

Home:
Jens Juels Gade 33
DK-2100 Copenhagen Ø
Denmark

Tel: +45 35554959
Mobile: +45 23718973
Home page:
www.zi.ku.dk/personal/drnash

David Nash

NEWS₂₀₀₁

Work:
Department of Population Ecology
Universitetsparken 15
DK-2100 Copenhagen Ø
Denmark

Tel: +45 35321328
Fax: +45 35321250
e-mail: DRNash@zi.ku.dk

Another year draws to a close, and it seems to have been a long and tough one, as I guess it has for many people – This year, more than ever, I'm looking forward to a relaxing Christmas, and I hope that you will be able to have the same.

Last Christmas I was in the UK for an extended visit to Keele, doing more analysis of the surface chemistry of my *Maculinea alcon* caterpillars and their *Myrmica* ant hosts. I took a break from Chemical work to spend Christmas and the New Year with my family. Chrissie (my niece) is now 3, and really enjoyed Christmas when she, Pete and Marion visited my parents' place. After the New Year it was back to Keele, where I had a very productive time while kindly being hosted by Graeme Jones. This was very successful, and I'm hoping to submit a paper to *Nature* on the results in the New Year.

I've been to an awful lot of meetings and conferences this year, in fact probably too many, but I've not really had much chance to take a holiday or visit anywhere other than for work. I did take a short break in the UK in May, flying over on my birthday and managing to catch my father's performance of various choral works with KAOS (The Kidlington Amateur Operatic Society) on one of the hottest days of the year.



The Alhambra in Granada

The first meeting I went to was the first meeting of the "INSECTS" network, which took place in Granada, Spain in April. Granada is a wonderful town, famous for the Alhambra amongst other things and we had a few brief opportunities for sightseeing during the six days we were there. The second meeting wasn't 'til August, when there was the European Society of Evolutionary Biology meeting, which this year took place in Århus, Denmark, so it wasn't a major trip. I gave a talk at this meeting which went down pretty well, coming runner-up in the competition for "most entertaining and informative talk".

My and Thomas Als' work on *Maculinea alcon* also featured heavily in a report on the meeting in the Danish newspaper *Jyllandsposten* and in a radio program on Danish national radio. The third meeting was the meeting of the European sections of the IUSI (International Union for the Study of Social Insects) in Berlin in September, which shattered once and for all the myth of German efficiency. The fourth meeting took me to Germany again, for a conference on butterfly conservation in Laufen in November. This is a very pretty town on the Austrian border, where the Christmas Carol "Silent night" may have been written (or it may have been in Oberndorf, the other half of the town across the Austrian border, which is where it was first performed). The meeting and accommodation were in a former Capuchin monastery, which was surprisingly one of the most comfortable and well-equipped places I've ever stayed. The fifth meeting was in Cambridge in the UK in early December, where the British section of the IUSI held a joint meeting with the Isaac Newton Institute on mathematical modelling of social insects "from worker to colony". This allowed me to pay a brief visit of about 14 hours to my parents, during which we also had a very pleasant family brunch at my brother Paul and his girlfriend Alison's new house in Witney. The sixth and final meeting for 2001 was the second "INSECTS" workshop in Florence in sunny Italy. This was a very good 2.5 day meeting, but one for which the travelling proved rather long-winded. On the way to the meeting we were diverted from Florence airport because of storms with 100kmh winds, and landed at Bologna where there was snow and sub-zero temperatures (it was lovely and warm in Copenhagen when we left!). I wrote most of this newsletter in Florence airport, our flight out having been cancelled for "technical reasons", and with the prospect of an overnight stay in Frankfurt (at Lufthansa's expense) eating into the precious little time left before Christmas.



The causeway to Æbelø

There have also been a few Danish field trips this year. In May I, and much of the department of Evolutionary Biology, went to the Island of Møn to Prof. Peter Arctander's house to have a wonderful day of fresh shrimps and spit-roast goat. In June, a departmental trip was organised to Æbelø, an Island linked to the north coast of Fyn (the Island between Jutland and Zealand in Denmark) by a causeway. The whole Island is a nature reserve, and we had a fun day out looking at the natural history of the place – I still haven't got round to preparing the list of ant species that we found there. In late July, I did a bit of fieldwork for my own project on *Maculinea alcon* in North Jutland and on the Island of Læsø (one of my favourite parts of Denmark – Highly recommended for a visit!). I was accompanied by Darlyne Murawski, a freelance photographer who is writing an article for *National Geographic* on carnivorous Lepidoptera. She took some really great pictures of my butterflies and their ant hosts, which I hope will make it into the magazine, as well as some pictures of me doing fieldwork, which probably shouldn't be included! Thomas Als, Boris Baer and Pia Gertsch also helped out with various parts of the trip.

