THE BRITISH ORNITHOLOGISTS' UNION

England & Wales · Charity number 249877

Details

Status	Registered
Legal form	Other
Registered	1966-12-09
Register	View on the Charity Commission register

Contact

Address	Lytchett House 13 Freeland Park Wareham Road Poole Dorset BH16 6FA
Phone	07485385451
Email	bou@bou.org.uk
Website	www.bou.org.uk

Activities

Objects: THE ADVANCEMENT OF THE SCIENCE OF ORNITHOLOGY

Activities: The promotion of the science of ornithology.

Classification

- **How:** Makes Grants To Individuals, Makes Grants To Organisations, Sponsors Or Undertakes Research, Acts As An Umbrella Or Resource Body
- **What:** Animals, Environment/conservation/heritage
- **Who:** The General Public/mankind

Geography

- Scotland
- Throughout England And Wales

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Finances

Period end	Income	Expenditure	Assets	Employees
2024-12-31	£218,114	£264,865	-	-
2023-12-31	£221,915	£221,077	-	-
2022-12-31	£202,323	£253,767	-	-
2021-12-31	£182,527	£228,777	-	-
2020-12-31	£167,189	£244,235	-	-

Trustees

Name	Role	Appointed
Dr Graeme Buchanan	Chair	2023-04-05
Dr Alexander Lees		2023-04-05
Dr Catharine Horswill		2022-04-13
Dr Catriona Morrison		2023-04-05
Dr Hugh Lewis Wright		2025-04-02
Dr Lynda Donaldson		2025-04-05
Dr Mark Alexander Eaton		2021-03-31
Dr Mark James Eddowes		2022-04-13
Dr Natalia Barbara Zielonka		2025-04-05
Dr Rosamund Mary Whipple Green		2025-04-02
Dr Stuart Sharp		2023-04-05
Dr Tom Bradfer-Lawrence		2025-04-02
Professor Arjun Dev Amar		2025-04-02
Professor Emma Jane Ann Cunningham		2023-04-05

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THE BRITISH ORNITHOLOGISTS' UNION

England & Wales - Charity number 249877

Accounts

British Ornithologists' Union

advancing ornithithology

Annual Report & Accounts

birds | people | science



2024

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Cover image: Grey Heron *Ardea cinerea*
Alexis Lours CC BY 4.0 Wikimedia Commons

President's statement

Dr Graeme Buchanan



The BOU has again had an active year, delivering upon our mission of promoting ornithological science across the international community, supporting the individuals who contribute to that science, and growing understanding of that science among a wider community. This continues to be done by a small number of paid staff, led by COO Leila Walker, with the support of Standing Committees of volunteers and the BOU Council. It has been a pleasure for me to lead this group this year.

A list of those who have contributed to operations this year is given in the following pages, including pages 24–25. I would like to give special thanks to the three former Investment Trustees who have given their time to the BOU, in some cases for over 30 years. We have three new trustees in place, and thanks go to Neil Bucknell who has overseen the legal side of the process. I would also like to recognise the contribution of our Honorary Treasurer Graham Appleton, who is stepping down at the upcoming AGM after eight years in the role. Graham has done much more than keep the BOU finances in order over the years, and has been an essential part of Management Group, a great source of counsel for me, and supported Juliet Vickery in the recruitment of Leila as COO. On Juliet, I realise I made a major omission from my review last year, by failing to thank her for the smooth handover in spring 2023. A belated thank you for successfully navigating the BOU through some difficult circumstances during your four years as President.

As detailed in the Annual Report, the BOU has been working hard to maintain its high profile on social media, navigating considerable change, and continuing to promote ornithology, the BOU and IBIS through multiple platforms and media. There are risks associated with the use of social media, and this year we have been updating the BOU's social media policy to manage those risks. We have also updated a range of other policies including on bullying and harassment, and these have now been included in a set of updated Standing Orders that set out how the BOU is run, and how each Standing Committee operates. This year the BOU have also established a risk register that identifies the major potential threats to the operation of the BOU, and records what steps have been taken or need to be taken to reduce or mitigate these threats.

I'd like to pull out a few highlights from elsewhere in the report. The conference on Urban birds in April was my first spring conference as President and was an excellent opportunity to catch up with old colleagues and meet new people, some of whom I have been corresponding with for a few years. While online conferences increase accessibility and inclusion, in-person conferences have their own benefits. The Avian conservation translocations conference in November demonstrated the benefits of online conferences, with attendees from around the globe. I found the talk

from my former boss, from when I worked in Mauritius, Carl Jones, stimulating and challenging.

A busy year for the Records Committee saw a remarkable eight new species added to the British list, and three historic firsts were updated. Chris McInerny left the committee after 13 years, 11 of which were as Secretary. BOU is hugely appreciative of all that Chris has done and it was my pleasure to thank him at the end of the Birds and net zero conference. Finally, I would like to draw attention to the new summer placement scheme to support undergraduate students, developed by the Engagement Committee. Nominations for funding are encouraged from those who belong to groups that are underrepresented in ornithology.

I hope you find the rest of this annual report interesting. I would like to end by giving my own thanks to all those who left roles in 2024 or are leaving roles on BOU committees at the AGM, including Richard Bradbury whose term ends as Vice President, Graham Appleton, Lucy Wright, Tom Finch, Rosemarie Kentie, and Sonya Clegg.

Structure, Governance & Management

The British Ornithologists' Union is an unincorporated charity, no. 249877 (England & Wales) and SC044850 (Scotland).

The object of the BOU is the promotion of the science of ornithology. Its governing document is the Rules adopted at the Annual General Meeting in 2010, and last updated by Council in July 2020. Under the rules, the governing body, the Council of the Union, is responsible for the running of the Union's business, supported by its staff. Council may delegate functions to standing or ad hoc committees that report to Council. The Union's Council retains overall responsibility for matters so delegated.

The BOU has six standing committees: the Awards Nominations Committee, the Engagement Committee, the Grants Committee, the IBIS Management Committee, the Meetings Committee and the Records Committee.

Elected members of Council are Trustees of the charity. Members of Council are recruited from within the ornithological community. Where possible, Council members will have served on one or more of the BOU's standing committees prior to nomination for election to Council. Those standing for election to BOU Council as an incoming chair of a standing committee will have served for at least two years on the respective committee. On election, new Council members are provided with relevant Union documents to help familiarise them with current Union activities and to provide information on the duties and responsibilities of being a Trustee of the Union.

ADMINISTRATION DETAILS

BRITISH ORNITHOLOGISTS' UNION

Founded 1858

Registered as a Charity:

England and Wales, no. 249877

Scotland, no. SC044850

Address

PO Box 79, Pembroke SA72 9AX, UK

Tel: +44 (0) 7485 385451

Email: bou@bou.org.uk

Web: bou.org.uk

As at 31 December 2024

BOU Staff

Chief Operations Officer
Dr Leila K. Walker

Journal & Office Manager
Mrs Angela F. Langford

Council Officers

President	Dr Graeme Buchanan
Vice Presidents	Prof Emma Cunningham
	Dr Richard Bradbury
Honorary Secretary	Dr Mark Eaton
Honorary Treasurer	Mr Graham F. Appleton

Ordinary Members of Council

Dr Tom Bradfer-Lawrence (Chair, Grants Committee), Dr Mark Eddowes, Dr Tom Finch (Chair, Engagement Committee), Dr Cat Horswill, Dr Rosemarie Kentie (Chair, IBIS Management Committee), Dr Alex Lees (Chair, Records Committee), Ms Ros Green, Dr Catriona Morrison (Chair, Meetings Committee) and Dr Stuart Sharp.

ADMINISTRATION DETAILS

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Trustees

The following individuals served as Trustees of the charity at the time of Council approving this annual report and accounts:
Mr Graham F. Appleton, Dr Richard Bradbury, Dr Tom Bradfer-Lawrence, Dr Graeme Buchanan, Prof Emma Cunningham, Dr Mark Eaton, Dr Mark Eddowes, Dr Tom Finch, Ms Ros Green, Dr Cat Horswill, Dr Rosemarie Kentie, Dr Alex Lees, Dr Catriona Morrison and Dr Stuart Sharp.

The following individuals also served as Trustees of the charity for part of the year covered by this annual report and accounts: Dr Sonya Clegg, Dr Julie Miller and Dr Lucy Wright.

Editorial positions

At 31 December 2024 the following editorial positions were held:

IBIS Editor in Chief	Prof Jennifer Gill
IBIS Editors	Dr Rauri Bowie
	Dr Richard Fuller
	Prof Rebecca Kimball
	Dr Ruedi Nager
	Prof Jeremy Wilson
Blog Editor	Mr Charlie Russell

Investment Trustees

The following individuals served as Investment Trustees for the Union during the period of this report and accounts:
Mr Nigel J. Crocker, Mr Richard Price and Mr Stephen J. Rumsey (outgoing Trustees); Mr Neil J. Bucknell, Mr Andrew D. Callender and Mr Ben J.N. Turner (incoming Trustees).

Council continually reviews the risks to which the Union is exposed and is satisfied that, as far as is practicable, it has taken appropriate steps to mitigate any risk.

The Union employs two full-time staff who work from their respective home offices. Staff salaries are reviewed annually, as part of our staff appraisal process, conducted by the President and Honorary Secretary. Pay is normally adjusted in line with inflation (CPIH) and there is an option to award an unconsolidated performance-based bonus, in exceptional circumstances.

Objectives & Activities

Mission statement

The British Ornithologists' Union will promote ornithological science across the international scientific community, support the individuals who contribute to that science, and grow understanding of that science among a wider community. The BOU mission will be achieved by the following means:

- Publishing IBIS as a leading international journal of ornithological science.
- Organising a programme of meetings and conferences.
- Awarding grants and bursaries for ornithological research.
- Encouraging liaison between those actively engaged in ornithological research.
- Providing a representative body of the scientific community, able to provide ornithological information and advice to government and other policy makers.
- Maintaining and publishing the official list of birds recorded in Britain-The British List.

Council activities

At our AGM in April, held during BOU2024 at the University of Nottingham, Dr Tom Bradfer-Lawrence was elected as Chair of Grants Committee to replace Dr Sonya Clegg and Ms Ros Green was elected as an Ordinary member of Council (Early Career Researcher representative) to replace Dr Julie Miller.

We were delighted that Amanda D. Rodewald (Cornell University, USA) accepted our invitation to deliver the 11th Alfred Newton Lecture at BOU2024 (page 6). We were equally delighted to award the 2024 Godman Salvin Prize to P. Dee Boersma (University of Washington, USA), who accepted the Prize at the Pacific Seabird Group meeting in Seattle (page 6), to award the 2024 Janet Kear Union Medal to Helen Baker (JNCC), who accepted the medal at BOU2024 (page 7), and to award the 2024 Early Professional Award to Wouter M.G. Vansteelant (University of Groningen, Netherlands), who accepted the award at the International Wader Study Group conference in Montpellier (page 7).

ADMINISTRATION DETAILS

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Bankers

The Union holds accounts with the following banks:

CAF Bank Ltd
25 Kings Hill, West Malling, Kent ME19 4JQ

Natwest Bank plc
PO Box 6037, Brompton Road, London SW13 1XJ

Solicitor

The Union's solicitors are:
Laytons
Ranger House, Walnut Tree Close, Guildford, Surrey GU1 4UL

Accountant & Auditor

The Union's accountant and auditor are:
Azets Audit Services
Westpoint, Lynch Wood, Peterborough, Cambridgeshire, PE2 6FZ

Elected members of Council, as Trustees of the charity, confirm that they have referred to the guidance contained in the Charity Commission's general guidance on public benefit when reviewing objectives and activities.

Activities in Scotland

The BOU is an unincorporated charity registered in Scotland (SC044850). As well as having members in Scotland, at the time of this report, six of our Trustees, Mr Graham F. Appleton, Dr Tom Bradfer-Lawrence, Dr Graeme Buchanan, Prof Emma Cunningham, Dr Tom Finch, and Dr Catriona Morrison and three of our journal editors, Prof Jennifer Gill, Dr Rudolf Nager and Prof Jeremy Wilson, also resided there.

ALFRED NEWTON LECTURE



Amanda D. Rodewald delivered the 11th Alfred Newton Lecture at BOU2024 in Nottingham in April.

Amanda's Alfred Newton Lecture, entitled *A bird's eye view of behavioural and demographic processes that shape avian communities in an urbanizing world,* demonstrated the capacity for human inputs to fundamentally alter species interactions.

GODMAN SALVIN PRIZE



P. Dee Boersma (centre) received the BOU Godman Salvin Prize at the 51st Annual Meeting of the Pacific Seabird Group in Seattle, USA in February (L–R Rachel Sprague, P. Dee Boersma and Julia Parrish).

For the full citation see IBIS 166: 754-755 doi: 10.1111/ibi.13312

Achievements & Performance

Reports on our activities from the BOU Office and Standing Committees

The BOU Office

Staff

During the year, the BOU employed two home-based staff members within the BOU Office: Angela Langford (Journal & Office Manager) and Leila Walker (Chief Operations Officer).

Office duties

The BOU Office is responsible for the effective running of the BOU, managed by the Chief Operations Officer and overseen by Council and the Union's standing committees.

