ECT Adds Two More Experiments to its Register!

ECT’s national register of long-term field experiments now stands at 29 across 22 different sites. The two new additions are: the awe-inspiring BiFor-FACE elevated CO₂ experiment in oak woodland in Staffordshire, and the Ainsdale Dune Slacks grazing experiment in West Lancashire. View our new webpage for BiFor-FACE here.

Please get in contact if you have new information for the website or newsletter!

Great News From the Glen Finglas LTE!

17 years after the Glen Finglas experiment started, the team has published its first paper on vegetation change. Despite major management changes (including abandonment and tripling grazing) it took 9 years for the first species to show effect (blaeberry). Other species only showed an impact after 15 years. By contrast, meadow pipits responded within a few months of treatments starting. Being so large, the plots contain a mosaic of different communities, enabling study of community-level responses. Infertile habitats contained species that responded to grazing removal, whereas communities of intermediate productivity showed the greatest response to increased grazing as the sheep widened their habitat selectivity at higher density. Vegetation change appears very slow in infertile, unproductive habitats at Glen Finglas. Changes in structure led to the quick response of invertebrates and meadow pipits, but it could take many years for changes in plant composition to cascade through systems like this. Read more about the Glen Finglas LTE here.

New Trustees Appointed to ECT’s Board

ECT is delighted to announce the appointment of three new trustees to its Board, with effect from 1 June 2019. The new Board members are Kadmiel Maseyk (Open University), Bridget Emmett (CEH Bangor) and Chas Holt (ecological consultant). Read more about our Board membership here. We are still looking to fill a vacancy for a dedicated fundraiser.

Further New Staff at RainDrop

We welcome Laura McManus to the RainDrop team, recently appointed as the new research technician based at the University of Oxford.

Laura will be collecting data from the RainDrop experiment and facilitating the research carried out there by PhD and undergraduate students. RainDrop aims to compare a range of above- and below-ground traits and species biodiversity within the grassland community across different climatic treatments. Read more about the RainDrop LTE here.

ECT-PSE JOINT SCIENCE MEETING IN BUXTON A GREAT SUCCESS!

On 21/22 May, ECT’s ‘big event’ took place in Buxton, Derbyshire in close partnership with the BES Plants-Soils-Ecosystems special interest group.

Titled Long-term ecological experiments in plant-soil ecosystems, this was our first attempt at a national two-day conference for LTEs. Around 80 delegates enjoyed talks in five habitat-based sessions, with an opening keynote from Raj Whitlock (Liverpool) and Karl Evans (Sheffield) on the Buxton Climate Change Impacts Laboratory (BCCIL). One of the key highlights for delegates was a field visit to BCCIL, hosted by Phil Grimes (pictured) and Raj Whitlock. Our congratulations go to José van Paassen (Aberdeen) who won the speaker prize! You can still review the conference ‘conversation’ via the Twitter hashtag #LongTermEco19.

Two New ECT Grants Awarded!

Nash’s Field & Ainsdale Dune Slacks

ECT has made two new awards recently under our Small Grants Scheme to Ramesh Ningthoujam at Imperial College Silwood Park for spatio-temporal mapping work on Nash’s Field LTE, and to Jonathan Millett at Loughborough University for dipwell installation at the newly-registered Ainsdale Dune Slacks grazing LTE in West Lancashire. Read more about the Nash’s Field experiment here, and look out for our new webpage on Ainsdale Dune Slacks soon!