

Obituary: E. Charles Nelson FLS, VMM (15 September 1951–20 May 2024)



Figure 1. Charles Nelson (1951–2024) in 2023. © Photograph Gina Douglas.

Charles Nelson (Figure 1) was an acclaimed botanist, author and plant historian of international renown. Writing under his preferred name of E. Charles Nelson, his published legacy includes over 40 books and more than 160 research papers on botany, horticulture, floristics, natural history and the history of botany. As a taxonomist, Charles specialized in Ericaceae, the heather

family, and particularly in the genus *Erica*. His interests were wide ranging and he wrote prolifically on the numerous topics that interested him. His acute eye for detail and his concern for accuracy made him a meticulous researcher, ensuring that his outputs, either taxonomic or the written word, were of the highest standard. It also made him a formidable editor, but his feedback was coupled with kindness, generosity and a sense of humour, which extended to the naming of new species (see below). His contribution to the history of Irish plants (native, introduced and cultivated), Irish gardens and to the people associated with them is unsurpassed.

Charles was a valued member of a number of societies specializing in the fields that interested him. To these societies he dedicated long and loyal service, which included governance, acting as editor for their journals, contributing to conferences, developing and curating databases, and contributing numerous articles to their journals and newsletters. He served for many years as Editor for The Heather Society yearbook and the journal *Archives of Natural History*. He was a founding member and first chairman of the Irish Garden Plant Society and contributed to the society's journal *Moorea*. He was instrumental in the establishment of the Northern Ireland Heritage Gardens Trust, serving as co-president until 2018 and speaking at many of their conferences.

Charles was elected a Fellow of the Linnean Society in 1973. In 2013, he received the Society for the History of Natural History's Founders' Medal, awarded for his substantial contribution to the study of the history or bibliography of natural history (Figure 2). In 2015, the Royal Horticultural Society awarded him the Veitch Memorial Medal in recognition of his outstanding contribution to the advancement and improvement of the science and practice of horticulture. In 2016, Charles received both The Heather Society's Award of Merit and the Royal Horticultural Society of Ireland's Medal of Honour. In 2021, the Irish Garden Plant Society recognized his contributions with the introduction of a daffodil named in his honour, *Narcissus* 'Charles Nelson'.¹

Charles was born in Belfast, Northern Ireland in 1951, the eldest son of Robert and Heather Nelson and brother to five siblings: Alan, Jeffrey, Christine, Brian and Rosemary. The family lived in Enniskillen, Co. Fermanagh, where he was educated at Portora Royal School (now merged into the Enniskillen Royal Grammar School). He wrote in *The Burren* (Nelson and Walsh 1997: 2), 'I grew up in Northern Ireland, in Fermanagh, a county of loughs, woodlands and limestone hills. For as long as I can remember, I have been fascinated by flowers and was determined to make my career botany'.

Charles went on to study at the University of Aberystwyth, where he obtained a BSc in botany (1971) and at the Australian National University, Canberra (ANU), where he obtained his PhD (1976) on the ecology and taxonomy of the genus *Adenanthos* (a member of the Proteaceae). Charles later went on to undertake the first modern-day systematic review of the genus *Adenanthos*, superseding George Bentham's (1800–1884) arrangement of 100 years standing (Nelson 1978, 1996a).

Recalling his research in the Department of Biogeography and Geomorphology at ANU, Charles wrote: 'I was immersed in a stimulating new world inhabited by plants unlike anything that grows wild on Irish hillsides, belonging to uniquely Australian genera with strange names such as *Adenanthos*, *Banksia* and *Gompholobium*' (Nelson and Walsh 1997: 3). There he also learned about karst geology, including limestone pavements, and developed his interest in biogeography, an education that was to stand him in good stead for his work on the Burren on the west coast of Ireland, on which he later so engagingly and informatively wrote in his *The Burren. A companion to the wildflowers of an Irish limestone wilderness* (Nelson and Walsh 1991).



Figure 2. SHNH President Hugh Torrens awards Charles Nelson the SHNH Founders' Medal at the Society for the History of Natural History's meeting in Exeter in 2013. © Photograph Elaine Shaughnessy.

