

## British Phycological Society

Winter Council Meeting January 2022

Algae Outreach Committee Report: Martyn Kelly Winter Meeting January 5<sup>th</sup> 2022

Outward-facing activities of the BPS in 2021 included the Hilda Canter-Lund competition, a joint field meeting with the Quekett Microscopical Club (QMC), performances at the Green Man Festival and a new scheme to encourage members to make short films. The Hilda Canter-Lund competition was fully online for the first time, using “plug-ins” that enabled photos to be uploaded and BPS members to vote for their favourites. A social media campaign run by our student reps led to the largest field of entries (75) in the history of the competition and the winners were Sophie Steinhagen and Gerd Günther.

After the 2020 Green Man Festival was cancelled due to Covid we had hoped that the 2021 Festival would go ahead as planned. Eventually, the Welsh Government gave the go-ahead just a month before gates were due to open. A few stressful weeks followed but myself and Thomas Andrade eventually performed twice in the Festival’s science tent, showing Susi Arnott’s Slimeworld videos and also used one of the BPS’s new training microscopes to explore the algae of the River Usk. We also learned some valuable lessons on the practicalities of putting on events at festivals that we hope to take forward into 2022. A few weeks after Green Man, a group of BPS and QMC members met at Malham Tarn Field Centre for a weekend of microscopy in the Yorkshire Dales, with a focus on the cyanobacteria and desmid communities of the area.

Finally, in early December, the first outputs from the new Video Bursary Scheme were uploaded to YouTube and TikTok. These short films were made by BPS members under the tutelage of a professional film maker (Susi Arnott) and provide us with some useful resources for raising the profile of algae. We hope that we can learn from this first exercise and that this will become a regular fixture in the BPS calendar in the future.