The BOU Office's key responsibilities are:

- to undertake the day to day running of the BOU;
- to support BOU Council and its committees, implementing much of the work arising from them, specifically;
  - working with the IBIS Management Committee, manage non-editorial, business and marketing of the Union's journal, IBIS;
  - working with the Meetings Committee, organise BOU conferences and meetings;
  - working with the Engagement Committee, develop and deliver engagement initiatives including equality and diversity items;
  - working with Meetings and Engagement Committees, manage the Union's Conference Attendance Grants;
  - working with the Grants Committee, manage the Union's Small Grants and Career Development Bursary schemes, the John & Pat Warham Studentships and the Brenda & Tony Gibbs Awards;
  - working with the Records Committee, manage the British List and associated areas;
  - working with the Awards Nominations Committee, develop and deliver changes to our nominations processes and awards criteria, and select nominations to put forward to Council;
- working with the Honorary Treasurer, to maintain accounts and budgets and the preparation of annual accounts and annual forecasts;
- working with the IBIS Editorial Team, to oversee and manage the manuscript process and flow for IBIS, and to oversee marketing of the journal;
- to oversee the business and contractual sides of IBIS;
- to service the BOU membership;
- to develop and manage the BOU's web content;
- to develop and manage the BOU's social media activity;
- to undertake routine administration;

JANET KEAR UNION MEDAL



Helen Baker (left) received the BOU Janet Kear Union Medal from Graeme Buchanan (BOU President) at BOU2024, for services to the Union, to ornithology and our wider community.

For the full citation see IBIS 166: 1114-1115 doi: 10.1111/ibi.13324

EARLY PROFESSIONAL AWARD



Wouter M.G. Vansteelant (left) received the BOU Early Professional Award from José Alves (past BOU Meetings Committee member) at the 2024 IWSG conference in Montpellier, France.

For the full citation see IBIS 167: 310-311 doi: 10.1111/ibi.13358

- to manage the BOU storage facility;
- to handle general enquiries, press and publicity.

In addition to working with the Union's various committees (see individual committee reports below) the BOU Office undertook the activities outlined below.

Website

BOU.ORG.UK

In 2024, the BOU website received 167,046 page views, representing 80,948 users. Table 1 details the number of page views received by key areas of the website, mapping closely onto core BOU activities.

Table 1: Most-viewed areas of the BOU website by number of page views (2024).

1.	#theBOUblog* /blog/	57,718	5.	Home page /bou.org.uk/	11,565
2.	The British List /the-british-list/	24,685	6.	Funding /funding/	10,569
3.	Conferences & meetings† /conferences-and-meetings/	19,756	7.	About the BOU /about-the-bou/	5,971
4.	IBIS /ibis/	12,100	8.	Member login /login/	2,560

* Includes individual blogs; † Includes individual event pages; Data from Google Analytics.

The majority of users arrived to the website via organic search (52%), with remaining users arriving direct-to-site (37%), via Social Media (6%) or by referrals from other websites (5%). The top-10 countries from where users arrive to the website are listed in Table 2, with 74% of website users based outside the UK (62% in 2023).

Table 2: Top-10 countries from where users arrive to the BOU website (2024). Percentage in 2023 indicated in brackets.

1.	United Kingdom	26% (38%)	6.	Hong Kong	3% (0.25%)
2.	United States	21% (18%)	7.	Australia	3% (2%)
3.	Germany	12% (5%)	8.	Spain	1% (2%)
4.	India	4% (3%)	9.	Brazil	1% (1%)
5.	Canada	3% (2%)	10.	France	1% (1%)

OUR SOCIAL YEAR

@IBISJOURNAL.BSKY.SOCIAL

Audience at 31 Dec 24	3,672	+903%
Posts	1,325	+657%

@IBIS_JOURNAL

Audience at 31 Dec 24	22,234	-0.5%
Posts	4,497	+31%
Impressions	2.6m	-30%
Engagements	28,899	-58%

IBISJOURNAL

Audience at 31 Dec 24	14,263	+4%
Posts	2,241	-22%
Impressions	717,000	-62%
Engagements	33,482	-62%

IBIS_JOURNAL

Audience at 31 Dec 24	2,143	+21%
Posts	172	+19%
Impressions	33,023	+11%
Engagements	1,536	+144%

Percentage change on 2023.

Social media

Marked changes on social media have continued apace in 2024, with many X users closing, or ceasing to be active on, their accounts. This is reflected in the BOU X account seeing, for the first time, a net decrease in followers over the year (see side panel). Impressions and engagements were also significantly reduced.

Many academic users have been moving over to Bluesky, and since opening our account on the platform in October 2023, we have been steadily increasing our output, and following, there. This was aided, in 2024, with our transition to Fedica as our social media scheduling and analysis platform, allowing us to schedule Bluesky posts on the latest ornithology research (via the #ornithology feed).

In the past, X (as Twitter) has been very successful at delivering our parallel conference format, alongside both in-person and online conferences. Changes in the way X operates, combined with decreased enthusiasm for the platform, have implications for the success of this format. Following the successful trial delivery of Bluesky presentations at BOU2024, BOUasm24 and BOUsci24, we therefore decided, in late 2024, to switch to Bluesky as our parallel conference platform. For the time being, delivery of #ornithology content continues on X, but this will continue to be closely monitored and reviewed.

Social media is a significant contributor to the online attention that IBIS articles receive, as measured by the Altmetric Attention Score. IBIS continues to come out on top, when compared to other ornithology journals, although mentions are notably down on 2023 for all attention sources (Table 3), a trend shared by other ornithology journals. Encouragingly, Bluesky is now included in Altmetric as an attention source, justifying efforts to promote IBIS articles on this platform.

Table 3: Online mentions for IBIS and competitor ornithology journals (in 2024)

	# outputs	Mentions						
		Total	News	Blog	X	Facebook	Wiki	Bsky
IBIS	729	4,478	404	112	2,416	342	509	661
change 2023 v 2024	-1%	-88%	-42%	-75%	-92%	-81%	-66%	NA
Ornithology	631	1,931	183	40	686	57	836	122
change 2023 v 2024	-9%	-74%	-50%	-79%	-83%	-67%	-67%	NA
J Ornithology	325	1,618	109	11	1,057	128	230	78
change 2023 v 2024	+5%	-66%	-64%	-89%	-69%	-39%	-65%	NA
J Avian Biology	202	1,281	67	31	692	141	123	131
change 2023 v 2024	+4%	-79%	-79%	-56%	-85%	-59%	-74%	NA
Orn Applications	412	1,230	209	36	470	60	347	84
change 2023 v 2024	+10%	-77%	-81%	-76%	-84%	-58%	-69%	NA

Data from Altmetric Explorer (almertic.com/explorer) downloaded 21 January 2025.



#THEBOUBLOG

Our most-read blog posts published in 2024:

Black-eyed Birds
A new way to monitor impact of avian influenza in Gannets?
Jude Lane
RSPB, UK
https://bou.org.uk/blog-lane-gannet-avian-influenza/

Travel wide, breed hard and die young
Intercontinental movements of nomadic Short-eared Owls (*Asio flammeus*)
John Calladine
BTO, UK
https://bou.org.uk/blog-calladine-short-eared-owls/

Bluesky
The real alternative to Twitter?
Steve Dudley
Westray, UK
https://bou.org.uk/blog-dudley-bluesky/

Are Big Birding Events Making an Impact?
Significance of big birding events in crowd-sourcing vital birding data in Kerala
Syamili Manoj
University of Eastern Finland
https://bou.org.uk/blog-manoj-birding-events/

Recent surveys deliver mixed news for India's vultures
Populations of Critically Endangered species remain stable but no evidence of recovery
John Mallord
RSPB, UK
https://bou.org.uk/blog-mallord-indian-vultures/

#theBOUblog

BOU.ORG.UK/BLOG/

Our blog continues to be the most-read section of our website, accounting for 35% of all page views in 2024 (57,718 views, including views of individual blog posts). During the year we published 77 blog posts (111 in 2023) – see the side panel for the most read blog posts published in 2024.

E-newsletters

BOU.ORG.UK/E-NEWSLETTERS /

We published 30 e-newsletters during the year, covering IBIS content (13), conference announcements (8), funding opportunities (4), latest news (4) and a contribution from Leica, sponsor of our best IBIS ECR paper award.

Sponsorship

We are very grateful to Leica Camera (UK) who continued their support by providing a pair of binoculars as the prize for the best paper in IBIS by an Early Career Researcher (ECR) as lead author. See page 12 for the recipient of the Best IBIS ECR Paper 2023 (voted for and awarded in 2024).

General administrative items

We continue to maintain a storage facility in Peterborough.

Awards Nominations Committee

BOU.ORG.UK/MEDALS-AND-AWARDS/

AWARDS NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE

Chair

Dr Lucy Wright (RSPB) (to April 2024)

Vacant (from April 2024)

Members

Dr Marta Acácio (Tel Aviv University)

Dr Adham Ashton-Butt (BTO)

Dr Martin Beal (Lisbon University) (from July 2024)

Dr Annette Fayet (Norwegian Institute for Nature Research)

Dr Natasha Gillies (University of Liverpool) (from July 2024)

Dr Robert Hawkes (RSPB)

Dr Grant Humphries (to July 2024)

Dr Rebecca Laidlaw (Natural Resources Wales) (to July 2024)

Dr Kate Rogerson (Natural England)

Dr Martyna Syposz (from July 2024)

Dr Alice Trevail (University of Exeter) (to July 2024)

Dr Leila Walker, BOU COO

The Awards Nominations Committee was set up in 2020 to oversee the criteria and nominations process for each of the BOU's awards: the Godman Salvin Prize, the Janet Kear Union Medal, the Alfred Newton Lecture, and, as of 2023, the Early Professional Award. One meeting was held during 2024 with further business conducted by email.

In April, Lucy Wright stepped down as Chair, and we extend a warm thanks to Lucy for her work establishing the Committee and setting up the Early Professional Award. A successor was sought to be co-opted into the Chair role, but none being found, the position remained vacant for the remainder of the year. Council's nominee for Chair of Awards Nominations Committee will be put forward for election at the 2025 AGM. The Committee's membership further changed during the year, with the terms of three members, Grant Humphries, Rebecca Laidlaw and Alice Trevail, coming to an end. We thank Grant, Becky and Alice for their valuable contributions. Three new members, Martin Beal, Natasha Gillies and Martyna Syposz, were appointed to the Committee at the July Council meeting.

The 2024 recipients of the Godman Salvin Prize, Janet Kear Union Medal, Alfred Newton Lecture and the inaugural Early Professional Award, were announced during the course of the year (see side panels on pages 6 and 7).

Open calls for nominations were run, from July to September, for the Godman Salvin Prize, the Janet Kear Union Medal and the Early Professional Award. Three people were nominated for the 2025 Early Professional Award. No new nominations were received for the 2025 Godman Salvin Prize, but the nominators of the 2nd and 3rd ranked nominees from the previous year agreed to have their nominees rolled forward. No nominations were received for the 2025 Janet Kear Union Medal, and with no nominees to consider from the previous year, the medal will not be awarded in 2025. For the Godman Salvin Prize and the Early Professional Award, nominations were independently ranked following previously agreed procedures. The top ranked nominees for each award were presented to Council, for approval, at their November meeting, and the top-ranked nominee for each award has accepted their invitation. The recipients of the 2025 Godman Salvin Prize and the 2025 Early Professional Award will be announced during the course of 2025. No call for nominations was run for the 2026 Alfred Newton Lecture during 2024, as planned, due to delays in forming the Scientific Programme Committee for BOU2026.

ENGAGEMENT COMMITTEE

Chair

Dr Tom Finch (RSPB)

Members

Dr Ailidh Barnes (BTO) (to July 2024)
Mr Ondřej Belfín, Conference Support Officer (Czechia)
Dr Aonghais Cook (BTO)
Dr Jamie Dunning (University of Leeds) (from July 2024)
Dr Daniel Hayhow (Earthwatch Europe) (to July 2024)
Dr Danielle Hinchcliffe (Liverpool John Moores University) (from July 2024)
Dr Katharine Keogan (HiDef Ariel Surveys)
Dr Nicola Largey (University of Highlands and Islands)
Dr Ashleigh Marshall, Journal Support Officer (Royal Society) (from July 2024)
Dr Veronica Mendez (University of Iceland)
Dr Julie Miller (University of Glasgow) (to July 2024)
Dr Connor Panter, Blog Editor (University of Nottingham)
Mr Charlie Russell, Blog Editor (University of East Anglia)
Dr Ashley Sendell-Price (Uppsala University, Sweden)
Dr Elwyn Sharps (Natural Resources Wales)
Dr Leila Walker, BOU COO
Dr Saskia Wischnewski (RSPB) (to July 2024)
Ms Karolina Zalewska (University of East Anglia) (from July 2024)
Dr Natalia Zielonka, Social Media Support Officer (University of East Anglia)

Engagement Committee

The Engagement Committee oversees engagement between different parts of the BOU, our members and the wider ornithological community, primarily through conferences and social media activities. The Committee's role is to increase awareness of the BOU's activities, facilitate communication and collaboration within the community, and champion equity, diversity and inclusion.

The Committee met three times in 2024, saying goodbye to four valued members (Ailidh Barnes, Daniel Hayhow, Julie Miller and Saskia Wischnewski), and welcoming four new members (Jamie Dunning, Danielle Hinchcliffe, Ashleigh Marshall and Karolina Zalewska), in July.

Membership

Following the revamping of the Member Conference Attendance Grants last year (with a renewed focus on funding low-carbon travel and remote attendance), this year we have made some further tweaks to the scheme to encourage more applicants and to support a wider range of events. From 2025 we will hold two annual calls for applications to support events taking place year-round. We will also support attendance at BOU events. As in 2024, applicants are encouraged to use low-carbon travel to in-person events, where possible.

In an effort to reach prospective new members, we have produced a series of posters (with thanks to Natalia Zielonka) to distribute around ornithological institutions across the UK and beyond. These posters include a trackable QR code which links through to the BOU website, so we will be to be able to monitor the extent to which posters are being interacted with. Do keep a look out for BOU posters in your place of work or study, and get in touch with us if you could 'host' a poster for us.

