback on these submissions.

Lulled by liking: why our love and rage are so vital for nature: 'We will not fight to save what we do not love', said Stephen Jay Gould. But this simple statement presents us with two problems - the first is our natural reticence in the face of the word 'love'. We flinch a little at its use. Does our passionate engagement with nature undermine our ability to observe it? Do we need to retain detachment? I believe we need to accept that what drives us is, whatever words we may choose to

describe it, rooted in love. And secondly, what does that fight look like? Where along the spectrum; from leafleting and collecting county records, via objecting to planning proposals and taking part in marches, to civil disobedience and nonviolent direct action, do you stand? There are so many reasons to feel rage - but as a group, nature lovers tend to be rather polite. This workshop, being run by **Hugh Warwick** will explore the motivations for our dedication to the natural world, introduce and legitimise the sense of anger that we should feel at its destruction and identify effective tools with which to confront those who would harm what we love. Hugh Warwick is an ecologist and writer with a particular fondness for hedgehogs. His first book, *A Prickly Affair*, remains the only book to have accolades from both Jeanette Winterson and Ann Widdecombe on the cover.

Drawn to Nature: The workshop, which will be run by **Bruce Pearson** (www.brucepearson.net) is an introduction to observational drawing and the idea of exploring nature by learning to see, and how responding more spontaneously can reveal how someone feels about a subject as well as how much they might know about it. Not capturing the detail in nature, but interpreting it by looking more creatively. To quote Matisse, "Drawing is putting a line around an idea". A brief introduction and explanation of mark making - from lines and tones to negative spaces, from loose and gestural to controlled and neat, and how the shapes defined on the outside of a line are as important as the ones on the inside - will be followed by participants being encouraged to get on with drawing the museum specimens presented. Simple materials (charcoal, graphite and paper) will be provided. Participants are advised not to wear smart clothes as working with charcoal can sometimes be messy.

Education inside and outside the classroom: Unless you work in or directly with schools it can sometimes be difficult to understand the realities of what may or may not be possible and realistic when considering working with or providing materials for schools and students. This workshop aims to provide some background, context and detail of the kinds of activities done in schools within and beyond the curriculum. It will share examples of best practice as well as ways in which nature focused education projects have been evaluated and some of the underpinning research. The second half of the session will be a forum/discussion session where participants will be able to share their thoughts and ideas relating how best to get children/students to engage with their projects and interests and able to offer feedback to each other. Although no longer in the classroom on a daily basis, **James de Winter** he still considers himself to be physics teacher, and now spends most of his working life supporting the teaching of physics. He works at the Faculty of Education, University of Cambridge, running the Secondary Physics PGCE initial teacher education course as well as teaching on the Primary PGCE Courses. Recently he has noticed that there is a world outside physics and has been looking for ways to incorporate a love of natural history into physics teaching. One of his recent projects involves using birdsong and sonograms to teach about sound, frequency and pitch as well as wider observational and data handling skills. A teacher's pack, aimed at primary and secondary aged children, with associated notes (and sounds) is available from www.physicsandbirdsong.co.uk.

Is nature conservation representative of society? For over a century British nature conservation has led the way, but is it representative of today's society? A US report has claimed that there is an overwhelmingly white "Green Insiders' Club" which employs few people from diverse ethnic backgrounds and socio-economic groups - so is the same true in the UK, and has the conservation movement too often contented itself with preaching to the converted? This workshop, being run by **Ben Hoare** and **Lianne de Mello**, will explore barriers that might be stopping more people from engaging with nature, and ways in which they might be overcome. Ben Hoare has been Features Editor of BBC Wildlife Magazine since 2008, and previously was a freelance natural-history editor. He researched a special report on diversity in conservation for the magazine's October issue, on sale 28 September. Lianne de Mello is gainfully employed as a comms officer for a regional wildlife trust.

Gender and conservation: As with most scientific fields, women are traditionally under-represented in leadership roles in both conservation practice and environmental-science faculty positions. Do you think this matters? What difference could greater gender diversity have on the conservation sector? In this practical, interactive and discursive workshop, **Rosie Trevelyan**, Director of the Tropical Biology Association, will give participants the chance to share their thoughts, experiences and reflections on gender issues within conservation. No prior experience of conservation or gender issues are necessary, and we'd very much welcome both male and female participants – just come prepared to listen and share your thoughts.