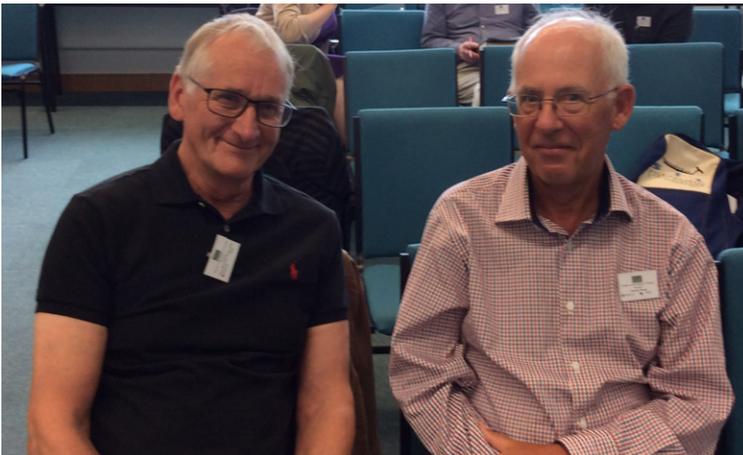


Figure 3. Peter Davis and Charles Nelson at the Society for the History of Natural History's meeting in the Lake District, Cumbria in 2017. © Photograph Elaine Shaughnessy.

On Charles's return to Ireland in 1975, he became horticultural taxonomist at the National Botanic Gardens, Glasnevin, north Dublin. He joined the staff in 1976, six years after the transfer of the National Museum of Ireland's botanical specimens and library to Glasnevin and which had been amalgamated with the Garden's smaller herbarium (**DBN**). Charles wrote, 'there another new world opened; the wonderful flora of Irish gardens, a patchwork of plants from every continent, far more numerous than this island's truly native flora, enriched by the

craft of gardeners' (Nelson and Walsh 1997: 3). He continued, 'At Glasnevin I was enabled to return to my other infatuation – heathers' (Nelson and Walsh 1997: 3–4). While fulfilling his role as taxonomist at the National Herbarium, Charles also began his quest to discover as much as possible about the plants and gardens of Ireland, their histories, and the history of the people associated with them and then to speak and write about them.

Charles remained at Glasnevin for the next 20 years until he met his future wife Sue Robinson on the slopes of Mount Etna, Sicily. Sue, a practising GP, lived in the fenland village of Outwell, south of King's Lynn in Norfolk and, in 1996 after their marriage, Charles moved to start a new life with Sue and her two daughters, Emily and Lucy, working as a freelance botanist, author and editor. Charles cherished Sue deeply and their life was spent variously between Outwell, Lanzarote (where they went for a few months every year) and North Norfolk, where they eventually owned a small cottage. Here they enjoyed walking the coastal path and swimming. Charles also continued giving botanical tours in places that he loved including the Burren and Greece, and especially Crete. Sue passed away in 2020 after a long struggle with melanoma, through which Charles cared for her lovingly.

Charles moved to a new home in Sutton St Edmond in Lincolnshire, the third of his homes called 'Tippitiwichee Cottage'. Those who corresponded with Charles know that he also used 'tippitiwichee' as his email address. In 2009, in his *An Irishman's cuttings: tales of Irish gardens and gardeners and plant hunters* (Nelson 2009: 124–129), Charles described how the Irish governor of North Carolina, Arthur Dobbs (1689–1765), sent the first seed of an exciting new discovery, the carnivorous plant now known as the Venus flytrap (*Dionaea muscipula*), to the English gardener and horticulturalist Peter Collinson (1694–1768). Collinson wanted live specimens and wrote to the American botanist John Bartram (1699–1777) in Philadelphia. When describing the plant in more detail to Collinson, Bartram provided another name for it, 'tippitiwichee'.

Charles passed away in Greece while on holiday, on 20 May 2024, aged 72. He has left a considerable legacy and body of work behind him not least to our own Society, the Society for the History of Natural History, known previously as the Society for the Bibliography of Natural History, as Charles would have known it when he originally joined.

