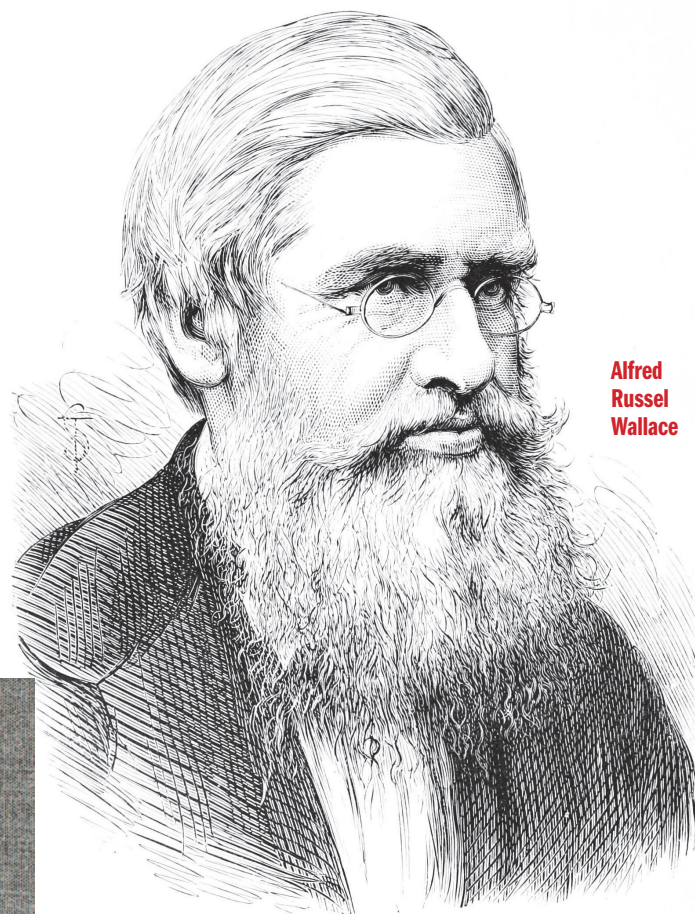


PERFECTLY NATURAL

It's 100 years since Darwin's collaborator Alfred Russel Wallace died in Broadstone



Alfred
Russel
Wallace

For decades he has been one of the unsung heroes of British history, the man whose work inspired the publicity-conscious Charles Darwin.

But now, as the centenary of his death approaches in November, the name of Alfred Russel Wallace is increasingly acknowledged as that of one of the founding fathers of the theory of natural selection.

Wallace, who died at home in Broadstone on November 7, 1913 at the age of 90, was one of the great explorer naturalists of the Victorian era and developed a theory of natural selection which he published jointly with Darwin in 1858, prompting the latter's publication of the landmark *On the Origin of Species*.

The two men were friends who inspired each other's thinking – Wallace dedicated his seminal work *The Malay Archipelago* (which has never been out of print) to Darwin, who in turn helped secure Wallace a government pension in later life.

To mark the centenary of Wallace's death, Dorset County Museum is to exhibit its entire collection of bird skins from Wallace's Malay Archipelago trip in 1854-55. The display opens on September 30 and runs until January 4.

In the 21st century, we have a reasonable knowledge of the world's animals and plants, but in the mid-19th century much less was known and the only way to identify animals and plants, and to sort out their relationships to each other, was to collect dead specimens and bring them home to study.

Dorset County Museum holds more than 80 bird skins that belonged to Wallace and were bought from his son by Edward Harker Curtis in 1919 and presented to the Museum.

Two of them, a lorikeet and a fruit pigeon, still have price tags attached, of four and six shillings [20 and 30 pence] respectively. Most of these birds are from South East Asia and appear to have been collected by Wallace on his travels.

Because they were well prepared all those years ago, and have been well cared for since, the skins are in good condition, and have not faded as many stuffed birds do. Particularly lovely are two species of pittas, or jewel thrushes, which normally live on the forest floor, where there is little light. These birds need to be brightly coloured to communicate with each other – dull coloured birds would find it difficult to attract a mate or defend a territory. There is also a lesser bird of paradise – Wallace brought two of these back alive for London Zoo.

Wallace retired to Dorset 1889, where he became an honorary member of the Dorset Natural History & Archaeology Society, and is buried at Broadstone.

GOLDEN YEARS

Who played here in history, Sep 20-Oct 3

10 YEARS AGO

22: Isley Brothers – Pavilion Theatre: Incredibly, their first UK tour.

15 YEARS AGO

26, 27: Boyzone – BIC.

2: Paul Jones & Dave Kelly – Poole Arts Centre.

20 YEARS AGO

2: Jethro Tull – Poole Arts Centre.

25 YEARS AGO

20: Dr Hook – Poole Arts Centre.

26 Belinda Carlisle – BIC.

30 YEARS AGO

24: Stockholm Monsters – Midnight Express: Signed to Factory, mentored by Peter Hook.

24: Judie Tzuke – Poole Arts Centre.

25: Paul Young – Poole Arts Centre.



2: Billie Jo Spears + Lonnie Donegan – Winter Gardens.

35 YEARS AGO

21: Tom Robinson Band + Stiff Little Fingers – Village Bowl.

26: The Stranglers – Village Bowl.

1: The Shadows – Winter Gardens.



40 YEARS AGO
Family – The Hardrock.

45 YEARS AGO

20: Ten Years After – The Ritz.

1: Fleetwood Mac – The Ritz.

50 YEARS AGO

20: Steve Marriott & the Moonlites + Zoot Money + Tony Blackburn – Pavilion Ballroom: Fresh from his starring role in *Oliver!*, the young Steve Marriott steps out with his first beat group.

23, 2: Manfred Mann – Le Disque A Go Go.

24: The Andy Summers Jazz Quartet – Le Disque A Go Go.



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T: 01202 525333
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Ellis Jones Solicitors
Sandbourne House,
302 Charminster Road,
Bournemouth,
Dorset BH8 9RU

www.ellisjones.co.uk

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