

REVERSIBLE

The Conservation Zine

Issue 3: Bugs

@reversiblezine



Reversible Zine Artist - Steven Kutcher

"One of my paradigms is that insect footprints cover the world. They are generally not seen as they leave little to see. When they walk on dirt you can see their footprints but they are not permanent. I make their walking footprints permanent..."

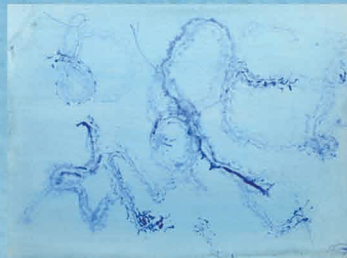
Steven Kutcher is an artist, teacher, lecturer, photographer, writer, radio personality, entomologist, consultant, and environmentalist. Working as a biological consultant for private industry, government agencies, the entertainment industry, has earned him a worldwide reputation. His more noticeable claims to fame being work on feature films including "Arachnophobia," "Jurassic Park," and "Spiderman" utilising his knowledge on arthropods. The biggest influence in his current work started with a project for Spielberg making a fly walk through ink leaving its footprints.

Steven is incredibly relatable to many conservators, he had an early interest in both insects and art. At the age of four he collected fireflies and wild berries in the Catskill Mountains in New York and his artistic journey started with a professional watercolor set from his uncle Sam.

In 2003 Steven started showing his insect footprint art, experimenting to find the perfect method. Having an understanding of insect biology meant he could find the most suitable mediums and by wetting the paper, the tiny footprints become larger and more emphasised.



Steven with his tiled artwork



Sweet One Honey Bee, 2004



Bug in a Box No. 2
Darkling Beetle, 2006



Photo Credit Howard Morris

Steven at work in his studio

Do you think about the long term preservation of your work? I am very concerned about long term preservation. My biggest problem is silverfish as they eat paper and paint. I have been working on more secure methods of enclosing my art on paper. Both process and image are important. During the initial process there is no time to think about anything else, in the later stages I can refine the aesthetics.

What are your aims for the future? I hope to make people more creatively aware of the interrelationship between art and science and the importance of preserving nature. I plan to make the largest piece of artwork with the smallest paint brushes, insects feet. I do this by tiling the artwork.

Finally, are any bugs hurt in the process? I can assure you the insects are not harmed. There is a practical reasons for this. I need to use them many times and so I treat them with great care. I am concerned about my art surviving as well as the insects I use.

www.bugartbysteven.com

"People with small minds do not see the limitless adventures and boundless knowledge that tiny insects have to offer. And people with big minds have the ability to be humble in the presence of a small insect."



There's nothing worse than coming back to your **#pesttraps** only to find a visitor **#stillalive** I've heard horror stories of monsters strong enough to drag the trap across the floor! How do you deal with these **#critters**

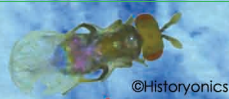
I spend an inordinate amount of time releasing the freshly caught ones using tissue and swab sticks

I quickly put them in a plastic bag and try to stay calm and check what else is in there...

Step 1 scream,
Step 2 swear,
Step 3 stomp like I'm in a hoedown

I've got a plastic box the traps go in, leave them for at least a week before I check them so everything is dead

Microwasps and pheromones at large to tackle Stately Home moth infestation! - Hilary Jarvis



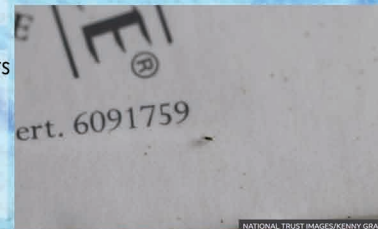
At the National Trust we've been trialling two new biological solutions to address webbing clothes moth infestations that seem to be moving beyond the reach of our standard, non-interventive regime.

Staying closely aligned to our conservation principles, we are adapting the approach to caterpillar damage in soft fruit, an industry where many producers have rejected chemical intervention; and what's good for tomatoes is likely ok for tapestries, right?!