Charles has provided over 48 years of service to the Society from when he originally became the Society's Irish representative, a role he held from 1976–1996. He served as Vice-President (1990–1991) and three times on Council (1977–1980, 1988–1991, 1998–1999). In 1988, he became Book Reviews Editor for the Society's journal, *Archives of Natural History* (previously known as the *Journal for the Society for the Bibliography of Natural History*), a role he continued in for 6 years. In 1999, Charles became the journal's editor, taking over the role from Alwyne (Wyn) Wheeler (1929–2005), the eminent ichthyologist and curator at the Natural History Museum, London. Charles remained in this role for 13 years until 2012. In those days Charles prepared the copy for press and worked with the printers when the journal was still managed by the Society itself. In 2008, the journal moved to a new home with Edinburgh University Press, a welcome arrangement that continues today.² Charles was responsible for the practical elements of transition including the digitization of all the back issues from 1936, editing and submitting copy. He retired from the role in 2012, agreeing to remain as copy-editor for the journal under the new editorship of Peter Davis (Figure 3), a role he continued until 2019, when he retired to take care of Sue. Charles returned to the role of Editor *pro tem* in 2020 until Anne Secord joined as Editor; Charles remained as an Associate Editor, willingly giving guidance and support. Charles also contributed numerous articles to the journal himself (see selected bibliography below) on a wide range of topics. His last article,

‘Ethnobotany and Irish nationalism: an early contribution by Dr Michael F. Moloney (Micheál P. Ó Máoldhomhnaigh) of Dungarvan’ was just recently published (Nelson 2024).

Under his editorship, the symposium (June 2004) proceedings *A Century of discovery: Antarctic exploration and the Southern Ocean* (Griffiths and Walton 2005) was produced. He edited, together with Duncan M. Porter, *Darwin in the Archives* (Nelson and Porter 2009), marking the bicentenary of the birth of Charles Darwin (1809–1882) and the 150th anniversary of *On the origin of species* (Darwin 1859). The publication reproduced facsimiles of papers on Erasmus Darwin and Charles Darwin published before 2005 in the Society’s journal and included an essay by Duncan Porter recounting the Society’s particular contribution to Darwin scholarship. Also produced was a *Cumulative index to Archives of Natural History ... 1936–2001* (Gibson and Nelson 2001). To mark the Society’s Diamond Jubilee in 2011, Charles compiled some of the notes and queries published in the Society’s *Newsletter* since its first publication in 1977 into the delightful collection *History & Mystery* (Nelson 2011b). Charles was also a strong supporter of the Society’s newsletter and contributed many articles. In recognition of his editorial services and to acknowledge his retirement as Editor, Gina Douglas presented Charles with thanks from the membership for his services at the Society’s meeting in Exeter, in 2013 (Figure 4).

I first collaborated with Charles in 1994, when I became the Society’s International Representative and had the pleasure of being in contact with our international colleagues. Since then, we have worked closely together in the Society’s interests in our various roles. Charles built the Society’s first website (having been running one for The Heather Society) when websites were first emerging, and we then worked together in the development and content of a new one (2010) and the current one built in 2014 (<https://shnh.org.uk>). Charles remained a constant source of support and copy when I became the Newsletter Editor on the retirement of Julia Bruce in 2011. Because he liked to keep up on environmental and natural history news, he was a continuous source of copy for our Facebook and X (Twitter) feeds, which I used to post. When Charles became Editor *pro tem* for our journal in 2020, I continued as an Associate Editor and worked closely together with Charles on the content and production. So, having benefited from his generous support, guidance and friendship for 30 years, it was my great pleasure to see Charles awarded Honorary Membership of the Society in June 2020 for his signal services to the Society for close on 50 years.³

Charles’s interests were wide and his published output prodigious, so they would be impossible to capture here in full. Colleagues and friends have contributed some of their considered highlights of their association with Charles and his career, which are shared below.

