

Home:
Snertingevej 30
DK-2700 Brønshøj
Denmark

Mobile: +45 23718973
Home page:
bioold.science.ku.dk/drnash/
e-mail: Maculinea@gmail.com
www.facebook.com/Maculinea

DAVID NASH

NEWS 2016

Work:
Centre for Social Evolution
Section for Ecology and Evolution
Universitetsparken 15
DK-2100 Copenhagen Ø
Denmark

Tel: +45 35321323
Fax: +45 35321250
e-mail: DRNash@bio.ku.dk

It's Christmas day, and as I sit on the sofa next to Jane, drinking Earl Grey tea, eating *pebernødder* and watching *The Life of Brian* on TV, it's an appropriate time to look back on 2016. It's been a strange year for many, but we have emerged largely unscathed, although it remains to be seen what Brexit will mean in the long-run. I am still enjoying Denmark tremendously, particularly married life with Jane, although things are definitely getting tougher. Because of lack of funding, I haven't been on any really long distance trips this year, but managed to take several European excursions.



Emily, in typical literary mode

Emily the cat continues to become more integrated into our family (she's training us well), so last Christmas saw me visiting my parents in Islip (U.K.) for a few days over the festive season on my own, while Jane stayed in Denmark to look after her, a procedure that I repeated over Easter.



Mum & dad, me, Chrissie, Carys, Pete and Marion – Christmas 2015

At the end of March I attended the fourth meeting about European Butterfly Conservation in Wageningen in the Netherlands, and also managed to catch up briefly with Duur Aanen and his daughters, who have grown beyond recognition from their Copenhagen days. Early May saw another meeting, this time of symbiotic associations of ants, in Munich, where I spent a delightful few days interacting with many old friends and colleagues as well as meeting some new ones.



Many familiar faces at the ANTS2016 meeting in Munich

My fieldwork was not particularly extensive this year, but I did spend a week on the island of Læsø, one of my favourite places in Denmark, where I was very happy to be joined by Mischa Dijkstra for the last couple of days of sample collection. Mischa then stayed with us in Brønshøj for a couple of days, and it was great to catch up with him.



Mischa, spotting ant nests on Læsø

In August, Jane and I both managed to visit Islip (while Jane's mum and Birger cat-sat) to celebrate my mum's 80th birthday with the rest of the family, including a memorable high tea at the *Old Parsonage Hotel* in Oxford. I also took a trip back to my old Oxford college, Lady Margaret Hall, where I showed Jane and Koos Boomsma and Ada Kramer (who were in the middle of a 6-month sabbatical in Oxford) around the college (half of which is new since my day) and gardens (which haven't changed so much).



Paul, Dad & Mum taking high tea on my mum's 80th birthday



Jane in the fellow's garden, Lady Margaret Hall

Later in the year, I was invited to be an external examiner on two different Ph.D. theses. The first was in Leuven in Belgium in late September, which I hadn't visited since Robert Esnouf and Iris Geens got married there in 2007. As well as being introduced to the doctoral work of Thomas Parmentier, it was great to become reacquainted with this beautiful town as well as Johan Billen, Tom Wenseleers and their research group (particularly ex-Copenhagener Jelle van Zweden).

The second Ph.D. exam was in Helsinki in October, where I had a rather rushed couple of days (partly because I managed to leave my suitcase on the airport bus and spent half a day getting it back). Jana Wolf's thesis was very interesting, and I did manage to catch up a little with Lotta Sundström, Perttu

Sëppä, Pekka Pamilo, Jonna Kulmuni Heikki Helanterä and Riitta Savolainen, all of whom I know of old. Between the two PhD exams, Jane and I celebrated ten years of knowing each other, and our eighth wedding anniversary, as well as seeing an excellent performance by King Crimson at the Falkonersal in Copenhagen. We returned there again in late October for an impressive concert by Jean Michel Jarre.

I visited Islip one more time (again on my tod) in mid-December, to have an early Christmas get-together with my parents, brother Paul and Alison, but just missed meeting up with other brother Pete and family. He had just left to spend Christmas in New Zealand along with Marion and their daughter Carys, visiting their older daughter Chrissie, who is currently one third of her way through a round-the world adventure. I also managed to attend the IUSSI (International Union for the Study of Social Insects) North-west European section meeting in London, as well as briefly seeing Robert and Aidan Esnouf, and old friends Julie Beale and Steve Mott.



Traditional duck and trimmings with Jane and her mum

Yesterday (Christmas Eve) was spent at home, celebrating a fairly traditional Danish Christmas with Jane's mum (roast duck, brown and white potatoes and red cabbage, followed by *risalamande*). Now I'm looking forward to a relaxing 7 days off work (well, apart from writing 4 paper reviews and sorting out the inevitable problems that my conservation students are having organizing themselves) before starting back again on 2nd of January.

Otherwise 2016 has seen three unsuccessful grant applications (one still in the pipeline), but on the plus side, I managed to publish several good scientific papers, and see through the successful completion of my Ph.D. student, Janni Dolby Clement, two M.Sc. students (Mette Hansen and Marie Hauge) and three B.Sc. project students (Philip Holck Folman, Lærke Blum Bruun and Julie Adelørn). 2017 will inevitably involve more grant applications, and more interesting student projects, as well as hopefully visiting the USA for next year's solar eclipse and Paris for the next European puzzle party. I am looking forward to it, and I hope you are too. In the meantime, I hope you are enjoying Christmastide.

David