The trial is at Blickling Hall in Norfolk, a large Jacobean mansion with the Trust's biggest concentration of *Tineola bisselliella*. We are investigating the efficacy of disruptive pheromones to reduce mating encounters (by dousing the males in female sex hormone), and parasitoid microwasps to limit viable pupation from the few moth eggs that may still be fertilised by any uncontaminated males.

The female wasps smell out moth eggs, into which they lay their own egg. At less than 0.5 millimetres long, we've seen for ourselves that the hatched adults take a while to get going, but then scuttle and crawl, rather than fly. Their lifespan is generally only about 14 days, and we have needed to increase our housekeeping slightly, but are intrigued to have them with us.

We'll continue to trial the treatments through 2022, but early signs are that they're doing their job and certainly outperforming moth reduction in areas where we only deployed insecticides.



Save the Museum - Card Game Review



NatSCA

The Natural Sciences Collections Association (NatSCA) is a membership organisation and charity that represents natural science collections in the UK. Amongst other things, it means we're here for bugs, especially those that are meant to be in our collections! Entomology is the study of insects, the research of which can help us tackle some of the most significant topics of the day including evolution, biodiversity loss, disease transmission and agricultural sustainability. NatSCA is not just here for entomology collections, but herbaria, taxidermy, fluid preserved, bone, geology, palaeontology and more. One of our main objectives is to support people working with natural science collections to be able to look after them and use them! Besides, it's brilliant to get the opportunity to see beetles, flies and moths up close.

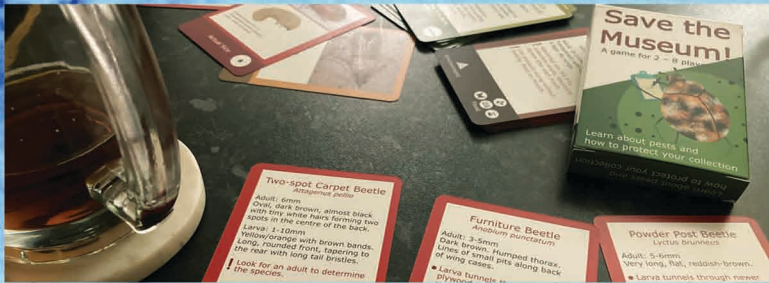
In 2017 we developed a natural science conservation working group with an aim to provide more resource, support and advocacy for the care of these collections. NatSCA jiscmail is well worth signing up to as a free community resource with specialists and enthusiasts.

Remember, specimens are notoriously popular food sources for the cannibalistic pests in our museums. So, keep an eye out, and remember the freezer is your best friend (...in most situations...)



NatSCA membership is only £20/year (£15 for students). Visit:
<https://www.natsca.org/>
<https://www.jiscmail.ac.uk/cgi-bin/webadmin?A0=NATSCA>

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Launched in 2020, the Pest Partners project aimed to support museums and heritage organisations to care for their collections during the Covid-19 Lockdowns and beyond. 138 organisations from across the south west joined and monitored for pests in their buildings. The project provided free trapping and identification kits to help assess the scale and variety of pests that may be threatening collections. This information will be used to provide valuable data for scientific research, in the spread and variety of pest infestations.

The project also produced a card game called 'Save the Museum'. The Reversible Zine team took it for a test drive one Saturday evening.

We were really impressed by the information the cards contained, the pack is useful as a resource for just the pest cards on their own! However, we felt the game was much more designed for people with some conservation knowledge already. Our non-conservator attendees struggled to understand what treatment cards would be effective against their pests, it was suggested symbols linking the cards might make it easier along with a glossary of the symbols for the types of food the pests consume.

We would love to see extension packs in the future to include more pests and other treatments. Let's hope the project continues to go from strength to strength.

- Reversible Zine Team -

Bugs Good Enough To Eat!

Lady Luck Chocolate Ladybirds £5.95
Fortnum and Mason



Chocolate Beetle £30
The Edible Museum



Jelly Spiders £2.09 for 5
Handy Candy



Jar of Bug Biscuits £12.95
Honeywell Biscuit Co.



Fudge Flies £5
Harry Potter Shop



Entropy, Steven Kutcher, Darkling Beetle, 2007