Social media

Through 2024, the committee has continued to discuss how to make best use of the various social media platforms on offer to us. From a functional perspective, X is deteriorating – posts can no longer be viewed without a user account, and 'the algorithm' penalises posts containing links to external webpages (such as journal articles or blog posts). Our following on X has remained largely unchanged since this time last year (22k), though engagement is down.

In contrast, we have a growing following on Bluesky (currently 3.5k at the end of 2024), where we curate the ornithology feed and have published a 'starter pack' of ornithologists. Bluesky posts can now be viewed without a user account, and the content of feeds can be finely tuned, effectively giving users control of the algorithm. We tested Bluesky as a parallel conference platform at our 2024 conferences (BOU2024, BOUasm24 and BOUsci24), with the BOU account posting presentation summaries from presenters who provided content. This testing, alongside increasing take-up of Bluesky, informed our recent decision to cease using X for our parallel

TOP ALTMETRIC PAPERS

IBIS papers published in 2024

Global extinction of Slender-billed Curlew (*Numenius tenuirostris*) Graeme M. Buchanan, Ben Chapple, Alex J. Berryman, Nicola Crockford, Justin J. F. J. Jansen, Alexander L. Bond DOI: 10.1111/ibi.13368

A new species of nightjar (*Caprimulgus*) from Timor and Wetar, Lesser Sunda Islands, Wallacea Ben F. King, George Sangster, Colin R. Trainor, Martin Irestedt, Dewi M. Prawiradilaga, Per G. P. Ericson DOI: 10.1111/ibi.13340

Species status and phylogenetic relationships of the enigmatic Negros Fruit Dove (*Ptilinopus arcanus*) John A. Nash, Richard C. Harrington, Kristof Zyskowski, Thomas J. Near, Richard O. Prum
DOI: 10.1111/ibi.13305

Remote tracking unveils intercontinental movements of nomadic Short-eared Owls (*Asio flammeus*) with implications for resource tracking by irruptive specialist predators John Calladine, Gunnar Thor Hallgrimsson, Neil Morrison, Chris Southall, Hallgrimur Gunnarsson, Fernando Jubete, Fabrizio Sergio, François Mougeot DOI: 10.1111/ibi.13304



Eamon C. Corbett's paper was voted the best ECR paper published in IBIS in 2023.

The mechanistic, genetic and evolutionary consequences of bird eye colour variation Eamon C. Corbett, Robb T. Brumfield, Brant C. Faircloth / DOI: 10.1111/ibi.13276

conference activities. From BOU2025, we will instead encourage conference presenters to post to Bluesky. BOU's regular posting on X will remain unchanged but under continued review.

Summer Placement Scheme

In 2024 the Committee developed a new scheme to provide financial support to undergraduate students undertaking summer research projects. The Summer Placement Scheme opened in January 2025, and will support three students to undertake projects of up to eight weeks in length. Applicants must be supported by a host organisation which will provide supervision and access to lab space, field sites, consumables and equipment, as necessary for the proposed project. We are particularly seeking applications from individuals belonging to groups that are currently under-represented within ornithology, and from applicants for whom a summer placement would otherwise be unaffordable. We hope that, by nurturing the next generation of ornithologists, the scheme will help secure the BOU's future.

Equality and Diversity

Two Engagement Committee members have joined the BOU's Equality and Diversity Working Group (EDWG) – welcome and thanks to Danielle Hinchcliffe and Elwyn Sharps. This year we have clarified the terms of the EDWG within the Engagement Committee's Standing Orders, and the group's work will be supported by a new Equality & Diversity Support Officer role which we are currently recruiting.

Support Officers

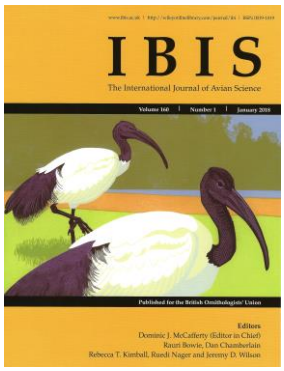
The BOU's Support Officers drive a large part of our work around conference delivery, journal publicity, social media activities and the BOU blog.

Our Blog Editor, Charlie Russell, is responsible for sourcing, editing and publishing content for #theBOUblog. This year saw 77 new posts, including articles written by our Journal Support Officer (see below), authors of IBIS papers, and other community articles (including our #DiversityBlog series and, for example, an introduction to Bluesky by former BOU Chief Operations Officer Steve Dudley). We are also delighted to have Bob Montgomerie, an Emeritus Professor from Queen's University, Canada, as a regular contributor to the blog, covering the historical background of recently published IBIS papers.

Our new Journal Support Officer, Ashleigh Marshall, wrote an impressive 20 articles for the BOU blog in 2024, summarising a variety of papers published in our journal IBIS. She cover topics ranging from Lesser Kestrel conservation to Ancient Murrelet foraging and American Black Swift mating strategies.

Our Conference Support Officer, Ondřej Belfín, supported the delivery of our annual conference and two successful autumn events, including extensive revision of conference guidelines and resources to support presenters and attendees.

Finally, our Social Media Support, Natalia Zielonka, continues to support BOU's social media activities in a variety of ways, for example by helping to update our



IBIS MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

Chair

Dr Rosemarie Kentie (IBED, University of Amsterdam)

Members

Mr Graham Appleton, BOU Hon. Treasurer

Dr Beatriz Arroyo Lopez (Instituto de Investigacion en Recursos Cinegeticos (IREC) (CSIC-UCLM-JCCM)

Dr Rauri Bowie, Editor (University of California – Berkeley)

Dr Simon Butler (University of East Anglia)

Dr Richard Fuller, Editor (University of Queensland)

Prof Jenny Gill, Editor in Chief (University of East Anglia)

Dr Rebecca Kimball, Editor (University of Florida)

Mrs Angela Langford, Journal Manager

Dr Ruedi Nager, Editor (University of Glasgow)

Dr Andrea Soriano Redondo (University of Helsinki) (from July 2024)

Dr Leila Walker, BOU COO

Prof Jeremy Wilson, Editor (RSPB)

social media policy, developing training materials to support the transition from X to Bluesky for our parallel conference delivery, designing new image templates for social media, and identifying a dashboard from which to manage posting across multiple platforms.

Many thanks to all of our Support Officers for their outsized contributions to the work of the BOU.

IBIS Management Committee

BOU.ORG.UK/IBIS/

Committee membership and business

IBIS Management Committee offers strategic guidance, support, and advice to editors and staff, particularly regarding the management of the journal and with our publisher, Wiley. The Committee consists of the Editor in Chief, all Editors, the Chief Operations Officer, the Honorary Treasurer, the Journal Manager and up to four regular members operating at Associate Editor level for IBIS or similar journals.

IBIS is published on behalf of the BOU by Wiley Publishing, from whom we continue to receive fantastic service, support and advice. During 2024, we worked closely with Andreas Petersen, our society contact in the Partner Publishing Team, and both Genevieve Richards (until September) and Melissa Clasper (from October), our editorial contacts in the Publishing Development Team. The efforts of Wiley staff during the year were greatly appreciated, and we are enjoying working closely with all the Wiley team. Within Wiley, several specialized teams (such as Journal Marketing) are available to provide guidance in the forever-changing publishing landscape. We have an excellent relationship with Wiley and maintain constant communication throughout the year, with both parties striving to improve IBIS, to ensure the journal remains at the forefront of ornithology.

Our annual meeting with Wiley was held on Zoom in March. At the meeting, annual reports covering editorial, production, marketing and finance were presented and discussed. Our close working relationship comes to the fore during these meetings, with both sides able to talk openly about our joint management of the journal.

Editorial team

The journal is managed by our Editor in Chief. Jennifer Gill, five Editors, Journal Manager Angela Langford, and our globally representative Associate Editor Board. All play a vital role in the management of IBIS and we thank each and every one of them for their time and dedication to the journal. Three Associate Editors retired from the board after many years and handling many manuscripts, and we want to thank them for their excellent work: Melanie Kershaw, James Pierce-Higgins and Gary Voelker. We currently have 48 Associate Editors. In the coming year, we plan to recruit Associate Editors by advertising positions in certain areas. Look out for developments on this in 2025 and associated calls in our e-newsletters and on social media!

TOP CITED PAPERS

From most recent Impact Factor period (2022-2023)

High pathogenicity avian influenza (H5N1) in Northern Gannets (*Morus bassanus*): Global spread, clinical signs and demographic consequences / Jude V. Lane et al / DOI: 10.1111/ibi.13275

BirdNET: applications, performance, pitfalls and future opportunities / Cristian Pérez-Granados / DOI: 10.1111/ibi.13193

Thermal effects of plumage coloration / Svana Rogalla, Matthew D. Shawkey, Liliana D'Alba / DOI: 10.1111/ibi.13100

MOST DOWNLOADED IBIS PAPERS

Papers published in 2024

Global extinction of Slender-billed Curlew (*Numenius tenuirostris*) / Graeme M. Buchanan, Ben Chapple, Alex J. Berryman, Nicola Crockford, Justin J. F. J. Jansen, Alexander L. Bond / DOI: 10.1111/ibi.13368

Migration mortality in birds / Ian Newton / DOI: 10.1111/ibi.13316

Estimating sampling biases in citizen science datasets / Louis J. Backstrom, Corey T. Callaghan, Hannah Worthington, Richard A. Fuller, Alison Johnston / DOI: 10.1111/ibi.13343

Special issues

Two special issues, inspired by recent BOU conferences, were published in the last year. The special issue Avian Reproduction was published in 2024 (Volume 166, Issue 2), with 13 articles spanning from breeding strategies to nest site selection and egg morphology. Another special issue, Citizen Science, was prepared for publication early in 2025 (Volume 167, Issue 1), with seven articles on topics ranging from species distributions to methodology. IBIS is also participating in a multi-journal themed collection *Waking up on Climate Change: Measuring Impact, Focusing Efforts and Building Futures*, which closed for submissions at the end of February 2025.

Journal metrics

The Wiley IBIS website displays a range of journal and article metrics, including the latest Journal Impact Factor (1.8 in 2023), CiteScore (4.6 in 2023), Journal Citation Indicator (1.45 in 2023), full text views (350,876 in 2023), acceptance rate (34% in 2023), submission to first decision (13 days in 2023) and submission to acceptance (283 days in 2023).

Best ECR paper

We annually award a best IBIS Early Career Researcher (ECR) paper, where the first or corresponding author was an ECR. In 2023, 54 papers qualified, of which seven were nominated for the award by our Associate Editors. These nominated papers went to a public vote in 2024, with Eamon Corbett's paper on the mechanistic, genetic and evolutionary causes of bird eye colour variation being voted the winner (see side panel on page 12 and https://bou.org.uk/ibis/ibis-best-ecr-paper-of-2023/).

Marketing

IBIS is actively promoted through e-newsletters, social media and BOU blogs, which helps to maximise article views and online attention, as measured by Altmetric Attention Scores.

Throughout 2024, we worked closely with Jo Wood, our Product Marketing Manager at Wiley, who has created promotional banners for the Wiley IBIS website, helped us to update our journal messaging, and involved IBIS in several Wiley marketing campaigns.

Online-only journal

In 2024, IBIS became an online-only journal. The benefits associated with this include a reduced carbon footprint, a more sustainable journal and content that is more readily available to readers around the world. A very limited number of print copies continue to be made available to existing BOU member print subscribers, in agreement with Wiley, with printing and distribution provided by Henry Ling Ltd.

MEETINGS COMMITTEE

Chair

Dr Cat Morrison (University of East Anglia)

Members

Dr Katherine Booth Jones (Scottish Government)
Dr Vojtěch Brlík (Czech Academy of Sciences & Charles University, Czechia) (from July 2024)
Dr Daria Dadam (Natural England) (from July 2024)
Dr Christine Howard (Durham University)
Dr Joelene Hughes (RSPB)
Mrs Angela Langford, Journal & Office Manager
Dr Barry McMahon (University College Dublin)
Dr Ana Payo-Payo (University of Aberdeen) (to July 2024)
Dr Alice Risely (Salford University)
Dr Emily Simmonds (Norwegian University of Science and Technology & University of Edinburgh)
Dr Leila Walker, BOU COO
Dr Kevin Wood (Wildfowl & Wetlands Trust)

Meetings Committee

BOU.ORG.UK/CONFERENCES-AND-MEETINGS/

The Meetings Committee is responsible for maintaining the ongoing programme of BOU conferences and providing advice and support to the BOU Office and others responsible for organising and running BOU events. The Committee met remotely via zoom twice during the year and also conducted business by email.

Ana Payo-Payo left the Committee this year and we would like to thank Ana for her great work. Vojtěch Brlík and Daria Dadam joined and we welcome and look forward to working with them.

The Committee would like to thank our 2024 conference delivery team of Ondřej Belfín, Sarah Binnie, Valentin Kiss, Angela Langford and Natalia Zielonka for all their hard work.

2024 annual conference

Urban birds (#BOU2024) – 9–11 April 2024

The conference was held in Nottingham and focused on urban birds, aimed at discussing the unique issues faced by urban dwelling bird populations in our changing world. We had 80 in attendance of which 22 were ECRs, which made for a friendly environment with great networking opportunities. The conference sessions spanned physiology and behaviour, gut microbiomes in urban birds, morphology and colouration and behaviour and community responses.

Amanda Rodewald (Cornell University, USA) delivered the Alfred Newton Lecture, titled *A bird's eye view of behavioural and demographic processes that shape avian communities in an urbanising environment*.

