

British Deer Society Annual General Meeting weekend

Programme of Speakers - Saturday 13 May 2017

Time	Subject	Speaker	Synopsis
0930	Welcome	Chairman	
0940	Deer Farms & Parks	Peter Green BDS Hon Veterinary Surgeon	There is considerable confusion between the statutory status of a deer park and a deer farm and this confusion is reflected in the opinions and practices of those who keep deer enclosed within a fence or wall. The British Deer Society has traditionally focussed its attention upon wild deer and has maintained a deliberate policy of minimal engagement with the deer <i>farming</i> sector. There are, however, considerably more deer parks in the UK than deer farms, and culled deer in parks almost all enter the Wild Game meat trade, because they are considered to be wild, not farmed. This short presentation will explain the differences between a deer park and a deer farm and highlight the difficulties of interpreting and applying the legislation to parks and farms.
1010	Consequences of chronic wasting disease beyond the individual	Alastair Ward BDS Scientific Advisor	The emergence of chronic wasting disease in cervids in North America and now Europe has understandably triggered much activity in the fields of human and livestock health. Much less attention has been paid to the potential for environmental impact, despite the potential risks to the successful delivery of international conservation obligations and national biodiversity targets. I will discuss the keystone role of cervids in regulating ecosystem structure and function and forecast some possible outcomes of population reduction if CWD spreads across Eurasia and the environmental and socio-economic impacts that could be experienced. If CWD becomes widespread significant impacts in Eurasia might not be experienced for many decades, but when they materialise, they could be severe and persistent, and in some cases, non-reversible. Consequently, a precautionary approach is required to risk management.

1040	<i>Coffee break</i>		
1110	Wild Boar in Britain	Ian Harvey Forestry Commission	After disappearing from Britain in the 17 th Century, the wild boar has now reappeared and is thriving in parts of the country thanks to escapes and possible deliberate reintroductions. This has repercussions not only for man but the wider environment as well. This presentation will look at current UK distribution, the case for and against control, management options and will consider the future.
1150	Current distributions of wild-ranging deer species in the United Kingdom	Ryan Burrell Game & Wildlife Conservation Trust	In recent decades, distributions of free-ranging deer in Europe have been expanding, a trend which is mirrored in the United Kingdom. Deer can provide income, through hunting and the sale of venison and at moderate densities, deer pressure can positively impact ecosystems, though at high densities large herbivores have the potential to cause cascading effects, typically driven by alterations to vegetation abundance, diversity and structure. Subsequently, current distributions of deer species are an essential asset to enable appropriate harvests and management to minimise negative impacts. Against this background the British Deer Society completes regular surveys to monitor deer distribution and in this presentation I shall be outlining the methodology and progress on the 2016 survey.
1220	Genome-wide survey of the genetic variation in roe deer and reindeer founder populations	Msc Menno de Jong Department of Biosciences, Durham University	With sequencing costs rapidly dropping, it has become possible to characterize the genetic variation within populations throughout the genome. We used the ddRADseq-method to generate up to 20.000 genetic markers (snps) within founder deer populations, more specifically East Anglia roe deer and South Georgia reindeer. This data allowed us to study how population bottlenecks affect genome-wide genetic diversity and to search within the genome for evidence of natural selection.
1300	<i>Lunch</i>		
1400	Lyme disease: ecology, hazard and prevention	Jo Middleton MSRB Pharmacy and Biomolecular Sciences, University of	Tick-borne Lyme disease can cause serious medical complications, and UK annual diagnoses have trebled over the last two decades. Those working in farmland/forestry or having contact with animals (including deer) in high hazard areas are at greatest risk. The talk will outline ongoing BDS funded research on

		Brighton & Primary Care and Public Health, Brighton & Sussex Medical School	ecological determinants of Lyme disease and potential habitat based interventions, and give practical advice on how BDS members can reduce their risk of contracting the disease.
1440	Modelling the distribution of an expanding roe deer (<i>Capreolus capreolus</i>) population in Wales	Owain Barton MBiolSci Bangor University	As keystone herbivores, roe deer have significant capacity to influence ecosystem functions and biodiversity. Populations in Wales are estimated to be limited in distribution but are predicted to increase and reliable evidence in support of this prediction is currently scarce. Management decisions, required to mitigate the economic and ecological impacts of an expanding population should be based on robust ecological research, and I shall discuss methods of evidence gathering to support strategies.
1520	What to Make of Deer in the Early Mesolithic: The Star Carr headdresses	Dr Ben Elliott Research Associate, Archaeology, University of York	The 11,500 year old site of Star Carr in North Yorkshire is internationally renowned within archaeological circles for its vivid insights into the lives of the hunter-gatherers who moved into Britain after the last ice age. The hunting and consumption of deer appear to have been of critical importance to these people, with venison forming a key component of their cuisine and deer bones and antlers being used to create various forms of hunting equipment and costume. This presentation will look at the recent work of the POSTGLACIAL project at Star Carr, and focus on the ways in which some of the most iconic artefacts from the site, red deer headdresses, were made and used there.
1600	Gourmet Venison Masterclass	Michael Bates Executive Head Chef and Simon Crockford Resort Head Chef at Celtic Manor	The award winning pair team up to present a masterclass in venison preparation; more details to follow.
1730	<i>Afternoon programme ends</i>		
1930	<i>Assemble for evening programme</i>		