



Churchill College
Storey's Way
Cambridge
CB3 0DS

The Evolution of Dragonfly Wings

Dr Robin Wootton
University of Exeter

7:30 pm, Monday 11th May, 2015

Wolfson Hall Lecture Theatre, Churchill College, Storey's Way, Cambridge

The lecture will be preceded by a short presentation from one of this year's bursary winners Jan Mertens on his research into new materials.

Attendees to this evenings lecture are asked to avoid making unnecessary noise in the foyer area as it is exam time and students are revising nearby. Thank you.

The Lecture:

Robin Wootton writes:

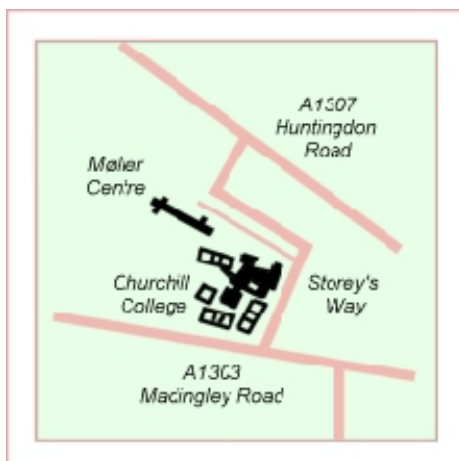
Dragonflies are among the most skilful and spectacular of all flying insects, and are also among the earliest to appear in the fossil record. Superficial resemblances between Palaeozoic fossils and modern forms make them favourites for creationists wishing to demonstrate that evolution is a myth. On the contrary detailed examination of the mechanics of their wings and the adaptive significance of changes in their structure through time provides excellent evidence of 300 million years of progressive refinement and improvement on a broad front, probably reflecting increasing flight agility in the prey on which they depend.



About the Speaker:

Robin Wootton taught zoology at Exeter University for four decades. From the 1970s he and his group pioneered an engineering approach to insect wings, investigating and demonstrating their unique qualities as smart, flexible aerofoils, and endeavouring to make functional sense of evolutionary trends in their construction. While most of the research was concerned with the wings' operation in flight, he worked for a period in the 1990s on the mechanics of their folding, and developed then a wider interest in folding structures which has continued into his retirement. He has given many lectures on these, on flight and a lot of other things, to a wide range of audiences from aeronautical engineers to primary schoolchildren.

Practical Matters



Those attending the CSAR lecture may park in the Senior Car Park on Churchill Road, which is off Storey's Way. More parking is available further along Churchill Road, and in the Möller Centre at the far end.

CSAR lectures are open to all; CSAR members are admitted free. Pupils and students may register for free membership at the lecture reception desk.

Non-members are asked to make a nominal contribution of £3.00.

Coffee and biscuits are available in the Wolfson Foyer from around 7pm. For further directions, see: www.chu.cam.ac.uk/about/visitors/directions.php