The keynote presenters were Fran Bonier (Queens University, Canada), Pablo Capilla-Lasheras (University of Glasgow, UK), Lucas M. Leveau (CONIET-University of Buenos Aires, Argentina, Ian Macgregor-Fors (University of Helsinki, Finland), Dan Chamberlain (University of Turin, Italy), Hugh Hanmer (BTO, UK) and Barbara Tomotani (Arctic University of Norway, Norway). We thank the Scientific Programme Committee (SPC) – Christine Howard (Chair, Durham University), Davide Dominoni (University of Glasgow), Caroline Isaksson (Lund University) and Kate Plummer (BTO) – for putting together an excellent programme.

Two Early Career Researcher (ECR) events also took place at the conference. The first was a series of workshops on *Tricks of the trade: some thoughts on maximising the impact of your research*, *Media skills for ornithologists* and *Fundamentals of radio tracking*, led by Arjun Amar (FitzPatrick Institute of African Ornithology, South Africa), Natalia Zielonka (RSPB, UK) and Sarah Deans (Lotek UK). Thanks to all. We also had a roundtable event where ECRs got to grill the keynote speakers on

2024 ANNUAL CONFERENCE



URBAN BIRDS

9–11 Apr 2024 | Nottingham | #BOU2024

Image: Zeynel Cebeci CC BY-SA 4.0 Wikimedia Commons

2024 AUTUMN CONFERENCES



BIRDS AND NET ZERO

24 Oct 2024 | York & Zoom | #BOUasm24

Image: Susanne Nilsson CC BY-SA 2.0 Wikimedia Commons



AVIAN CONSERVATION TRANSLOCATIONS

12-13 Nov 2024 | Zoom | #BOUsci24

Image: Zeynel Cebeci CC BY-SA 4.0 Wikimedia Commons

subjects ranging from careers tips to their favourite fieldwork experiences, over a drink or two served by our President Graeme Buchanan.

2024 autumn conferences

Birds and net zero (#BOUasm24) – 24 October 2024

This one-day conference was held in York and run as our first hybrid event (in-person and on Zoom). We had 62 attending in person and 88 online. The conference sessions spanned unlocking new evidence, novel approaches to meeting evidence gaps, understanding population-level impacts and demographic consequences, ecosystem approaches to understanding impacts, understanding uncertainty and monitoring impacts and closing the loop.

The keynote speakers were Aonghais Cook (The Biodiversity Consultancy, UK), Catharine Horswill, (ZSL Institute of Zoology & University College London, UK), Micheal Heath (University of Strathclyde, UK), Elizabeth Masden (University of the Highlands and Islands, UK) and Martin Perrow (University College London & UK Centre for Ecology and Hydrology, UK). We thank the SPC – Katherine Booth Jones (Scottish Government, UK), Aly McCluskie (RSPB, UK), Kate Searle (UK Centre for Ecology and Hydrology) and Chris Thaxter (BTO, UK) – for putting together an excellent programme.

Avian conservation translocations (#BOUsci24) – 12-13 November 2024

This two-day online conference aimed to share knowledge and experiences from past, ongoing and planned translocation programmes, to inform future translocation efforts. We had 158 in attendance. The conference sessions spanned monitoring of translocated populations, decision science and translocation planning, adaptive management, health and welfare considerations, ecosystem restoration and rewilding, translocation and people, behaviour impacts, conservation translocations: looking to the future.

The keynote speakers were Kevin Parker (Parker Conservation, New Zealand), Carl G. Jones (Durrell Wildlife Conservation Trust, UK), Sarah J Converse (University of Washington, USA), Stefano Canessa (University of Bern, Switzerland), Kate McInnes (Dept of Conservation, New Zealand), Phil Seddon (University of Otago, New Zealand), Olivier Nsengimana (Rwanda Wildlife Conservation Association, Rwanda) and Alison Greggor (San Diego Zoo Wildlife Alliance, USA).

The conference closed with a panel discussion on *Conservation translocations: looking to the future*, chaired by Geoff Hilton (Wildfowl & Wetlands Trust, UK), with an opening presentation from Martin Gaywood (NatureScot, UK) and contributions from Sarah Dalrymple (Liverpool John Moores University, UK), Lee Schofield (Ecologist and Author), John Ewen (Zoological Society London, UK), Delphine Pouget (Natural England, UK) and Mary Davies (RSPB, UK).

We thank the SPC – Lynda Donaldson (Chair; RSPB, UK), Katie Beckmann (University of Edinburgh, UK), Victoria Franks (University of Salford, UK) and Kevin

2025 CONFERENCES



FRONTIERS IN ORNITHOLOGY

1-3 Apr 2025 | Nottingham | #BOU2025

Image: Imran Shah CC BY-SA 2.0 Wikimedia Commons



A DAY AT THE MUSEUM

18 Nov 2025 | Natural History Museum, London | #BOUasm25

Image: © Trustees of the Natural History Museum, London

Wood (Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust, UK) – for putting together an excellent programme.

Future conferences

We have a diverse selection of topics covered by our upcoming conference programme. These are:

2025 annual conference – *Frontiers in ornithology* (#BOU2025) 1–3 April 2025 – University of Nottingham, UK

This is an exciting conference, bringing together researchers, conservationists, and policy makers. working at the cutting edge of ornithological research and conservation, to share their knowledge as to how innovative technologies and novel approaches can help us find solutions to conserve birds in a changing world.

BOU at EOU 2025 – *Pre-congress symposium on woodland birds* 18 August 2025 – Bangor, UK

This symposium offers a timely opportunity to bring together members from the many active research groups working on woodland birds, with great potential to discuss emerging topics in ecology and conservation. It is likely to be of interest to a wide range of ornithologists from across Europe.

2025 autumn conference – *A day at the museum* (#BOUasm25) 18 November 2025 – Natural History Museum, London, UK

This conference aims to bring together researchers to explore the frontiers of collections-based ornithological research, including innovative approaches being developed to unlock the data in collections, and exciting new directions in environmental change research.

2026 annual conference – *Birds and people* (#BOU2026) 31 March – 2 April 2026 – University of Nottingham, UK

This conference aims to examine the complexities of the relationships between birds and people, in order to understand more about how birds and people can live together. We will provide an optimistic note for the future for birds by hearing about recent conservation successes, while learning more about current anthropogenic threats they face. We will hear about the latest science on minimising the challenges birds may pose to human interests and maximising the benefits they provide.

Grants Committee

BOU.ORG.UK/FUNDING/

GRANTS COMMITTEE

Chair

Dr Sonya Clegg (University of Oxford) (until April 2024)

Dr Tom Bradfer-Lawrence (RSPB) (April 2024 onwards)

Members

Dr Davide Dominoni (University of Glasgow)

Ros Green (University of Liverpool & BTO) (role-sharing)

Dr Claudia Martin (University of Edinburgh) (from April 2024 onwards)

Dr Sam Patrick (University of Liverpool) (role-sharing)

Dr Martin Sullivan (Manchester Metropolitan University)

Dr Leila Walker, BOU COO

This Committee advises Council on the selection of research grant and bursary applications that the BOU should support.

The Committee considers applications for:

- Small Research Grants;
- Career Development Bursaries;
  - open to BOU members and non-members in low- and middle-income countries.
- John & Pat Warham Studentships;
  - funded by a bequest left to the BOU by the late John and Pat Warham for the study of Sphenisciform (penguins) and Procellariiform (tubenoses) seabirds.
- Brenda and Tony Gibbs Awards;
  - funded by a bequest left to the BOU by the late Brenda and Tony Gibbs, for research on tracking and migration studies including the use of new technologies.

The Committee met twice via Zoom in 2024. The meeting to consider research grant and career development bursary applications was held in February, and the meeting to consider applications for the Brenda and Tony Gibbs Award was held in June. The remainder of the Committee's business was conducted by email.

Sonya Clegg's term as Chair of Grants Committee ended in April 2024 and Tom Bradfer-Lawrence stepped into the Chair role. We are hugely grateful to Sonya for her time on the Committee and to Tom for taking on this position. To maintain the full complement of Grants Committee members, Claudia Martin joined the Committee alongside the Chair changeover, bringing with her invaluable expertise in populations genomics and molecular ecology.

Small Ornithological Research Grant scheme

The Committee received 48 grant applications (31 in 2023, 45 in 2022, 54 in 2021). One application was rejected due to breaches in submission criteria, leaving 47 to be assessed ahead of the annual meeting held on 5 February 2024. Two qualified for funding consideration under the Brenda and Tony Gibbs bequest. Each application was scored by two committee members and based on these scores, the associated comments and on-the-day discussions, the committee determined which projects to support.

Council approved eight awards, totalling £14,839, to be made in 2024:

FUNDING ORNITHOLOGY





Two of the species featuring in research projects funded by the BOU in 2024.

From the top:

Grey Heron *Ardea cinerea*
Alexis Lours CC BY 4.0 Wikimedia Commons

Bullock's Oriole *Icterus bullockii*
Kevin Cole CC BY 2.0 Wikimedia Commons

Alejandro Corregidor-Castro (Spain) | £1,166 (amount requested) *
PhD Student, University of Padua, Italy
Unwanted ecological traps: the importance of nest microclimate in artificial nesting sites under forecasted climate change.

Alice J. Edney (UK) | £2,000 (amount requested)
D.Phil Student, Oxford University, UK
Genomic tagging: using population genomics to determine the geographic and evolutionary origins of UK-wintering chiffchaffs.

Simon Evans (UK) | £1,850 (amount requested) *
Postdoctoral Research Fellow, University of Exeter, UK
A continent-scale assessment of fertilisation failure rates in the Great Tit.

Sophie Harris (UK) | £1,965 (amount requested)
PhD Student, Newcastle University, UK
Exploring the transportation of Grey Heron (*Ardea cinerea*) DNA through a spatiotemporal analysis of sedimentary DNA (sedDNA) in a lake in Gloucestershire.

Stephanie Harris (UK) | £1,998.80 (amount requested)
Postdoctoral Researcher, Bangor University, UK
Investigating thermal investment in incubation and life-history decisions in a long-lived seabird with long incubation stints.

Jason Lacson (USA) | £1,888.81 (amount requested)
Ph.D student, Arizona State University, USA
Feather testosterone concentrations in relation to plumage colour in male and female Bullock's Orioles (*Icterus bullockii*).

Andreia Malpica-Topete (Mexico) | £2,000 (amount requested)
Postdoctoral Researcher, Michoacan University of Saint Nicholas of Hidalgo, Mexico
Searching for genome-environment association signals that suggest patterns of local adaptation in an endemic bird of the Tropical Dry Forest of Mexico: perspectives for conservation in the face of climate change.

Alper Yelimlieş (Turkey) | £1,970 (amount requested)
Ph.D. candidate, Konrad Lorenz Research Centre for Behavior and Cognition, Austria
Duetting and territorial defence coordination in the Galapagos Yellow Warbler.

* Awards funded from £10,000 donation received in 2022 (small grants fund).

Brenda and Tony Gibbs small research award

Separate to the main Gibbs Award (awards up to £20,000 – see page 22) we are using the remainder of the bequest left to us by Brenda and Tony Gibbs to fund smaller awards for applications to our small grant scheme that fall within the parameters of the Gibbs bequest.

Two awards were made in 2024:

Charlie Russell (UK) | £2,000 (amount requested)
PhD Student, University of East Anglia, UK
Evaluating the impact of tracking device placement and weight on high resolution flight performance metrics

Eugenia Andrea Bonetti (Argentina) | £ 1,933.39 (amount requested)
PhD Student, Marine and Coastal Research Institute, Argentina
Communal roosting behavior of a Neotropical raptor (*Milvago chimango*) at the city: identifying potential conflicts and benefits for the society and the environment

In March 2023, Council approved the Committee's proposal that the funding amount available via the Small Ornithological Research Grant scheme be raised to a maximum of £2,000 (rather than "£1,500, or £2,000 in exceptional circumstances"). This change was to account for rising research costs, as many applications were claiming the £2000 maximum already. The total pot of money available via this scheme remains the same, but we were able to fund an extra application this year (eight rather than seven in 2023).

Career Development Bursary scheme

The committee received no applications to this scheme in 2024 (2 in 2023, 6 in 2022, scheme not offered in 2020, 7 in 2019, 5 in 2018, 10 in 2017). Overall, the Committee feel that the Bursaries scheme is worthwhile but that it requires better promotion. To this end, various measures were implemented in 2024 to encourage more applications, including improved signposting, more information and previous-recipient testimonials on the BOU website.

John and Pat Warham Studentships

The first three Warham students have now completed their PhDs (see the 2023 Annual Report for their final reports). Here, John Lamaris, the fourth and final Warham Student, provides an update on how his project is going.

John Lamaris, Monash University, Australia (commenced 2023)
Recovering the critically endangered Beck's Petrel
Principal supervisor: Assoc. Prof. Rohan Clarke

WARHAM STUDENT



Our 2023 Warham Student, **John Lamaris**, Monash University, Australia.

RECOVERING THE CRITICALLY ENDANGERED BECK'S PETREL



John (left) and Bernard Maul (Field Assistant; right) conducting on-shore observation of Beck's Petrel in southern New Ireland (photo: Jeremy Bird).

My research programme is aimed at recovering the Critically Engendered Beck's Petrel and will focus on locating a breeding colony and studying the species' ecology. It is important that we locate the Beck's Petrel nesting grounds, and assess threats to the population such that targeted conservation strategies may be developed to protect the species.

As this research is being conducted on lands that belong to indigenous communities in southern New Ireland, our efforts in the first year of research have been focused on consultation with indigenous communities that we are collaborating with, to ensure all parties have a clear understanding of the aims and objectives of the study, and the significance of protecting this rare species. In April 2024, we visited five communities (*Muliama, Yasu, Mimias, Kapsipau, Taron*) and two primary top-up schools (*Kapsipau and Silur*) along the southern New Ireland coastlines, to engage with community members, explain what our project will involve, and to seek consent to continue the research. At the conclusion of this consultation, we also commenced monthly on-shore observation and population counts of the Beck's Petrel at *Tadang* river mouth (*Taron* village). Tadang river mouth was selected as the location for our monthly on-shore population counts after our preliminary surveys from five distinct locations detected more birds at this site when compared with others.