As noted above, heathers (Ericaceae) were a main passion of Charles. His family recall that this interest started early in County Fermanagh, where there is a unique Irish population of Cornish or wandering heath (*Erica vagans*) growing on a limestone hillside, a botanical puzzle which clearly intrigued him and was the subject of one of his early papers (Nelson and Coker 1974). The itinerary of one family summer holiday took them on a search for this plant, with a visit to another unique location, the Lizard peninsula in Cornwall, and a new phrase, ‘Areas of Special Scientific Interest’, was introduced into their conversations.⁴ He collected, described and named many cultivars including *Erica cinerea* ‘Kerry Cherry’, *E. mackayana* ‘Errigal Dusk’, and *Erica tetralix* ‘Curled Roundstone’.⁵ The latter was found by Charles growing around a stone near the village of Roundstone, Co. Galway and he could not resist giving it a punning name.⁶ Charles named the prostrate Irish heather *Calluna vulgaris* ‘Caleb Threlkeld’ after the author of the first Irish flora. Charles, in turn, was honoured in the names *Daboecia cantabrica* ‘Charles Nelson’ and *Erica* × *nelsonii*. His *Hardy heathers from the northern*



Figure 4. Meetings Secretary Gina Douglas presents Charles Nelson with thanks from the membership for his services as Editor at the Society for the History of Natural History's meeting in Exeter in 2013. © Photograph Elaine Shaughnessy.



Figure 5. Publication launch of *The curious Mister Catesby – a naturalist explores new worlds* (Nelson and Elliott 2015) held in the Library of the Linnean Society of London, 19 May 2015. Left to right: Dr E. Charles Nelson, Sir Ghillelan Prance and Dr David J. Elliott. © Photograph Elaine Shaughnessy.

hemisphere: Calluna, Daboecia, Erica (Nelson 2011a) was named reference book of the year in 2012 by the Garden Media Guild. Charles was a dedicated member of The Heather Society (closed 2020) and acted as the Society's official registrar of heather names, maintaining a meticulously curated database. He collaborated with colleagues at the Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh, the University of Bergen and the South African National Biodiversity Institute to ensure this unique resource, documenting the often obscure origins of thousands of heather names, is now openly accessible through its incorporation into World Flora Online (Elliott *et al.* 2024).⁷ This is a significant contribution to work on the systematics and conservation of *Erica* species.⁸

Another of Charles's passions was the history of botany and the lives of Irish botanists and plant explorers, whom he researched thoroughly and wrote about.⁹ He made a fundamental contribution to Dublin's botanical history through his work on the herbalist and botanist, Caleb Threlkeld (1676–1728), who lived in Dublin from 1713 until his death.¹⁰ Threlkeld's plant records were known to only a few local botanists and little attention was paid to his published work, *Synopsis stirpium Hibernicarum* (Threlkeld 1726). Charles brought his analytical skills to bear on issues such as the date of publication (Nelson 1974), Threlkeld's earlier fieldwork in Cumbria and his seminal contribution to botanical studies in Ireland. The result of this painstaking research was a beautifully-reproduced facsimile of Threlkeld's original work (Nelson and Synnott 1988).¹¹ The text was accompanied by a series of appendices and glossaries linking the pre-Linnaean nomenclature employed by Threlkeld to present-day names, including a commentary on the Irish names of plants (with Donal Synnott) and an index to 'local place names of the time with their present-day equivalents'. Subsequent researchers have built on this authoritative foundation, establishing Threlkeld's significant place in the study of seventeenth and eighteenth-century botany in Ireland.¹² A recent outcome of Charles's scholarship in this respect was the paired conferences centred on the Worth Library, Dublin, based around the themes of botany in early modern Ireland (2017) and gardens and gardening in early modern Ireland (2018), in which he was prominently involved both as speaker and editor. He contributed four chapters to the resulting elegant publication, *Botany and gardens in early modern Ireland* (Boran *et al.* 2022), which he also co-edited with the Worth's librarian, Elizabethanne Boran, and its trustee, Emer Lawlor.

