

A YEAR OF TAXONOMY

PRODUCING A CALENDAR FOR THE LINNEAN SOCIETY

Topics Covered:

- Principles and importance of classification and taxonomy
- Understanding the importance of Linnaeus' contribution to science
- Understanding the importance of the Linnaean collection and the role of the Linnean Society
- Research skills
- Presentation skills

The Linnean Society of London is the world's oldest active biological society. Its purpose is to promote the study, understanding and appreciation of the biological sciences. It achieves this by holding meetings, publishing books and scientific journals, and maintaining a world-class natural history library, as well as several important scientific collections.

Procedure

The Linnean Society of London is keen to interest the general public in its collections, history and work. One way to do this would be to produce an attractive, educational calendar.

Produce a calendar for the Linnean Society.

For **each month** choose a suitable mini-topic and write a short piece of interest to go with the picture or pictures chosen to illustrate the mini-topic. Your target audience is the general public.

On page 2 are some suggestions, but you may tackle the task in any way you feel appropriate - use your imagination! Each suggestion could be the theme for one month, several months, or even the whole calendar.

Things to remember:

- Try to make your calendar attractive—use pictures and drawings to good effect
- Make sure your information is accurate! Information about the Linnean Society and its work can be found at www.linnean.org

Here are some ideas for themes—you don't have to use these, if you have a good idea that isn't listed here go for it!

The Linnean Society

The Linnean Society is the world's oldest active biological society. It was founded in 1788 and takes its name from the Swedish naturalist Carl Linnaeus. Where is it and what does it do?

The Linnaean collection/the Linnaean online collection

This is a collection of Linnaeus' preserved biological specimens plus his books and letters which has been kept by the Linnean Society since 1829. Why is it important? How did it come to be in England? In the year 2008 the process began of digitising the collection in order to make it available online.



Butterfly from the Linnaean collection

Carl Linnaeus

A brief account of the life and work of Linnaeus could be the theme for one month, or aspects of his life and work could be used as the basis for a whole calendar. Topics which could be included are:



'The Second Adam' – Linnaeus believed he had a mission to list and order the whole of what he regarded as God's Creation. In the book of Genesis (Chapter 2, verse 19 – "So out of the ground the Lord God formed every animal of the field and every bird of the air, and brought them to the man [Adam] to see what he would call them: and whatever the man called every living creature, that was its name"). Linnaeus was responsible for the modern system of classifying and naming living organisms

Naming living organisms - binomial nomenclature

Linnaeus the traveller – in Sweden, his own country, Linnaeus is well-known for his travel books. He went on several expeditions in remote parts of the country, collecting specimens, recording the life of local people and showing great insight into the workings of nature – he could be regarded as one of the first ecologists.

Linnaeus the poet – this may appeal to arts students. Strindberg, a Swedish author, said "Linnaeus was in reality a poet who happened to become a naturalist". Why did he say this? See, for example, Linnaeus' language at www.linnaeus.uu.se/online/history.

Linnaeus and conservation

Natural selection

In 1858 a joint paper by Darwin and Wallace was read out at the Linnean Society - this was the first published account of the theory of natural selection, one of the outstanding events in the history of science.