This fieldtrip was highly successful and met our objectives. Specifically, we received consent from the landowners to continue the research and to conduct the on-shore monthly population counts at *Tadang* river mouth. These monthly surveys have continued since then, and at the time of writing (December 2024), we have now completed eight months of surveys, the first long-term on-shore monitoring data documenting the seasonal occurrence of Beck's Petrel off the coast of New Ireland.

In preparation for Beck's Petrel tagging planned for the first quarter of 2025, I have been participating in our research group's seabird monitoring and tagging program that is being delivered off the coast of SE Australia. This regular fieldwork has provided both training and experience with the at-sea identification of seabirds, alongside training and experience with the safe capture, handling, measuring, banding and fitting of biologgers to seabirds. I am learning a lot from the team, developing an understanding of the process, and building confidence in handling seabirds, which I am very thankful for. There is still a lot to learn and so I will continue with this training over the coming months.



John with a Wandering Albatross on the Research group tagging trip off the coast of SE Australia (Photo: Rohan Clarke).

The next key components of my research will be focused on in-land searches for a breeding colony of the enigmatic Beck's Petrel. The intent here is that this will rely heavily on the boat-based seabird capture and tagging experience that I have been gaining so that, ultimately, I can deploy GPS tags with satellite connectivity on Beck's Petrels captured off New Ireland. When tagged at the appropriate time of year (informed by our monthly on-shore surveys and past knowledge of Beck's Petrel) these GPS tags will then assist with locating one or more breeding colonies.

I look forward to sharing more stories on my experiences training as a seabird biologist and our efforts to locating a Beck's Petrel breeding colony.

Brenda and Tony Gibbs bequest

We received and assessed 23 applications (33 in 2023, 20 in 2022, 37 in 2021). The combined scores and comments from Committee members were used for the basis of the on-the-day discussions at a meeting on 26 June 2024.

Council approved a single award of £19,794:

Wieland Heim (Germany)
Postdoctoral Researcher, University of Oldenburg, Germany
Pesticide effects on the migration and survival of Eurasian Skylarks *Alauda arvens*is.

Records Committee

BOU.ORG.UK/BRITISH-LIST/

The Records Committee is responsible for maintaining the British List, the official list of birds recorded in Britain.

The Committee met twice (remotely) during the year with other business conducted by email.

Chris McInerny retired as a member of the Committee in June 2024. Chris had served on the Committee since November 2011 and as Secretary from June 2013, and we extend our gratitude to him for all his hard work (including many BOURC publications) spanning 13 years. Chris Batty stepped into the Secretary role from July 2024 and we welcomed Jane Turner as a new member – Jane has been passionate about birding since childhood, with a long list of rarity finds, and serves as the county recorder for Cheshire and Wirral. We also said farewell to Paul French, who has served as BBRC representative on BOURC for 10 years, to be replaced by Andy Holden in one of the new BBRC Vice-Chair roles.

Changes to the British List

The BOURC's 57th Report was published in January 2025 and covers the period October 2023 to September 2024 (*IBIS* 167: 312-323). This announced a number of changes to Category A of the British List, including a remarkable eight new species:

- Red-headed Bunting *Emberiza bruniceps* (formerly on Category D)
- Soft-plumaged Petrel *Pterodroma mollis*
- Band-rumped Storm-petrel *Hydrobates castro* (formerly accepted as the species-group Band-rumped Storm-petrel/ Monteiro's Storm-petrel/Cape Verde Storm-petrel *Hydrobates castro/monteiroi/jabejabe*)
- Stejneger's Scoter *Melanitta stejnegeri*
- Black-winged Kite *Elanus caeruleus*
- Grey-headed Lapwing *Vanellus cinereus*

RECORDS COMMITTEE

Chair

Dr Alexander Lees (Manchester Metropolitan University

Secretary

Dr Chris McInerny (University of Glasgow) (until June 2024)
Mr Chris Batty (Lancashire) (from July 2024)

Members

Mr Ross Ahmed (Northumberland)
Dr Pierre-Andre Crochet (French National Centre for Scientific Research (CNRS))
Mr Paul French (East Yorkshire: BBRC Chair) (until August 2024)
Mr Mark Golley (Norfolk, UK)
Mr Andrew Holden (North Yorkshire: BBRC Vice-Chair) (from September 2024)
Mr Mark Thomas (RSPB)
Dr Jane Turner (Cheshire) (From July 2024)
Dr Leila Walker, BOU COO

BOURC CATEGORY F SUB-COMMITTEE (BOURC CFSC)

Dr Joanne Cooper
Prof John R. Stewart
Dr Dale Serjeantson

BOURC consultants

Mr Steve Dudley (Category C)
Dr Bob McGowen, National Museums of Scotland (museums)
Keith Naylor (historical records)
Andrew Owen, Chester Zoo (captive bird trade)

ADDITIONS TO THE BRITISH LIST



Black-winged Kite *Elanus caeruleus*, admitted to the British List in 2024.

Image © Paul Ellis, from record file



Grey-headed Lapwing *Vanellus cinereus*, admitted to the British List in 2024.

Image © Paul Ellis, from record file



Western Olivaceous Warbler *Iduna opaca*, admitted to the British List in 2024.

Image © Roger Riddington, from record file

- Canada Warbler *Cardellina canadensis*
- Western Olivaceous Warbler *Iduna opaca*

In addition, there were new historic first records for a further three species (year of occurrence in parentheses):

- Black-winged Pratincole *Glareola nordmanni* (1868)
- Oriental Pratincole *Glareola maldivarum* (1908)
- Taiga Flycatcher *Ficedula albicilla* (1976)

Furthermore, Golden Pheasant *Chrysolophus pictus* was subject to a category change from C1E* to C6E* as a 'Former naturalized species – species formerly placed in C1 whose naturalized populations are either no longer self-sustaining or are considered extinct'.

In addition, the release of versions 14.1 and 14.2 of the IOC World Bird List resulted in a large number of changes to the British List, mostly involving changes in linear sequence of several bird families as detailed in the 57th Report. However, these changes also involved taxonomic upgrades and downgrades. including the addition of two new species-level taxa. First. the addition of Red Grouse *Lagopus scotica* which was split from Willow Ptarmigan *Lagopus lagopus* and becomes a new endemic species for Britain and Ireland. Second, the addition of Eastern Red-rumped Swallow *Cecropis daurica* which is added alongside European Red-rumped Swallow *Cecropis rufula*. Two species-level taxa were removed from the list as Lesser Redpoll *Acanthis cabaret* and Arctic Redpoll *Acanthis hornemanni* were lumped with Common Redpoll *Acanthis flammea* to form one species Redpoll *Acanthis flammea*.

Also included in the 57th Report (and mentioned in the 2023 BOU Annual Report), was the removal of Lesser Short-toed Lark *Alaudala rufescens* from Category A of the British List.

In total, these changes to the British List, together with taxonomic changes in line with IOC taxonomy (detailed in *IBIS* 167: 312–323) bring the total to 640 species as at 31 December 2024.

Committee recruitment

New Committee members continue to be recruited via public calls for nominations and may in future be aided by a new shadowing role which will span all BOU committees. More on this to follow in 2025.

Links with other groups

The Committee maintains close links with the British Birds Rarities Committee (BBRC). The BOURC Secretary continues to work closely with BBRC's Secretariat and other European committees, and close links are maintained with Association of European Records Committees (AERC).

Acknowledgements

The Union would like to extend its thanks and gratitude to the following who have assisted with the many BOU activities throughout the year:

All those members of Council and our committees as listed throughout the report who give up their time willingly to develop, oversee and deliver our wide range of activities;

Raurie Bowie, Richard Fuller, Jenny Gill, Rebecca Kimball, Ruedi Nager, Jeremy Wilson, Patrick Smith, all Associate Editors (listed in each issue of IBIS) and the hundreds of reviewers (listed annually in IBIS) for their invaluable work for IBIS;

Richard Sale (on behalf of the Alexander Library, Oxford University) for his editing of the IBIS book reviews;

Prof Christopher Perrins and Neil Bucknell for arranging the obituaries published in IBIS;

Graham Allen, Farhath Jabeen, Andreas Petersen, Genevieve Richards, Melissa Clasper, Janany Sudarshan, Jo Wood and colleagues at Wiley, for their help in delivering our high quality journal;

Andrew Hopwood, Adrian Morris and colleagues at Henry Ling Ltd for providing member print copies of IBIS;

Leica (UK) for their support of our IBIS early career researcher award;

Outgoing investment trustees Nigel Crocker, Richard Price and Stephen Rumsey, and incoming investment trustees Neil Bucknell, Andrew Callender and Ben Turner for their excellent management of the Union's investment portfolio;

Christine Howard (Chair, Durham University), Davide Dominoni (University of Glasgow), Caroline Isaksson (Lund University) and Kate Plummer (BTO) for their work preparing the programme for the annual conference (*Urban birds*);

Katherine Booth Jones (Scottish Government, UK), Aly McCluskie (RSPB, UK), Kate Searle (UK Centre for Ecology and Hydrology) and Chris Thaxter (BTO, UK) for the planning and delivery of our *Birds and net zero* autumn conference;

Cont/.

Membership

At the end of the year our total membership stood at 1,082 (1,089 at 31 Dec 2023) comprising 784 full members (781 at 31 Dec 2023) and 298 reduced rate subscribers (308 at 31 Dec 2023), made up of 260 early career researchers (ECRs) and 38 from/living in low-and-middle-income countries.

46 members sent their formal resignation during the year (44 in 2023), and Council noted, with sadness, the following deaths: Mr Julian Arkell, Mr Graham Cowles, Dr Ommo Hueppop, Dr Peter Jones and Mr Peter Steyn.

As ever, we remain extremely grateful for the continued support of our members.

Financial review

Graham Appleton, Honorary Treasurer



On paper, the BOU made a loss of £28,907 during the year under review, following a loss of £3,140 in 2023. Much of the loss is associated with expenditure from legacy funds, as described below, together with planned support for grants and to develop conferences. Council is committed to reducing assets and sets a negative budget each year. At their November meeting, Council agreed the following reserves policy:

The Union is committed to reducing the amount of cash savings we hold, in line with the expectations of the Charity Commissioners. Council has agreed that we should reduce Unrestricted Funds to £350k, in the medium term, representing one year of operations (£250k) and a buffer of £100k. The size of this reserve takes account of uncertainty over medium-term income from journal publishing, which is currently a significant part of the Union's turnover.

At the end of 2024, Unrestricted Funds stood at £673,863, up from £642,362 at the end of 2023. The planned reduction in Unrestricted Reserves was negated by strong performance of IBIS (income declared here is £14,081 above budget) and the strong rise in the value of investments.

Wiley contract

Along with membership subscriptions, journal sales provide the bulk of the BOU's income. IBIS is published in partnership with Wiley Publishing, an arrangement which serves the Union well. 2024 was the first year of a new four-year contract. There would appear to have been a slight drop in income, from £118,906 to £112,801, but this is associated with a change in the Wiley reporting year. In the 2023 accounts, income included a large payment received in the early part of 2024. Under the new contract, with a later Wiley year-end, the first 2025 payment will not be received in

Acknowledgements

CONT/.

Lynda Donaldson (Chair; RSPB, UK), Katie Beckmann (University of Edinburgh, UK), Victoria Franks (University of Salford, UK) and Kevin Wood (Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust, UK) for the planning and delivery of our *Avian conservation translocations* autumn conference;

Ondřej Belfín, Sarah Binnie, Valentin Kiss, Angela Langford and Natalia Zielonka for supporting the delivery of our conferences;

Daniel Blanco and Charlie Douglass at Douglass Digital for maintenance and development of the BOU website;

Maria Rogers and the conference staff at the University of Nottingham Conferences for helping to deliver our annual conference;

Sarah Miller and the conference staff at Novotel York Centre for helping to deliver our autumn *Birds and net zero* conference;

Keith McJannett, and colleagues at Elite Event Solutions for delivering the online component of our autumn *Birds and net zero* conference;

Andy Musgrove for continued help with maintaining the electronic versions of the British List;

British Birds Rarities Committee (BBRC) and bird records committees across Europe under the auspices of the Association of European Records Committees (AERC) who have assisted BOURC during the year;

Karen Kragesand Thomsen at Kovsted & Skovgård;

and Caroline Gillis, Tracey Richardson, Lilly Byng, Shawn McIndoe and colleagues at Azets (accountants and auditors).

We apologise to anyone we have inadvertently omitted.

time for these accounts. Instead, the debtor figure, included in the income for 2024, is just the balance of expected income for 2024.

Changes

During 2024, Angela Langford and Leila Walker have moved our accounting system from paper to an online system, Xero. With the help of our accountancy support team at Azets, this has gone very smoothly. An online system is particularly useful, given our decentralised administration, and the package provides tools that should make it easier to monitor expenditure during the course of a year and to make budget proposals and decisions.

Most of the income and expenditure streams for 2024 matched those for 2023 but there were a few variances. Conference income was higher in 2024, with three conferences, instead of two, but expenditure was also higher, especially because we tried a new way to deliver a hybrid conference. The lower debtor figure of £40,059 (v £55,724) may in part reflect the fact that the end of year reconciliation is skewed by the change in the Wiley year, as discussed above.

Grants

Although some of the money used to support grants comes from annual income and returns on investments, the major contribution is from reserves. Extra support is being provided by a member who has kindly donated £10,000. During 2024, his money supported two of the Small Research Grants selected by Grants Committee.