While at Glasnevin, Charles often went to work at the herbarium in Trinity College Dublin (TCD). The collection is rich in historic material from around the world including the collections amassed, among others, by Thomas Coulter (1793–1843), William Henry Harvey (1811–1866) and Arthur Francis George Kerr (1877–1942).¹³ Charles reviewed the collections, annotating a number of plant specimens in the Proteaceae and Ericaceae. He also authored or co-authored several papers on the historical aspects of the collections including articles on Harvey (Nelson 1992, 1996b; Nelson and Parnell 2002) and John Bradbury (1768–1823) (Nelson and Parnell 1988).¹⁴ Charles was always very generous with his unpublished research data and later shared his work on Harvey including an extensive database listing all of Harvey's known correspondence.¹⁵ A valuable publication, *A man who can speak of plants. Dr. Thomas Coulter (1793–1843) of Dundalk in Ireland, Mexico and Alta California* (Nelson and Probert 1994), focussed on the herbarium's first curator, the Irish physician, botanist and explorer Thomas Coulter (1793–1843).¹⁶

One of Charles's longest and most productive collaborations was with the botanical artist Wendy Felicité Walsh (1915–2014).¹⁷ Where she provided the exquisite illustrations, drawn from nature, Charles contributed the scholarly and erudite text. When the two volumes of the classic *An Irish Florilegium – wild and garden plants of Ireland* (Walsh 1983; Walsh and

Nelson 1987) were published, there was nothing else of its kind celebrating Irish garden plants and flowers.¹⁸ Another outstanding publication was *The brightest jewel: a history of the National Botanic Gardens, Glasnevin, Dublin*, written with Eileen McCracken and again with watercolours by Wendy Walsh (Nelson and McCracken 1987). Other publications include *The Burren: a companion to the wildflowers of Ireland's limestone wilderness* (Nelson and Walsh 1991), *Trees of Ireland: native and naturalized* (Nelson and Walsh 1993) and *Flowers of Mayo. Dr Patrick Browne's Fasciculus plantarum Hiberniae (1788)* (Nelson and Walsh 1995). These works have substantially enriched the literature on native plants of Ireland.

In 1995, for the Bicentenary of the National Botanic Gardens, Glasnevin, there was an exhibition of paintings by Wendy Walsh together with those by Lady Charlotte Isabel Wheeler-Cuffe (1867–1967), the latter on display possibly for the first time. Charlotte had lived in Burma (Myanmar) for 24 years with her husband and during that time undertook botanical exploration, collecting plants, painting and recording them. Charles wrote the text for the catalogue, *The Art of Flowers* (Nelson 1995). Charles's admiration for her work continued until, almost two decades later, the Gardens published his beautifully-illustrated book *Shadow among splendours. Lady Charlotte Wheeler-Cuffe's adventures among the flowers of Burma 1897–1921* (Nelson 2014b)¹⁹ with many illustrations of Lady Wheeler-Cuffe's water-colour paintings of Burmese landscapes and orchids. It also includes lengthy extracts from her correspondence to her mother and family to allow Shadow (as she was known), 'to tell of her adventures' herself (Nelson 2014b: 7).

Also published in 2014 was Charles's biography on *John Scouler (c.1804–1871), Scottish naturalist: a life, with two voyages* (Nelson 2014a). Although Scouler published little, he collected plants and ethnographic specimens, as well as some zoological and geological material. He wrote an informative journal during his 1824–1826 expedition to the American Pacific Northwest, for part of which he was accompanied by the Scottish botanist and plant collector David Douglas (1799–1834). Appointed Professor of Mineralogy and Natural History at the Andersonian University in Glasgow in 1829, five years later Scouler moved to Ireland and became Professor of Mineralogy at the Royal Dublin Society, where he remained for the next 20 years until he returned to Glasgow in 1854 (Flannery 2015).

