

NORMAN WINFRID MOORE*

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A brief biography of Dr N.W. Moore (born 24 Feb. 1923; retired Chief Advisory Officer of the [British] Nature Conservancy Council, founder Chairman of the Odonata Specialist Group of the IUCN Species Survival Commission, Hon. Fellow of the Linnean Society and the British Dragonfly Society, Member of Honour of the Societas Internationalis Odonatologica, Fellow of the Royal Entomological Society, etc. and founding chairman of the international group promoting Odon. conservation) is followed by his shortened bibliography (1939-2002; 135 titles, fairly complete for odonatological publications, but ca 45 papers on pesticides and environment are omitted). — N.W.M. is a naturalist biologist whose lifelong aim has been to conserve wildlife and to relate the conservation of wildlife to human activities and welfare. In addition to his very wideranging contribution to conservation, he always maintained his long term research on odon. After retiring (1983), he created a reserve beside his garden, and dragonflies again took centre stage. Most of his odonatological work is devoted to studies on adult territorial behaviour, distribution and community structure, and to various aspects of habitat and species conservation.

A brief biography emphasising matters concerning the study of dragonflies and provision for their conservation:

1923-1940. — Norman was born on 24th February 1923 and grew up in a large happy family in the country, in East Sussex where his father was Medical Officer of Health. Norman showed himself as a naturalist very early indeed. His earliest experience was of chalk grassland habitat near Lewes; when he was ten the family moved to Hancox near Battle, on the Wealden. Birds were his primary interest (he has kept bird notes since 1929) but this was soon extended to other animals, particularly dragonflies, which he later described as “the bird watcher’s insect”. In 1936 he went to Eton College, where he spent much of his time either painting pictures (he became an amateur artist) or watching birds at Slough Sewage Farm.

1940-1942. — Norman went up to Trinity College, Cambridge, to read Natural Sciences for a two year wartime degree before he was called up. In addition to his study



Fig. 1. Norman and Janet outside the back of their home, Swavesey. – (Photo by Caroline Moore in the 1990s).

of zoology, botany and geology, he became President of the Bird Club and with Jeffery Harrison organised a survey of the bird population of Cambridgeshire woodlands.

1942-1947. – Wartime service in the Royal Artillery. Norman trained as a mountain gunner in the Cairngorm mountains in Scotland, with horses and mules. He was later wounded and taken prisoner in Germany.

1947-1948. – He returned to Cambridge to read Part II Zoology. In the Zoology Department he met Janet, who became his wife. A three month expedition to the Gambia (then

having a map with large areas labelled “Unexplored”) introduced him to tropical biology and confirmed his particular interest in dragonflies.

1948-1953. – Norman was an *Assistant Lecturer, later Lecturer, in the Zoology Department of the University of Bristol*, where his first two children Peter and Caroline were born. While at Bristol he returned to his earlier studies of dragonflies. The work of N. Tinbergen and K. Lorenz was providing new understanding of territorial behaviour in birds, and Norman looked at dragonfly behaviour in this context, which showed the importance of behaviour patterns for the interpretation of populations. He found a research site in the Gordano Valley (a 12 mile cycle ride) and prepared a thesis “*On the behaviour and ecology of dragonflies (Odonata, Anisoptera)*” on which the University of Bristol awarded him the degree of PhD.

1953-1960. – The formation of the *Nature Conservancy* (1949) gave Norman the opportunity to do the sort of job he had always wanted. He joined the organisation in 1953 as *Regional Officer for South West England* (from Hereford to the Isles of Scilly) based at Furzebrook Research Station on heathland near Wareham in Dorset. He was responsible for the National Nature Reserves in his Region, some of which he chose. He was concerned with their management, encouraging research in them and initiating local liaisons. Later he wrote an important paper on the heaths of Dorset and their conservation. He studied the effects of myxomatosis, newly arrived in Britain, which gave him early experience of the politics of nature conservation. To detect any indirect effects of depletion of rabbits, he organised surveys of buzzard and hare populations throughout the British Isles. He served on the scientific subcommittee of the Ministry

of Agriculture and Fisheries Advisory Committee on Myxomatosis. While the family was in Wareham Norman's third child, Helena, was born.

"*Dragonflies*" by P.S. Corbet, C. Longfield & N.W. Moore was published in the Collins New Naturalist series in 1960. His dragonfly research in Dorset was concentrated on a series of wartime bomb holes in the heath of the Arne Peninsula, conveniently placed for experimental studies of territorial behaviour.

1960-1974. — When the Nature Conservancy set up the Monks Wood Experimental Station near Huntingdon in 1960, Norman was appointed *Head of the Toxic Chemicals and Wildlife Division*. This research unit was interdisciplinary and highly innovative and productive, studying the effects of pesticides on wildlife in the environment and producing a very large number of papers. It was influential in Britain; Norman's many visitors included the Prime Minister (Harold Wilson), and Norman served on the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food (MAFF) Advisory Committee of the Pesticide Safety Precaution Scheme. It was also influential overseas; for example, Norman went to the USA in 1963, and was invited to Australia in 1972 to advise the CSIRO.

In 1965 he instigated and organised a NATO Advanced Study Institute at Monk's Wood which was attended by scientists from many countries, including USSR as well as USA; it lasted a whole week, with much time allocated to discussion. He became secretary of the IUCN committee on chemical controls and he served on the OECD committee on monitoring of pesticides in the environment. His 1967 publication "*A synopsis of the pesticide problem*" (see Bibliography) is perhaps the best short summary of his approach.



Fig. 2. Norman by his pond, the Mere. — (Photo by Caroline McCrudden).