BOU Council continues to act as stewards for the legacies provided by John & Pat Warham and Brenda & Tony Gibbs. Payments for both the 2023 Gibbs Award and the 2024 Gibbs Award were made during 2024 and the fourth and final Warham studentship continues to fund work at Monash University.

Investments

The value of the BOU's investments grew in line with market benchmarks, with dividends from unrestricted and endowment funds providing income, especially for grants. During 2024, there was a changeover of investment trustees, with Richard Price, Nigel Crocker and Stephen Rumsey handing over to Neil Bucknell, Ben Turner and Andrew Callender, who were appointed at the March Council meeting. The legal appointment took longer than expected and the retiring trustees ended up being responsible for the figures that fed into the 2024 report. I should like to thank them for their forbearance and reiterate Council's thanks for their many years of service.

It seems sensible to take this opportunity to review the BOU's investments, especially to assess whether there are ways to further refine ethical parameters. The new investment trustees will be bringing a report to Council early in 2025.

Looking forwards

This is my eighth and final Treasurer's report. Finances continue to be sound and there is no suggestion that this will change in the medium term. Making longer-term

plans is complicated by the four-year renewal cycle of the publishing contract. There is scope to invest more money in ornithology during 2025 and 2026 and Council is considering how to do so effectively. This is reflected in an amended budget for 2025 that has been agreed by Council.

I should like to record my thanks to Leila Walker, Steve Dudley and Angela Langford, with whom it has been a pleasure to work, and to the team at Azets who provide such excellent support for our accounts and governance procedures. I wish my successor well and hope that he enjoys being part of the BOU Management Team as much as I have.

Responsibilities of the Trustees

The Members of Council are responsible for preparing the Trustees' Report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

The law applicable to charities in England and Wales and in Scotland requires the Members of Council to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charity and of the incoming resources and application of resources of the charity for that year.

In preparing these financial statements, the Members of Council are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP;
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable accounting standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements; and
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in operation.

The Members of Council are responsible for keeping sufficient accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Charities Act 2011, the Charity (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008, the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005, the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006 (as amended) and the provisions of the trust deed. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

Approved by Council on 12 March 2025 and signed on their behalf by:



Dr Graeme Buchanan President

Independent auditor's report

to the members of the British Ornithologists' Union for the year ended 31 December 2024

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of British Ornithologists' Union (the 'charity') for the year ended 31 December 2024 which comprise the statement of financial activities, the balance sheet and the notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including Financial Reporting Standard 102 The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

In our opinion, the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the charity's affairs as at 31 December 2024 and of its incoming resources and application of resources, for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011, the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005 and regulation 8 of the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006 (as amended).

Basis for opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs (UK)) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of our report. We are independent of the charity in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the UK, including the FRC's Ethical Standard, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Conclusions relating to going concern

In auditing the financial statements, we have concluded that the Trustees' use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate

Based on the work we have performed, we have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on the charity's ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve months from when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

Our responsibilities and the responsibilities of the Members of Council with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this report.

Other information

The other information comprises the information included in the annual report other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. The Members of Council are responsible for the other information contained within the annual report. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon. Our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the course of the audit, or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether this gives rise to a material misstatement in the financial statements

themselves. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact.

We have nothing to report in this regard.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters in relation to which the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 and the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006 (as amended) require us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- the information given in the financial statements is inconsistent in any material respect with the Trustees' report; or
- sufficient and proper accounting records have not been kept; or
- the financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records; or - we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit.

Responsibilities of Members of Council

As explained more fully in the statement of Trustees' responsibilities, the Members of Council are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the Members of Council determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error. In preparing the financial statements, the Members of Council are responsible for assessing the charity's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the Members of Council either intend to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

We have been appointed as auditor under section 144 of the Charities Act 2011 and section 44(1)(c) of the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005 and report in accordance with the Acts and relevant regulations made or having effect thereunder.

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

A further description of our responsibilities is available on the Financial Reporting Council's website at: https://www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities. This description forms part of our auditor's report.

Extent to which the audit was considered capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud

Irregularities, including fraud, are instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations. We design procedures in line with our responsibilities, outlined above and on the Financial Reporting Council's website, to detect material misstatements in respect of irregularities, including fraud.

We obtain and update our understanding of the entity, its activities, its control environment, and likely future developments, including in relation to the legal and regulatory framework applicable and how the entity is complying with that framework. Based on this understanding, we identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion. This includes consideration of the risk of acts by the entity that were contrary to applicable laws and regulations, including fraud.

In response to the risk of irregularities and non-compliance with laws and regulations, including fraud, we designed procedures which included:

- Enquiry of management and those charged with governance around actual and potential litigation and claims as well as actual, suspected and alleged fraud;
- Reviewing minutes of meetings of those charged with governance;
- Assessing the extent of compliance with the laws and regulations considered to have a direct material effect on the financial statements or the operations of the entity through enquiry and inspection;
- Reviewing financial statement disclosures and testing to supporting documentation to assess compliance with applicable laws and regulations;
- Performing audit work over the risk of management bias and override of controls, including testing of journal entries and other adjustments for appropriateness, evaluating the business rationale of significant transactions outside the normal course of business and reviewing accounting estimates for indicators of potential bias.

Because of the inherent limitations of an audit, there is a risk that we will not detect all irregularities, including those leading to a material misstatement in the financial statements or non-compliance with regulation. This risk increases the more that compliance with a law or regulation is removed from the events and transactions reflected in the financial statements, as we will be less likely to become aware of instances of non-compliance. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.

Other matters

Your attention is drawn to the fact that the charity has prepared financial statements in accordance with "Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102)" (as amended) in preference to the Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice issued on 1 April 2005 which is referred to in the extant regulations but has now been withdrawn.

This has been done in order for the financial statements to provide a true and fair view in accordance with current Generally Accepted Accounting Practice.

Use of our report

This report is made solely to the charity's trustees, as a body, in accordance with part 4 of the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 and regulation 10 of the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to

the charity's trustees those matters we are required to state to them in an auditor's report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the charity and the charity's trustees as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.



Tracey Richardson BSc (Hons) FCA (Senior Statutory Auditor) 19 March 2025
for and on behalf of Azets Audit Services
Chartered Accountants
Statutory Auditor
Westpoint
Lynch Wood
Peterborough
Cambridgeshire
United Kingdom
PE2 6FZ

Azets Audit Services is eligible for appointment as auditor of the charity by virtue of its eligibility for appointment as auditor of a company under section 1212 of the Companies Act 2006.

BRITISH ORNITHOLOGISTS' UNION

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2024

Current financial year	**Notes**	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Endowment funds £	**Total 2024 £**	Total 2023 £
Income from:						
Donations and legacies	**3**	37,493	–	–	**37,493**	38,052
Charitable activities	**4**	147,530	–	–	**147,530**	149,262
Investments	**5**	26,737	4,687	1,667	**33,091**	34,601
Total income and endowments		211,760	4,687	1,667	**218,114**	221,915
Expenditure on:						
Raising funds	**6**	55,143	–	–	**55,143**	51,869
Charitable activities	**7**	142,049	67,673	–	**209,722**	169,208
Total expenditure		197,192	67,673	–	**264,865**	221,077
Net gains/(losses) on investments	**12**	10,467	–	7,377	**17,844**	(3,978)
Net incoming/(outgoing) resources before transfers		25,035	(62,986)	9,044	**(28,907)**	(3,140)
Gross transfers between funds		6,466	(6,466)	–	–	–
Net movement in funds		31,501	(69,452)	9,044	**(28,907)**	(3,140)
Fund balances at 1 January 2024		642,362	271,191	157,239	**1,070,792**	1,073,932
Fund balances at 31 December 2024		673,863	201,739	166,283	**1,041,885**	1,070,792

The statement of financial activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year.

All income and expenditure is derived from continuing activities.

BRITISH ORNITHOLOGISTS' UNION

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES (CONTINUED)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2024

Prior financial year (2023)	**Notes**	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Endowment funds £	**Total 2023 £**
Income from:					
Donations and legacies	**3**	38,052	–	–	**38,052**
Charitable activities	**4**	149,262	–	–	**149,262**
Investments	**5**	28,492	4,453	1,656	**34,601**
Total income and endowments		215,806	4,453	1,656	**221,915**
Expenditure on:					
Raising funds	**6**	51,869	–	–	**51,869**
Charitable activities	**7**	125,561	43,647	–	**169,208**
Total expenditure		177,430	43,647	–	**221,077**
Net gains/(losses) on investments	**12**	(5,903)	–	1,925	**(3,978)**
Net incoming/(outgoing) resources before transfers		32,473	(39,194)	3,581	**(3,140)**
Gross transfers between funds		4,064	(4,064)	–	–
Net movement in funds		36,537	(43,258)	3,581	**(3,140)**
Fund balances at 1 January 2023		605,825	314,449	153,658	**1,073,932**
Fund balances at 31 December 2023		642,362	271,191	157,239	**1,070,792**

BRITISH ORNITHOLOGISTS' UNION

BALANCE SHEET
AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2024

		2024		2023	
Fixed assets	**Notes**	**£**	**£**	£	£
Investments	**14**		**429,833**		407,682
Current assets					
Debtors	**16**	**40,059**		55,724	
Cash at bank and in hand		**609,205**		648,913	
		649,264		704,637	
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	**17**	**(37,212)**		(41,527)	
Net current assets			**612,052**		663,110
Total assets less current liabilities			**1,041,885**		1,070,792
Capital funds					
Endowment funds - general					
General endowment funds	**21**		**166,283**		157,239
Income funds					
Restricted funds	20		**201,739**		271,191
Unrestricted funds			**673,863**		642,362
			1,041,885		1,070,792

The accounts were approved by the Members of Council on 12 March 2025.

Graeme Buchanan

Dr Graeme Buchanan President

BRITISH ORNITHOLOGISTS' UNION

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2024

1 Accounting policies

Charity information

The British Ornithologists' Union is a registered charity in England and Wales (249877) and Scotland (SC044850) and is unincorporated.

The charity is a public benefit company.

The charity's place of business is:
PO Box 79, Pembroke, SA72 9AX, United Kingdom.

1.1 Accounting convention

The accounts have been prepared in accordance with the charity's trust deed, the Charities Act 2011, the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005, the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006 (as amended) and "Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102)" (as amended for accounting periods commencing from 1 January 2016). The charity is a Public Benefit Entity as defined by FRS 102.

The charity has taken advantage of the provisions in the SORP for charities applying FRS 102 Update Bulletin 1 not to prepare a Statement of Cash Flows.

The financial statements have departed from the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 only to the extent required to provide a true and fair view. This departure has involved following the Statement of Recommended Practice for charities applying FRS 102 rather than the version of the Statement of Recommended Practice which is referred to in the Regulations but which has since been withdrawn.

The financial statements are prepared in sterling, which is the functional currency of the charity. Monetary amounts in these financial statements are rounded to the nearest £.

The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention, modified to include the revaluation of certain financial instruments at fair value. The principal accounting policies adopted are set out below.

1.2 Going concern

At the time of approving the financial statements, the Members of Council have a reasonable expectation that the charity has adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future. Thus the Members of Council continue to adopt the going concern basis of accounting in preparing the financial statements.

1.3 Charitable funds

Unrestricted funds are available for use at the discretion of the Members of Council in furtherance of their charitable objectives unless the funds have been designated for other purposes.

Designated funds are unrestricted funds earmarked by the trustees for particular future project or commitment.

Restricted funds are subjected to restrictions on their expenditure declared by the donor or through the terms of an appeal, and fall into one of two sub-classes: restricted income funds or endowment funds.

Endowment funds are subject to specific conditions by donors that the capital must be maintained by the charity.

BRITISH ORNITHOLOGISTS' UNION

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2024

1 Accounting policies (continued)

1.4 Income

All incoming resources are included in the statement of financial activities when entitlement has passed to the charity; it is probable that the economic benefits associated with the transaction will flow to the charity and the amount can be reliably measured. The following specific policies are applied to particular categories of income:

- Income from donations or grants is recognised when there is evidence of entitlement to the gift, receipt is probable and its amount can be measured reliably.
- Legacy income is recognised when receipt is probable and entitlement is established.
- Income from donated goods is measured at the fair value of the goods unless this is impractical to measure reliably, in which case the value is derived from the cost to the donor or the estimated resale value. Donated facilities and services are recognised in the accounts when received if the value can be reliably measured. No amounts are included for the contribution of general volunteers.
- Income from contracts for the supply of services is recognised with the delivery of the contracted service. This is classified as unrestricted funds unless there is a contractual requirement for it to be spent on a particular purpose and returned if unspent, in which case it may be regarded as restricted.

1.5 Expenditure

Expenditure is recognised on an accruals basis as a liability is incurred. Expenditure includes any VAT which cannot be fully recovered, and is classified under headings of the statement of financial activities to which it relates:

- Expenditure on raising funds includes the costs of all fundraising activities, events, non-charitable trading activities, and the sale of donated goods.
- Expenditure on charitable activities includes all costs incurred by a charity in undertaking activities that further its charitable aims for the benefit of its beneficiaries, including those support costs and costs relating to the governance of the charity apportioned to charitable activities.
- Other expenditure includes all expenditure that is neither related to raising funds for the charity nor part of its expenditure on charitable activities.

All costs are allocated to expenditure categories reflecting the use of the resource. Direct costs attributable to a single activity are allocated directly to that activity. Shared costs are apportioned between the activities they contribute to on a reasonable, justifiable and consistent basis.

