

REPORT: FALCONER MUSEUM & STORE, VISIT 21st SEPTEMBER 2021

Museum Store GROUND FLOOR

Sensor reading: 20.2°C 60.7%RH within acceptable range.

The geology / palaeontology trays were all checked, including the Falconer collection of fossilised (dinosaur) bones (1990.22) specimens, these were all stable.

The bases of some of the storage trays had accumulations of dust and fragment debris as well as evidence of spiders webs and deceased spiders.

Most of the trays were lined with softening and had separator cells to prevent physical contact between specimens, however, there were some trays of fossil material and minerals where the specimens were loose and unprotected.

One of the chairs showed evidence of recent woodworm activity, fresh exit holes and dust accumulation. If it will fit into the freezer, will try freeze treatment next visit.



Palaeontology



Statue



Chair

ACTION: Next visit

- Marble statue of 'Shakespeare Wood Spirit' needs to have a Tyvek dust cover.
- Additional softening for some of the palaeontology trays
- Freeze or treat chair for wood worm

FIRST FLOOR

A walk-through check was made for all the stacks.

Three pheromone lure traps for flying clothes moths are located as follows:

- Trap 1 hung on the art rack the end of Stack 2, (Textiles)
- Trap 2 next to the art racks opposite stacks 14 & 15 (Taxidermy)
- Trap 3 front end of the stack 14.

Blunder traps are located the radiators at front and rear of store.

Trap Check 21/09/2021

Moth lures all clean, no evidence of flying clothes moth

Blunder traps, one dead spider and one Australian Spider beetle. (preliminary ID)

Spider beetles are a pest of organic collections especially natural history mounts, a second beetle was noted (dead) on the table at the front of the store. These could just be isolated intruders, but continued monitoring should determine if there is a source in the store.

Environmental data, sensor readings:

Stack 1.	20.1°C	56.7% RH
Stack 11	20.5°C	56.5%RH

Checked the cased and open taxidermy in the front section of the store:

- **Case of Irridescent birds** – lots of old insect damage, does not look to have a current infestation but it is difficult to be sure.
- **Antelope** – dusty , hair breakage and loss due to embrittlement, old insect damage. - Cover
- **Case of Ducks** – Glass side panel (R) is loose and partially open. The ducks appear stable, no obvious pest issues, access is restricted, there are heavy items in front of the case.

Stacks 1-6 General check, all are clean, no changes noted from the previous visit

Stack 7 In-depth check of all the trays (23 bays each with 12 trays)

Mixed contents, mostly in good condition and well packed.

7.12.12 – Old wooden lock and plate mounted on a Perspex stand. The lock appears to have had treatment to consolidate and treat for woodworm. The item is still fragile, a small fragment has become detached but is not in any immediate danger.

7.18.11 – Drawer containing fluid preserved natural history specimens.

Free liquid was noted in the tray and drips visible in the tray beneath, one of the sealed fluid perspex boxes was cracked and leaking. The box contained two osteological/anatomical specimens, one of which looks to be a mole, both were showing signs of tissue deterioration.

The liquid is unidentified but given the consistency it probably contains glycerol, possibly also formalin. It was treated as hazardous. The leaking box was placed in a spill tray and wrapped in polythene, then put into the fume cupboard.

The drawer was cleaned and all affected packing removed, wrapped and disposed. New packing was substituted, and the other items put back into the drawer.

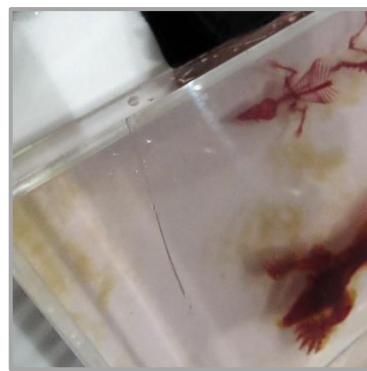
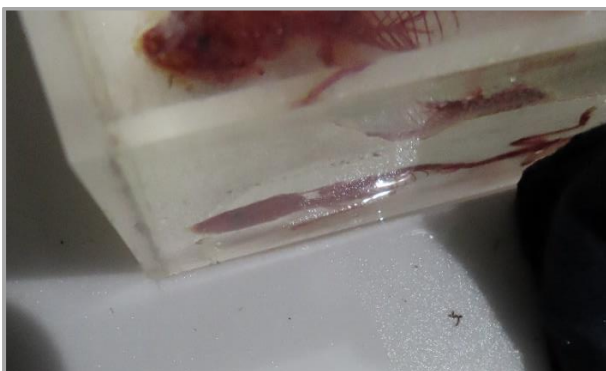
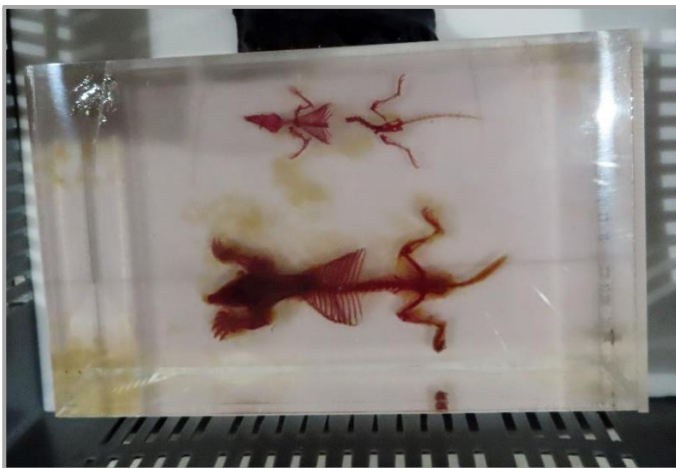
For the safety of the surrounding collections and visitors/ staff, all the fluid preserved material should sit in spill trays, either in the drawer or preferably in a designated cabinet.

It is advisable to store fluid collections in a separate labelled cabinet, many of the preservatives are hazardous and come under COSHH.

The main fluid preservatives are:

- Industrial methylated spirit (alcohol),
- Formalin in various mixtures, including with glycerol
- Propylene phenoxetol.

Drawer: (7.17.1) (7.19.11) (7.22.9) (7.22.1) (7.22.11) & (7.22.12) also house fluid preserved collections. There is a mixture of container types, perspex boxes, glass jars and glass tubes – the tubes which are field collected specimens probably contain alcohol.



ACTION: Next visit

- Identify a cabinet or cupboard in the lab \ workroom that can be used to safely house the fluid preserved collections, place fluid containers in spill trays within the cabinet.

Stack 8 – 15 General check, all are clean, no changes noted from the previous visit. Stacks 13,14 & 15 Taxidermy specimens show no obvious signs of new insect activity.

Two comments:

Stack 9 large spinning wheel, potential active wood worm, some of the exit holes look quite fresh.

Stack 14

14.10.3 & 14.11.3 Basket and some wooden slats freeze treated for active woodworm, action from the previous report. These two items were checked and put back on their designated shelves.

FALCONER MUSEUM

Environmental data: Sensor readings 19.3°C, 56.3% RH

The exhibits high-lighted in the previous report (November 2020) as having potential issues were checked, no changes were noted.

Insect traps placed by the music display on the ground floor and on the balcony area by the Tortiphant Sculpture were checked no new activity noted.

The Tortiphant Sculpture showed no new signs of damage



ACTION: Monitor regularly.

Jeanette Pearson ACR

High Life Highland Conservation Service

28th September 2021