Fig. 3. Inaugural Conference of the Odonata Specialist Group, Species Survival Commission IUCN, at the Kyoto International Congress Centre, Japan; August 1980. From left to right: J.A.L. Watson, E. Schmidt, N.W. Moore, B. Kiauta, F.G. Howarth. — (Photo by M. Kiauta).

Norman's research in his period at Monks Wood was not only on pesticides: with colleagues he studied the effects of the disappearance of hedges ("*Hedges*", E. Pollard, M.D. Hooper & N.W. Moore (Collins, 1974). His own research on dragonflies continued when possible: other work required the digging of 20 ponds in a nearby nature reserve, Woodwalton Fen, where Norman began a long term study (1962-1988) of dragonfly colonisation and territorial behaviour.

1974-1983. — The Toxic Chemical and Wildlife Division ended when for political reasons the Nature Conservancy was split into two parts. The close link between conservation and scientific research within one organisation was now severed. Norman became *Chief Advisory Officer* of the reconstituted *Nature Conservancy Council*. Having organised the first study on damage to and loss of Sites of Special Scientific Interest and written the guidelines for their selection, Norman's main job was to prepare the NCC's document on Agriculture and Nature Conservation, at a time when technological advances were making it increasingly difficult to conserve wild life on the farmland which covered so much of Britain. He had been involved with the Farming and Wildlife Group since the organisation was founded at the Silsoe Conference in 1965, and he now became National Chairman. A constructive dialogue between opposing interests has been a characteristic pursuit of Norman's, both in his pesticide work and in his advocacy of a land-use strategy.

In this period he served on an international committee in Brussels and Luxembourg on the effects of certain pesticides (particularly cadmium) on the environment, and from 1979 - 1983 he was Visiting Professor of Environmental Studies at Wye College, University of London. He studied the effects of changes in flora and fauna during the

development of a new town (Bar Hill) on arable farmland in Cambridgeshire (1966 - 1988) in addition to continuing his long term study of dragonflies at the Woodwalton Fen ponds.

1983 Retirement. — His stream of publications continued, now more often concerned with dragonfly research. When he retired his colleagues asked him what he wanted and he said "A pond": they most kindly presented him with the means to have one dug, on land adjoining his garden where he had already planted an acre of woodland. The pond is 40 metres long and specially designed to attract dragonflies. Within two years it was visited by 18 species, most of which have bred, so that Norman has a constantly available research site on his doorstep; it is also enjoyed by Norman and Janet's eight grandchildren.

Other activities also continued: he became *Chairman of the National Trust's Wicken Fen Local Management Committee* (1985-1996) and continued as founder *Chairman of the Odonata Specialist Group of the IUCN Species Survival Commission* (1980-1999) with biennial international meetings and *Reports*.

Norman's most important publication was the prize-winning semi-autobiographical book, "*The bird of time*" (Cambridge University Press, 1987) in which he emphasized that conservation is about the future. His life long aim has been to conserve wildlife and to relate the conservation of wildlife to human activities and welfare. A new small book is just published: it gives an account of planting a wood and making a pond, with a second half relating this local experience with the

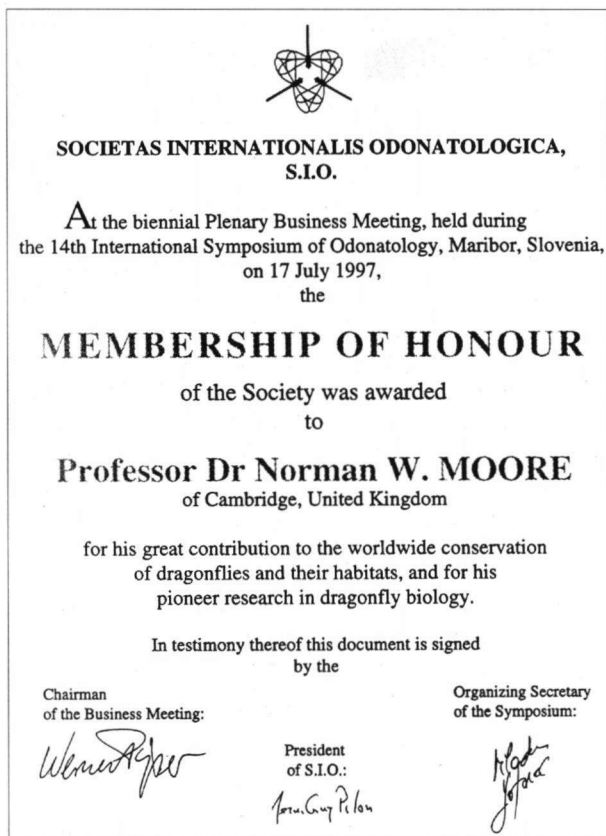


Fig. 4. Facsimile of the S.I.O. Membership of Honour Diploma.

wider conservation scene and relating that to the conservation of mankind.

Norman belongs to many scientific societies, including The Linnean Society (Hon. Fellow), the Institute of Biology (Fellow), the British Ecological Society (former Vice President), the Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management, the British Ornithological Union (former Vice President; Union Medal, 1972), the British Trust for Ornithology, the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds, the Mammal Society of the British Isles, the Royal Entomological Society (Fellow), the British Dragonfly Society (Hon. Member), the Societas Internationalis Odonatologica (Member of Honour) and the World Dragonfly Association. In 2002 he was given the Stamford Raffles Award of the Zoological Society of London for 2001 for his work on dragonflies, and, by the Royal Entomological Society, the first Marsh Entomology Award for Insect Conservation.

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SOME PUBLICATIONS ON THE WORK OF Dr NORMAN W. MOORE

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