BRITISH ORNITHOLOGISTS' UNION

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2024

1 Accounting policies (continued)

Overheads

Overhead costs are allocated to the relevant cost centres in the following proportions:

	Office costs	A F Langford remuneration	L Walker remuneration
Conference costs	15%	7.5%	22.5%
Management and administration	45%	47.5%	60%
IBIS publishing costs	37.5%	45%	15%
Research costs	2.5%	–	2.5%
	100%	100%	100%

These proportions were decided upon by the trustees, who believe that they represent a fair reflection of the resources expended by the charity on each activity.

1.6 Fixed asset investments

Unlisted equity investments are initially recorded at cost, and subsequently measured at fair value. If fair value cannot be reliably measured, assets are measured at cost less impairment.

Listed investments are measured at fair value with changes in fair value being recognised in income or expenditure.

1.7 Cash and cash equivalents

Cash and cash equivalents include cash in hand, deposits held at call with banks, other short-term liquid investments with original maturities of three months or less, and bank overdrafts. Bank overdrafts are shown within borrowings in current liabilities.

1.8 Financial instruments

The charity has elected to apply the provisions of Section 11 'Basic Financial Instruments' and Section 12 'Other Financial Instruments Issues' of FRS 102 to all of its financial instruments.

Financial instruments are recognised in the charity's balance sheet when the charity becomes party to the contractual provisions of the instrument.

Financial assets and liabilities are offset, with the net amounts presented in the financial statements, when there is a legally enforceable right to set off the recognised amounts and there is an intention to settle on a net basis or to realise the asset and settle the liability simultaneously.

Basic financial assets

Basic financial assets, which include debtors and cash and bank balances, are initially measured at transaction price including transaction costs and are subsequently carried at amortised cost using the effective interest method unless the arrangement constitutes a financing transaction, where the transaction is measured at the present value of the future receipts discounted at a market rate of interest. Financial assets classified as receivable within one year are not amortised.

BRITISH ORNITHOLOGISTS' UNION

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2024

1 Accounting policies (continued)

Basic financial liabilities

Basic financial liabilities, including creditors and bank loans are initially recognised at transaction price unless the arrangement constitutes a financing transaction, where the debt instrument is measured at the present value of the future payments discounted at a market rate of interest. Financial liabilities classified as payable within one year are not amortised.

Debt instruments are subsequently carried at amortised cost, using the effective interest rate method.

Trade creditors are obligations to pay for goods or services that have been acquired in the ordinary course of operations from suppliers. Amounts payable are classified as current liabilities if payment is due within one year or less. If not, they are presented as non-current liabilities. Trade creditors are recognised initially at transaction price and subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method.

Derecognition of financial liabilities

Financial liabilities are derecognised when the charity's contractual obligations expire or are discharged or cancelled.

1.9 Employee benefits

The cost of any unused holiday entitlement is recognised in the period in which the employee's services are received.

Termination benefits are recognised immediately as an expense when the charity is demonstrably committed to terminate the employment of an employee or to provide termination benefits.

2 Critical accounting estimates and judgements

In the application of the charity's accounting policies, the Members of Council are required to make judgements, estimates and assumptions about the carrying amount of assets and liabilities that are not readily apparent from other sources. The estimates and associated assumptions are based on historical experience and other factors that are considered to be relevant. Actual results may differ from these estimates.

The estimates and underlying assumptions are reviewed on an ongoing basis. Revisions to accounting estimates are recognised in the period in which the estimate is revised where the revision affects only that period, or in the period of the revision and future periods where the revision affects both current and future periods.

3 Donations and legacies	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	**2024**	2023
	£	£	**£**	£
Donations and gifts	203	-	**203**	1,395
Subscriptions	37,290	-	**37,290**	36,657

BRITISH ORNITHOLOGISTS' UNION

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2024

4 Charitable activities

	2024	2023
	£	£
Publication income – IBIS	**112,801**	118,906
Conference income	**34,729**	30,356
	147,530	149,262

5 Investments

	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Endowment funds general	**Total 2024**	Total 2023
	£	£	£	**£**	£
Income from listed investments	11,343	4,687	1,667	**23,858**	23,858
Interest receivable	15,394	–	–	**10,743**	10,743
	26,737	4,687	1,667	**34,601**	34,601
For the year ended 31 December 2023	28,492	4,453	1,656		34,601

6 Raising funds

	2024	2023
Fundraising and publicity	**£**	£
Management costs – purchases	**6,533**	4,637
Management costs – wages and salaries	**44,523**	42,911
Management costs – pension costs	**4,087**	4,321
Fundraising and publicity	**55,143**	51,869

7 Charitable activities

	2024	2023
	£	£
Research – administration costs	**1,709**	1,574
Publication costs – IBIS	**59,796**	60,097
Conference costs	**48,748**	32,166
	110,253	93,837
Grant and bursary funding of activities (see note 8)	**82,555**	58,686
Share of governance costs (see note 9)	**16,914**	16,685
	209,722	169,208

BRITISH ORNITHOLOGISTS' UNION

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2024

8 Grants and bursaries payable

	2024	2023
	£	£
Awards payable:		
Alejandro Corregidor-Castro (PhD Student, University of Padua, Italy)	**1,166**	-
Alice J. Edney (D.Phil Student, Oxford University, UK)	**2,000**	-
Simon Evans (Postdoctoral Research Fellow, University of Exeter, UK)	**1,850**	-
Sophie Harris (PhD Student, Newcastle University, UK)	**1,965**	-
Stephanie Harris (Postdoctoral Researcher, Bangor University, UK)	**1,999**	-
Jason Lacson (Graduate Teaching Associate (Ph.D Candidate), Arizona State University, USA)	**1,889**	-
Andreia Malpica-Topete (Postdoctoral Researcher, Michoacan University of Saint Nicholas of Hidalgo, Mexico)	**2,000**	-
Alper Yelimlieş (PhD candidate, Konrad Lorenz Research Centre for Behavior and Cognition, Austria)	**1,970**	-
Charlie Russell (PhD Student, University of East Anglia, UK)	**2,000**	-
Eugenia Andrea Bonetti (PhD Student, Marine and Coastal Research Institute, Argentina)	**1,948**	-
Claire Branston (Post-doctoral Research Assistant, University of Glasgow, UK)	-	1,498
Andrea Estandia (PhD student, Edward Grey Institute of Field Ornithology, UK)	-	1,950
Katarzyna Janas (Assistant Professor (adjunct), Polish Academy of Sciences, Poland)	-	1,500
Rosanne José Michielsen (PhD student, Polish Academy of Sciences, Poland)	-	2,000
Gabriel López Segoviano (Postdoc, Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, Mexico)	-	1,915
Enriqueta Velarde (Senior Researcher, Universidad Veracruzana, Mexico)	-	1,974
Akshay Bharadwaj (Masters student, Indian Institute of Science, India)	-	2,500
Federico De Pascalis (Postdoctoral Associate, ISPRA, Italy)	-	1,675
Conference attendance awards	**3,059**	4,700
Grants to institutions:		
McGill University (John & Pat Warham Studentship - Émile Brisson-Curadeau)	-	8,669
Monash University (John & Pat Warham Studentship - Dr Rohan Clarke)	**20,915**	30,747
University of East Anglia, UK (John & Pat Warham Studentship – Kirsty Franklin)	**-**	(442)
University of Cape Town (Brenda and Tony Gibbs Award - Arjun Amar)	**20,000**	**-**
University of Oldenburg (Brenda and Tony Gibbs Award - Wieland Heim)	**19,794**	**-**
	82,555	58,686

9 Support and governance costs

	Support costs	Governance costs	**2024**	2023
	£	£	**£**	£
Audit fees	–	5,760	**5,760**	5,580
Legal and professional	–	–	**–**	1,024
Accountancy	–	4,878	**4,878**	3,418
Costs of trustees' and committee meetings	–	1,876	**1,876**	3,112
Support Officers honoraria	–	4,400	**4,400**	3,551
	–	16,914	**16,914**	16,685
Analysed between Charitable activities	–	16,914	**16,914**	16,685

Governance costs includes payments to the auditors of £5,760 (2023 - £5,580) for audit fees and £4,878 (2023 - £3,418) for other services.

BRITISH ORNITHOLOGISTS' UNION

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2024

10 Members of Council

None of the Members of Council (or any persons connected with them) received any remuneration or benefits from the charity during the year.

During the year four Members of Council were reimbursed expenses totalling £325 (2023 - two members were reimbursed expenses totalling £417). These expenses represent travelling costs incurred by the Members of Council in the performance of their duties.

11 Employees

Number of employees	**2024**	2023
The average monthly number employees during the year was:	**2**	2

Employment costs	**2024**	2023
	£	£
Wages and salaries	**81,213**	78,231
Other pension costs	**7,389**	7,983
	88,602	86,214

No employee received employee benefits of more than £60,000 during the year (2023 – nil).

12 Net gains/(losses) on investments

	Unrestricted funds	**Endowment funds**	**2024 Total**	Unrestricted funds	Endowment funds general	2023 Total
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Revaluation of investments	10,467	7,377	**17,844**	11,771	1,925	13,696
Gain/(loss) on sale of investments	–	–	**–**	(17,674)	–	(17,674)
	10,467	7,377	**17,844**	(39,644)	1,925	(3,978)

13 Taxation

The charity is exempt from tax on income and gains falling within section 505 of the Taxes Act 1988 or section 252 of the Taxation of Chargeable Gains Act 1992 to the extent that these are applied to its charitable objects.

14 Fixed asset investments

	Listed investments
Cost or valuation	**£**
At 1 January 2024	407,682
Additions	4,306
Valuation changes	17,845
At 31 December 2024	429,833
Carrying amount	
At 31 December 2024	429,833
At 31 December 2023	407,682

BRITISH ORNITHOLOGISTS' UNION

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2024

15	**Financial instruments**	**2024**	2023
	Carrying amount of financial assets	**£**	£
	Trade debtors	**34,485**	47,353
	Other debtors	**210**	1,118
	Bank and cash	**609,205**	648,913
	Measured at cost	**643,900**	697,384
	Listed investments	**429,833**	407,682
	Measured at market value	**429,833**	407,682
	Carrying amount of financial liabilities		
	Other taxation and social security	**–**	683
	Trade creditors	**2,561**	–
	Accruals	**8,375**	17,982
	Measured at cost	**10,936**	18,665

16	**Debtors**	**2024**	2023
		£	£
	Amounts falling due within one year:		
	Trade debtors	**34,485**	47,353
	Other debtors	**210**	1,118
	Prepayments and accrued income	**5,364**	7,253
		40,059	**55,724**

17	**Creditors**	**Notes**	**2024**	2023
			£	£
	Amounts falling due within one year:			
	Other taxation and social security		**–**	683
	Deferred income	**18**	**26,276**	24,394
	Trade creditors		**2,561**	–
	Accruals		**8,375**	17,982
			37,212	41,527

BRITISH ORNITHOLOGISTS' UNION

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2024

18 Deferred income

	2024	2023
	£	£
Other deferred income	**26,276**	22,862

Deferred income relates to subscriptions received in advance of £20,457 (2023 - £20,649) and income received in advance for conferences in future years of £5,819 (2023 - £2,213).

19 Pensions and other post-retirement benefits

Defined contribution pension plans

Contributions to defined contribution plans are recognised as an expense in the period in which the related service is provided.

The charge to profit or loss in respect of defined contribution plans was £7,389 (2023 - £7,983).

20 Restricted funds

The income funds of the charity include restricted funds comprising the following unexpended balances of donations and grants held on trust for specific purposes:

		Movement in funds (2023)			
	Balance at 1 Jan 2023	Income	Expenditure	Transfers	Balance at 31 Dec 2023
	£	£	£	£	£
Research Fund	83,956	4,453	–	–	88,409
John & Pat Warham Scholarship Fund	134,599	–	(38,974)	(3,897)	91,728
Brenda & Tony Gibbs Bequest	85,894	–	(1,675)	(167)	84,052
Small grants	10,000	–	(2,998)	–	7,002
	314,449	4,453	(43,647)	(4,064)	271,191

		Movement in funds (2024)			
	Balance at 1 Jan 2024	**Income**	**Expenditure**	**Transfers**	**Balance at 31 Dec 2024**
	£	£	£	£	**£**
Research Fund	88,409	4,687	–	–	**93,096**
John & Pat Warham Scholarship Fund	91,728	–	(20,915)	(2,092)	**68,721**
Brenda & Tony Gibbs Bequest	84,052	–	(43,742)	(4,374)	**35,936**
Small grants	7,002	–	(3,016)	–	**3,986**
	271,191	4,687	(67,673)	(6,466)	**201,739**

Restricted funds include the Research Fund. This includes the income arising from investments held in the Endowment Fund.

The John & Pat Warham Scholarship Fund is to be used for research on Sphenisciform and Procellariiform seabirds and the income arising from investments.

The Brenda and Tony Gibbs Bequest is to be used for research on tracking and migration studies including the use of new technologies.

The transfer to the unrestricted fund represents an administration fee of 10% of the grants awarded from the John and Pat Warham Scholarship Fund and the Brenda and Tony Gibbs Bequest.

The small grants fund represents a donation that was received in 2022 that is to be used to award small grants in future years.

BRITISH ORNITHOLOGISTS' UNION

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2024

21 Endowment funds

Endowment funds represent assets which must be held permanently by the charity. Income arising on the endowment funds can be used in accordance with the objects of the charity and is included as restricted income. Any capital gains or losses arising on the assets form part of the fund.

