

THE KAY GRAY AWARD

The British Chelonia Group presents the Kay Gray Award annually, an award in honour of our benefactress Kay Gray. The award is made to someone who has made a significant contribution to chelonia welfare.

The person nominated for 2020 and supported by the Board Members, is someone who could be described as a pioneer of chelonia husbandry, an acclaimed naturalist and widely known as “the Father of Ecology” through his work in the field of ornithology and phenology.



The recipient is the subject of the celebration in 2020 of the Anniversary of the 300th birthday of the 18th Century naturalist, the Reverend Gilbert White, 1720 - 2020

Gilbert White 1720-2020

The three Judges all endorsed the nomination

JUDGE NO. 1

“At first I was surprised that anyone on their 300th birthday would be given an award, but Gilbert White was one of my mentors and his pioneering observations of Timothy Tortoise are well documented. So yes, a bit late in life, but he deserved recognition for his work and his study of Timothy. Also, well timed with the Celebration of his birth.”

JUDGE NO. 2

“To-day, Gilbert White would be termed an “observational scientist” or “behavioural biologist”, in fact, he was one of the great naturalists of his time and his observations on Timothy increased awareness of chelonia and stimulated generations of biologists and others to take an interest in and study them.

As well as being a studious observer, Timothy’s longevity reveals Gilbert White as also an excellent and caring keeper!”

JUDGE NO. 3

“The Reverend Gilbert White’s attention to detail, careful record keeping and ability to observe Timothy’s behaviour enabled him to notate exceptional aspects of his tortoise’s natural lifestyle. Timothy was obviously an incredible tortoise to

study, his self-perseverance and longevity were amazing, surviving all those years without any supplementary lighting and sorting out his own accommodation for the winter. The exhibits and information at the Selborne Museum really do celebrate the life of the Reverend Gilbert White and inform the public a little about the impact of his studies on herpetology.”

The presentation of the award trophy and certificate was scheduled to take place at the Spring Symposium of the British Chelonia Group on 21st March 2020, in the presence of a small deputation of the Selborne Museum. Unfortunately, due to the Symposium having to be postponed because of the current situation, this could not take place. A slot will be found at a later date, probably at the Selborne Museum during late Summer or Autumn.



(picture of certificate)