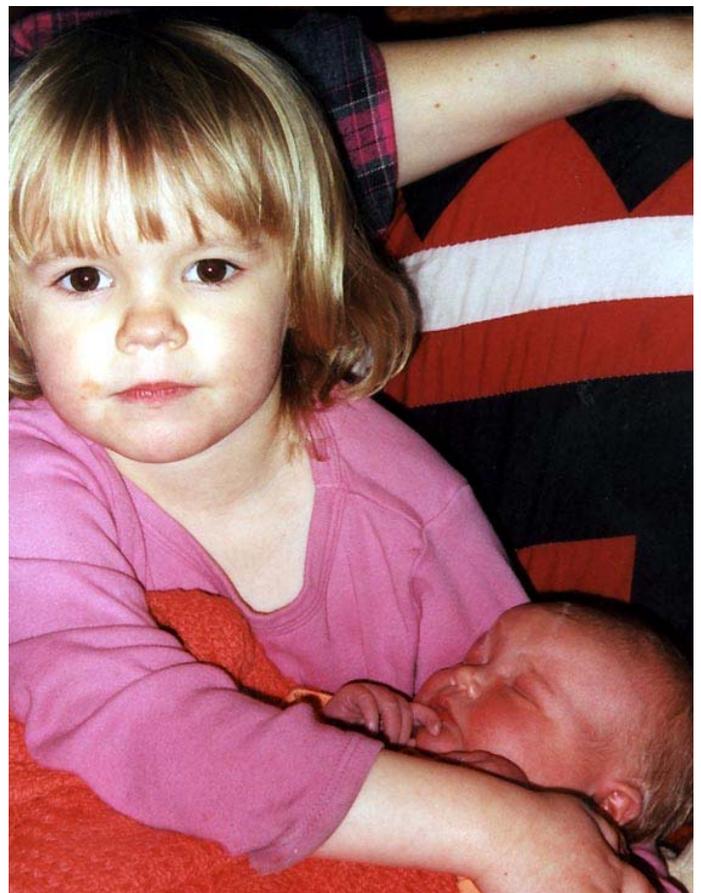


Alexia, Julie and the little mermaid

I've had several visits this year from friends and family, particularly in the middle of the summer. My mum and Dad came over for a very enjoyable week in July, in which we managed to do many of those touristy things in Copenhagen that I never get round to doing on my own. In early August I moved house yet again, this time into one of the *Kartoffelrækkerne* (Potato rows). My new place is a bit smaller than my previous flats, but is in a wonderful location. To test out the new accommodation, Max Garzarolli and his son Luca and daughter Lisa (my

how they've grown!) spent an action-packed weekend there, which culminated in a *Texas* concert at the Tivoli gardens. Later in August, Julie Beale, Steve Mott and their two-and-a-half-year-old daughter Alexia came over for a visit. Copenhagen is a very child-friendly city, and we spent an exhausting week visiting most of my local playgrounds (of which there are many), sightseeing, horse-riding and walking, walking around Copenhagen's defensive lakes.

I finally had a housewarming party for my new flat on December 19th, only 5 months after I moved in. This was the day before Seirian Sumner left Copenhagen, so it was also a leaving party for her – complete with Christmas decorations, presents from the *Nisse* (Danish house-gnomes) and the now traditional *Feuerzangenbowle*.



Chrissie showing off Carys

Saving the best 'til last, I was delighted by the arrival of my second niece – Carys Gloria Nash was born at 23:11 on November the 13th and weighed in at 8lb 11oz (that's 3.95kg) after a 3-hour labour. My brother Pete and Marion are immensely proud of her, but not as much as her sister Chrissie!

I hope that you have had a fun year, and will have an even better one in 2002!

David