Another of Charles's successful partnerships was with his friend and colleague David John Elliott (1935–2023), Executive Director of the Catesby Commemorative Trust, later reformed in 2019 as the Mark Catesby Commemorative Trust, University of South Carolina, of which Charles became the honorary Senior Research Director. The Trust was energetic in promoting Catesby's legacy as well as encouraging and promoting new research on his work and publications. Mark Catesby (1683–1749) was the eighteenth-century English naturalist, explorer, artist and author who published the monumental *Natural History of Carolina, Florida, and the Bahama Islands* (1731–1743). David and Charles came together to edit the award-winning *The curious Mister Catesby – a naturalist explores new worlds* (Nelson and Elliott 2015), which was published for the Trust by the University of Georgia Press in April 2015 and of which SHNH was one of the sponsors. David Elliott wrote in 2013, 'After 15 months of extraordinary effort by over two dozen authors, editors and reviewers, as well as outstanding assistance from many people, universities and institutions on both sides of the Atlantic, literarily thousands of emails, phone calls and electronic file transfers at all times of the day and night, it's a pleasure to let you know that our book was submitted to the University of Georgia Press today – the day of our deadline'. He continued, 'Too many people have worked assiduously to name everyone. However, two have to be specifically mentioned. One is Charles Nelson, our editor, who has done an incredible job of researching and finding new

information about Catesby, checking authors' accuracy, suggesting changes, and disproving some previously accepted information. His work went far beyond what he or we expected ... It could not have been done without him'.²⁰ A wonderful publication launch was held in the Library of the Linnean Society of London on 19 May 2015, attended by SHNH Patron, Sir David Attenborough, as well as the Catesby Trust's Patron, Sir Gillean Prance, and many SHNH members (Figure 5). Charles continued to work on Trust-related endeavours from that time until David Elliott's death in 2023, noting that, 'Catesby continues to enthral and surprise almost every day'.²¹ Charles also reviewed a number of articles on Catesby more recently published in *Archives of Natural History*. Last year, at the Society's summer meeting 'The Language of Nature', Charles gave a delightful paper on 'Mark Catesby (1683–1749): exploring his lexicon of vernacular names of plants and animals'. Charles was a great contributor to the *Oxford English Dictionary* and he supplied many words first used by Catesby, which was the subject of his talk.

A project that Charles was delighted to be involved in was the development of a stained-glass memorial window to Catesby to be installed in St Giles, Cripplegate, London, Catesby's local parish church where many of his children were baptized (Nelson 2021: [2]). The project was designed and executed by Caroline Swash with Laura Perry and generously supported by donations from the Catesby family and the Mark Catesby Centre at the University of South Carolina. Charles was closely involved in the design process and chose the images for inclusion from Catesby's *Natural History of Carolina, Florida, and the Bahama Islands* (1731–1743). These included the leopard lily or Catesby's lily (*Lilium catesbaei*), Eastern screech-owl (*Megascops asio*), ivory-billed woodpecker (*Campephilus principalis*), bald cypress (*Taxodium distichum*) and the American green tree frog (*Dryophytes cinerea*). The window was installed in November 2020 and dedicated on 7 June 2022. Charles also wrote and designed the accompanying catalogue, *Mark Catesby & St Giles' Cripplegate* (Nelson 2021) showing the colour plates from which the designs were taken. David Elliott wrote, 'It is, in my opinion, not only the nicest window in St Giles' but as nice as any I have seen. The natural images are somehow more vivid for being frozen in glass. Perhaps the mercuriality of the English weather plays a part in animating the images, with white and golden rays according to the will of the clouds'.²²

We cannot do justice here to Charles's many varied interests and accomplishments – we have been unable to touch on, for example, his interest in tropical drift seeds,²³ his fascination with genealogy, spending hours resolving family relationships, his love of the garden, his enjoyment of walking, his continuing interest in the naming of new cultivars and species. What we can do is to record our grateful thanks for his support of our Society, our journal and our members, and for widening our horizons through his substantive published output, written with 'outstanding attention to detail, immense knowledge and scholarship – which knowledge he was happy to share'.²⁴

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I should like to thank the many people who have shared their recollections of Charles and who have contributed to the article: Charles's family, and in particular Christine Shiers, Brian Nelson and Rosemary Nelson; Peter Davis, Declan

Doogue, Gina Douglas, Mary Forrest, John Parnell, Michael Pirie, Brendan Sayers, Anne Secord, Micheline Sheehy-Skeffington and Ella May T. Wulff.

