

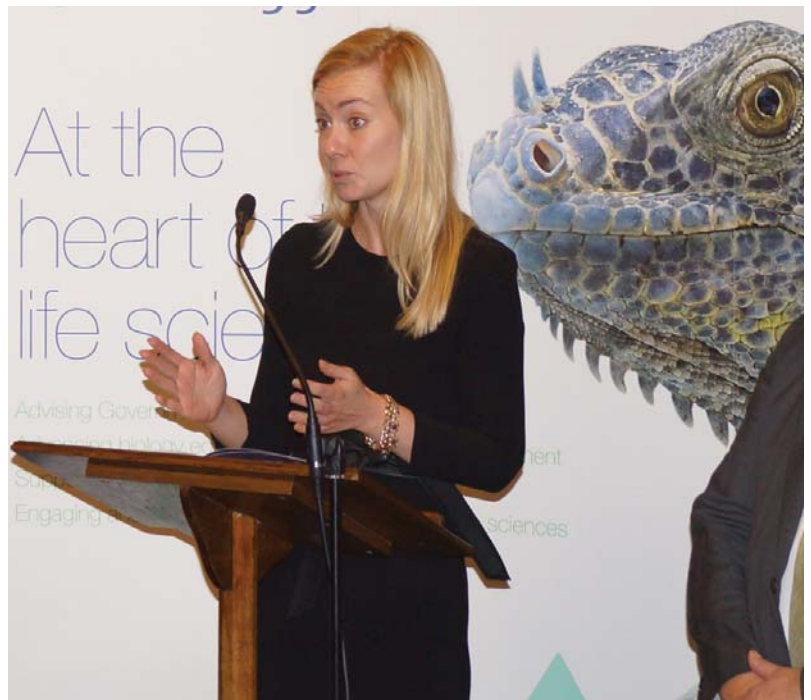
BIOLOGY WEEK 2015



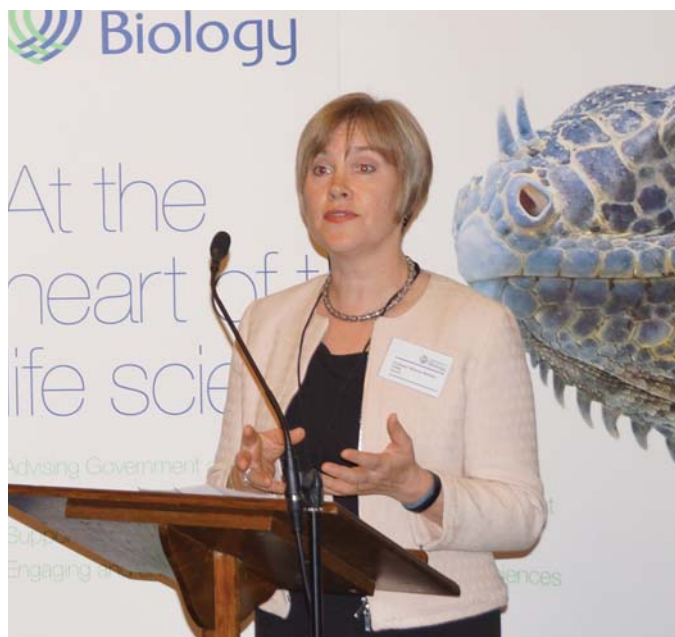
At the Wellcome Trust Centre for Human Genetics science researchers and musicians came together for an evening of music and storytelling, entitled 'The Heart and the Head' at the Oxford University Museum of Natural History. It got rave reviews: "I think this was an amazing event because it effectively brought the day-to-day experience of being a scientist to life. I would love to see more events like this" and "Science paired with art, telling stories instead of simply facts... thank you for inspiring us in the right direction".

Biology Week was launched at a packed Parliamentary Reception in the Palace of Westminster in October as Ministers, MPs, Peers, Society Fellows and representatives from the Society's Member Organisations also celebrated the Society's new Royal title.

Meanwhile, across the UK thousands of people, from young children to research scientists, enjoyed over 100 events as part of this year's Biology Week. The annual celebration of the biosciences included lectures, debates, science festivals, quizzes, storytelling, nature walks and more.



Nicola Blackwood MP, chair of the Science & Technology Select Committee, took to the stage to say a few words regarding the success of science in the UK saying: "The UK is a science superpower." She stressed the importance of investing in research, and emphasised her wish for the impending spending cuts to not drastically impact on UK science and her determination to not let science fall off the agenda.



Professor Melanie Welham FRSB, Executive Director of science at BBSRC highlighted the importance of Biology Week, detailing the wide variety of events and activities taking place in science centres, universities, schools, museums, lecture theatres, parks and even pubs across the UK and beyond. Professor Welham also stressed the importance of recognising the positive impact of the 'bioeconomy' in the UK.

The Royal Institution hosted over 400 guests of different ages and scientific backgrounds to discuss synthetic biology while at the annual RSB Awards Ceremony, the winners of the Photographer of the Year competition, Book Awards, Science Communication Awards, Animal Essay competition and President's Medal were all announced.

Three 'Big Biology Day' science festivals took place nationwide during the week. People learnt about carnivorous plants and fossils in Cardiff, crafted antibodies out of playdough and explored local nature reserves in Staffordshire, and enjoyed a panel discussion focussing on infectious diseases in Cambridge.



Finally, Professor Dame Jean Thomas Hon FRSB, President of the Royal Society of Biology, officially announced the Society's new 'Royal' title. She also officially launched the RSB's Three Year Plan 2015-2018, and outlined its three key themes: a unified voice, professional membership and a broad reach.

Fun scientific activities were arranged by organisations including the British Society of Immunology, Nutrition Society, Microbiology Society, Babraham Institute, the Linnaean Society, Medimmune and the Biochemical Society.

The Physiology Society's 'Physiology Friday' attracted hundreds of entries to their BioBakes competition, which crowned three 'star bakers' for their biological masterpieces.

The results of the 'election' for the UK's Favourite Insect was announced at the end of the Parliamentary Reception (co-sponsored by the BBSRC) and the clear winner proved to be the Bumblebee (which was also the choice of the nationwide poll announced live on BBC TV's Newsround two days later).



MPs cast their vote in the Ballot Box for their choice of Favourite UK Insect
Left to Right: Stephen Metcalfe MP, Nicola Blackwood MP and Chi Onwurah MP. In the background is Professor Dame Jean Thomas



Election Agents of the 'Insect Candidates' hear the results from the Acting Returning Officer (Dr Stephen Benn)