NOTES

- ¹ Mary Forrest, pers. comm., 5 July 2024.
- ² Archives of Natural History, *Edinburgh University Press*. Available at: <https://www.eupublishing.com/loi/anh> (accessed 5 July 2024).
- ³ SHNH is delighted to announce that Charles Nelson has been elected an Honorary Member of the Society, *Society for the History of Natural History*. Available at: <https://shnh.org.uk/news/charles-nelson-elected-to-shnh-honorary-membership/> (accessed 5 July 2024).
- ⁴ Brian Nelson, pers. comm., 4 October 2024; Christine Shiers, pers. comm., 4 October 2024.
- ⁵ Brendan Sayers, National Botanic Gardens, Glasnevin, pers. comm., 1 July 2024.
- ⁶ Ella May T. Wulff, pers. comm., 2 July 2024.
- ⁷ Ericaceae Resource Centre, *World Flora Online*. Available at: <https://about.worldfloraonline.org/tens/ericaceae-resource-centre> (accessed 5 July 2024).
- ⁸ Michael D. Pirie, University of Bergen, pers. comm., 31 July 2024.
- ⁹ Ella May T. Wulff, pers. comm., 2 July 2024.
- ¹⁰ Declan Doogue, pers. comm., 19 August 2024.
- ¹¹ Declan Doogue, pers. comm., 19 August 2024.
- ¹² Declan Doogue, pers. comm., 19 August 2024.
- ¹³ John Parnell, Trinity College Dublin, pers. comm., 1 July 2024.
- ¹⁴ References, Botany, *Trinity College Dublin*. Available at: <https://www.tcd.ie/Botany/herbarium/references.php> (accessed 1 July 2024).
- ¹⁵ John Parnell, Trinity College Dublin, pers. comm., 5 October 2024.
- ¹⁶ John Parnell, Trinity College Dublin, pers. comm., 1 July 2024.
- ¹⁷ Ireland's finest practitioner of botanical art: Wendy Walsh: April 9th, 1915–March 3rd, 2014, *Irish Times*. Available at: <https://www.irishtimes.com/life-and-style/people/ireland-s-finest-practitioner-of-botanical-art-1.1760439> (accessed 1 August 2024).
- ¹⁸ Brendan Sayers, National Botanic Gardens, Glasnevin, pers. comm., 1 July 2024.
- ¹⁹ Brendan Sayers, National Botanic Gardens, Glasnevin, pers. comm., 1 July 2024.
- ²⁰ David J. Elliott to Gina Douglas, 12 July 2013.
- ²¹ E. Charles Nelson, 2022. Mark Catesby: A new memorial window in London, UK, *Society for the History of Natural History* [blog]. Available at: <https://shnh.org.uk/mark-catesby-a-new-memorial-window-in-london/> (accessed 5 July 2024).
- ²² David J. Elliott, pers. comm., 15 June 2022.
- ²³ Micheline Sheehy-Skeffington, pers. comm., 21 July 2014. See also Nelson (2000).
- ²⁴ John Parnell, Trinity College Dublin, pers. comm., 1 July 2024.

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Accompanying this article is Charles Nelson's complete bibliography 'E. Charles Nelson. A bibliography: 1974–2024'. The 2024 entries have been updated to include latest publication details.

A select bibliography of E. Charles Nelson

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1. Prologue: a mixed maxim, pp.1–2.
2. Naturalists as composers of music {series 2, **88**: 7–8. 2007}, pp. 10–11.
3. Quotations ... {series 2, **36**: 11. 1989}, p. 13.
4. Quotations addenda: 2011 ... p. 13.
5. Charles Darwin on British Rail {series 2, **52**: 6. 1995}, p. 85.
6. The curious tale of the beast in Ballintubber {series 2, **55**: 5. 1996}, p. 92.
7. Presidential paper-knife {series 2, **87**: 4–5. 2006}, pp. 108–109.
8. Books from the libraries of Tournefort and Dodoens in Ireland {series 2, **4**: 6–7. 1979}, pp. 135–136.
9. The gardener's and botanist's dictionary (1795–1807) {series 2, **79**: 16–17. 2004}, pp. 147–148.
10. Newspaper gleanings: how times have changed for botanists {series 2, **96**: 9–11. 2004}, pp. 156–158.
11. Addenda, pp. 184–187.

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