		Movement in funds (2023)				
	Balance at 1 Jan 2023	Income	Expenditure	Transfers	Revaluations gains and losses	Balance at 31 Dec 2023
	£	£	£	£	£	£
L & MT Fund	121,696	1,656	–	–	2,676	126,028
Research Fund	10,610	–	–	–	(249)	10,361
Hutt Legacy	21,352	–	–	–	(502)	20,850
	153,658	1,656	–	–	(1,925)	157,239

		Movement in funds (2024)				
	Balance at 1 Jan 2024	**Income**	**Expenditure**	**Transfers**	**Revaluations gains and losses**	**Balance at 31 Dec 2024**
	£	£	£	£	£	£
L & MT Fund	126,028	1,667	–	–	6,563	134,258
Research Fund	10,361	–	–	–	270	10,631
Hutt Legacy	20,850	–	–	–	544	21,394
	157,239	1,667	–	–	7,377	166,283

The Landsborough and Mary Thomson Research Fund (L & MT Fund) and the Hutt Legacy represent funds set up by individual donors. The purpose of the L&MT Fund was to fund research. Income arising from the capital held in investments within Endowment Funds is credited to the restricted Research Fund. The Research Fund represents permanent capital, the income from which is transferred to the fund of the same name in Restricted Funds to be spent solely on research activities (e.g. grants and bursaries). The Hutt Legacy is intended for the general purposes of the Union and interest arising from this item is credited to General Unrestricted Funds which itself represents investments and net assets which are held for the daily running and maintenance of the charity.

22 Analysis of net assets between funds

	Unrestricted funds	**Restricted funds**	**2024 Endowment funds**	**Total 2023**
Fund balances at 31 December 2024 are represented by:	£	£	£	£
Investments	263,550	–	166,283	**429,833**
Current assets/(liabilities)	410,314	201,738	–	**612,052**
	673,864	201,738	166,283	**1,041,885**

BRITISH ORNITHOLOGISTS' UNION

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2024

22 Analysis of net assets between funds (continued)

	2023			
	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Endowment funds	Total 2022
Fund balances at 31 December 2023 are represented by:	£	£	£	**£**
Investments	250,443	–	157,239	407,682
Current assets/(liabilities)	391,919	271,191	–	663,110
	642,362	271,191	157,239	1,070,792

23 Financial commitments, guarantees and contingent liabilities

During 2022 the charity awarded the final John and Pat Warham Studentship grant of £85,000 of which £33,338 (2023 - £54,253) is still to be paid to the recipient. This Studentship is due to run from 2023 to 2027.

24 Related party transactions

During the year payments of £5,035 (2023 - £4,796) were made to Professor J Gill, wife of G Appleton, a Trustee. This was for IBIS editorial services and the transactions were on an arms length basis.

Remuneration of key management personnel

The remuneration of key management personnel including employer pension contributions is as follows:

	2024	2023
	£	£
Aggregate compensation	**50,754**	48,570

THE BRITISH ORNITHOLOGISTS' UNION

England & Wales - Charity number 249877

Accounts

British Ornithologists' Union

advancing ornithithology

Annual Report & Accounts

birds | people | science



2023

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Cover image: Giant Ibis © Zosia Frankowska

President's statement

Dr Graeme Buchanan



It is now a year since I became President of the British Ornithologists' Union. Unfortunately, I was unable to attend the AGM and spring conference in 2023 but I am very much looking forward to being in Nottingham this year. In the past year, BOU has settled into new ways of working, after Covid, and Leila Walker is fully established as our excellent COO. This year has also been a period of learning for me! Having previously contributed to Meetings Committee and sat as an Ordinary member on Council I was aware of the activities that drive the BOU but the past year has given me the full picture of just how much time and effort the volunteers who sit on or chair committees, or contribute to Council, give to BOU. This includes the support officers who do so much for to conferences, social media and blogs. I welcome all those who have joined us in these roles this year and thank everyone who has come to the end of their term on a committee or as a support officer.

In 2023, we saw the delivery of the ambitious autumn conference on flyways. As those who attended know, this online event spanned the globe over the course of 24 hours. The organisation and logistics of the conference were impressive. Talks were themed and timed around flyways, and the event was enjoyed across the globe, as the talks were timed to match the working day in each of the focal flyways. By my reckoning, the speakers came from 19 countries, reflecting the global reach of BOU.

The autumn also saw a special evening of talks by those with PhD studentships funded by the John and Pat Warham legacy. BOU has administered this legacy by giving funding for PhD students based in Commonwealth countries to study Sphenisciform and Procellariiform seabirds (penguins and petrels). These groups formed the core research interest of John Warham. The evening featured a diverse range of talks from around the globe, covering Round Island petrels, crested penguins and King Penguins. We wish the most recent recipient, John Lamaris, well as he starts his PhD research on Beck's Petrels. One of the first tasks for him will be finding the breeding areas of this poorly known species.

We expanded the BOU's Management Group, from President, Secretary (Mark Eaton), Treasurer (Graham Appleton) and COO, welcoming both BOU Vice Presidents (Emma Cunningham and Richard Bradbury). This larger group broadens the expertise available and has enabled us to share tasks more widely across the group. This year the expanded Management Group has undertaken a review of BOU's membership, conferences, and direction and mission. BOU's mission statement was last reviewed in 2010 and making sure that BOU is going in the right direction and maintaining support is essential. Covid changed many things and, while some areas have returned to business as usual, our ways of working and physical attendance at events will likely have changed. I see it myself as I work more from home and have the option of attending workshops and conferences online rather than in person. The changes we

ADMINISTRATION DETAILS

BRITISH ORNITHOLOGISTS' UNION

Founded 1858

Registered as a Charity:

England and Wales, no. 249877

Scotland, no. SC044850

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Web: bou.org.uk / ibis.ac.uk

As at 31 December 2023

BOU Staff

Chief Operations Officer
Dr Leila K. Walker

Journal & Office Manager
Mrs Angela F. Langford

Council Officers

President	Dr Graeme Buchanan
Vice Presidents	Prof Emma Cunningham
	Dr Richard Bradbury
Honorary Secretary	Dr Mark Eaton
Honorary Treasurer	Mr Graham F. Appleton

Ordinary Members of Council

Dr Sonya Clegg (Chair, Grants Committee), Dr Mark Eddowes, Dr Tom Finch (Chair, Engagement Committee), Dr Cat Horswill, Dr Rosemarie Kentie (Chair, IBIS Management Committee), Dr Alex Lees (Chair, Records Committee), Dr Julie Miller, Dr Catriona Morrison (Chair, Meetings Committee), Dr Stuart Sharp and Dr Lucy Wright (Chair, Awards Nominations Committee).

have seen could have implications for BOU membership and conferences. Organising and running our conferences are major parts of what BOU does so we have taken this opportunity to look at both of these areas and to reflect upon the BOU's direction and mission.

The membership review, led by Emma Cunningham, concluded that membership has been stable post 2019. This was reassuring and indicated that the benefits associated with BOU membership remain relevant to ornithologists. During the review, we identified an opportunity to understand the composition of our membership in more detail, helping establish trends and patterns. Consequently, we are discussing collecting a small amount of extra information about members to inform future reviews. This will, obviously, all be GDPR compliant. The review of conferences, led by Cat Morrison and Mark Eaton, concluded that our conferences aim "*to support the ornithological community around ornithological science*". Other organisations and conferences cover aspects of what BOU does but birds remain at the centre of BOU activities. Based on the assessment, conferences will remain themed, and give an opportunity for ornithological scientists to get together, to share their work and hear about the work of others. Conferences will be in person in spring and likely mixed (online and/or in person) in autumn. It was recognised in the review of membership, conferences, and BOU direction in general that birds lie at the heart of the Union.

These reviews fed into a broader review of BOU's direction by a subset of members of Council, led by Leila Walker, Richard Bradbury and myself. The mission statement up to 2023, has been "The British Ornithologists' Union will promote understanding and conservation of the world's birds, advance ornithology within the scientific community and promote scientific ornithology to the wider birdwatching public."

A working group considered this mission statement in the context of the conference and membership review outcomes. The group agreed that BOU was currently meeting its charitable objects which are 'the advancement of the science of ornithology' but, while the mission statement was broadly appropriate, it needed some revisions to reflect our current and desired investment in activities. The new version, as agreed by Council, now says:

> *"The British Ornithologists' Union will promote ornithological science across the international scientific community, support the individuals who contribute to that science, and grow understanding of that science among a wider community."*

These edits intend to: (i) reduce the focus on conservation, which is just one aspect of BOU activity; (ii) retain the focus on scientific ornithology; (iii) highlight the important role of BOU in supporting the careers of ornithological researchers, and; (iv) clarify that BOU's audiences are wider than just the birdwatching public, for instance including industry and government.

ADMINISTRATION DETAILS

CONT/.

Trustees

The following individuals served as Trustees of the charity at the time of Council approving this annual report and accounts:
Mr Graham F. Appleton, Dr Richard Bradbury, Dr Graeme Buchanan, Dr Sonya Clegg, Prof Emma Cunningham, Dr Mark Eaton, Dr Mark Eddowes, Dr Tom Finch, Prof Tony Fox, Dr Cat Horswill, Dr Rosemarie Kentie, Dr Alex Lees (Chair, Records Committee), Dr Julie Miller, Dr Catriona Morrison (Chair, Meetings Committee), Dr Stuart Sharp and Dr Lucy Wright.

The following individuals also served as Trustees of the charity for part of the year covered by this annual report and accounts:
Dr Francis Daunt, Prof Tony Fox, Dr James Gilroy, Dr Rosemary Trevelyan and Prof Juliet Vickery.

Editorial positions

At 31 December 2023 the following editorial positions were held:

IBIS Editor in Chief	Prof Jennifer Gill
IBIS Editors	Dr Rauri Bowie
	Dr Richard Fuller
	Prof Rebecca Kimball
	Dr Ruedi Nager
	Prof Jeremy Wilson
Blog Editor	Mr Charlie Russell

Investment Trustees

The following individuals served as Investment Trustees for the Union during the period of this report and accounts:
Mr Nigel J. Crocker, Mr Richard Price and Mr Stephen J. Rumsey.

This new mission statement very much promotes the charitable objectives of BOU. The advancement of the science of ornithology lies right at the core of what BOU does, through IBIS, conferences, and social media. This advancement covers all aspects of ornithological science, and that taxa-specific focus is a strength of BOU. The review has been a valuable exercise for BOU Management Group – one that we aim to repeat every few years – to ensure BOU continues to advance ornithological science as effectively as possible.

I look forward to working with all in BOU for the next three years to deliver this mission.

Structure, Governance & Management

The British Ornithologists' Union is an unincorporated charity, no. 249877 (England & Wales) and SC044850 (Scotland).

The object of the BOU is the promotion of the science of ornithology. Its governing document is the Rules adopted at the Annual General Meeting in 2010, and last updated by Council in July 2020. Under the rules, the governing body, the Council of the Union, is responsible for the running of the Union's business, supported by its staff. Council may delegate functions to standing or ad hoc committees that report to Council. The Union's Council retains overall responsibility for matters so delegated.

The BOU has six standing committees: the Awards Nominations Committee, the Engagement Committee, the Grants Committee, the IBIS Management Committee, the Meetings Committee and the Records Committee.

Elected members of Council are Trustees of the charity. Members of Council are recruited from within the ornithological community. Where possible, Council members will have served on one or more of the BOU's standing committees prior to nomination for election to Council. Those standing for election to BOU Council as an incoming chair of a standing committee will have served for at least two years on the respective committee. On election, new Council members are provided with relevant Union documents to help familiarise them with current Union activities and to provide information on the duties and responsibilities of being a Trustee of the Union.

Council continually reviews the risks to which the Union is exposed and is satisfied that, as far as is practicable, it has taken appropriate steps to mitigate any risk.

The Union employs two full-time staff who work from their respective home offices. Staff salaries are reviewed annually, as part of our staff appraisal process, conducted by the President and Honorary Secretary. Pay is normally adjusted in line with

ADMINISTRATION DETAILS

CONT/.

Bankers

The Union holds accounts with the following banks:

CAF Bank Ltd
25 Kings Hill, West Malling, Kent ME19 4JQ

Natwest Bank plc
PO Box 6037, Brompton Road, London SW13 1XJ

Solicitor

The Union's solicitors are:
Laytons
Ranger House, Walnut Tree Close, Guildford, Surrey GU1 4UL

Accountant & Auditor

The Union's accountant and auditor are:
Azets Audit Services
Westpoint, Lynch Wood, Peterborough, Cambridgeshire, PE2 6FZ

inflation (CPIH) and there is an option to award an unconsolidated performance-based bonus, in exceptional circumstances.

Objectives & Activities

Mission statement

The British Ornithologists' Union will promote ornithological science across the international scientific community, support the individuals who contribute to that science, and grow understanding of that science among a wider community. The BOU mission will be achieved by the following means:

- Publishing IBIS as a leading international journal of ornithological science.
- Organising a programme of meetings and conferences.
- Awarding grants and bursaries for ornithological research.
- Encouraging liaison between those actively engaged in ornithological research.
- Providing a representative body of the scientific community, able to provide ornithological information and advice to government and other policy makers.
- Maintaining and publishing the official list of birds recorded in Britain- The British List.

Council activities

At our AGM in April, held during BOU2023 at the University of Nottingham, Dr Graeme Buchanan was elected as President to replace Prof Juliet Vickery, Prof Emma Cunningham was elected as a Vice President to replace Prof Tony Fox, Dr Catriona Morrison was elected as Chair of Meetings Committee to replace Dr Francis Daunt, Dr Alex Lees was elected as Chair of Records Committee to replace Dr James Gilroy and Dr Stuart Sharp was elected as an Ordinary member of Council to replace Dr Rosemary Trevelyan.

We were delighted that Prof Jane Reid (University of Aberdeen, UK & Norwegian University of Science and Technology) accepted our invitation to deliver the 10th Alfred Newton Lecture at BOU2023 (page 6). We were equally delighted to award the 2023 Godman-Salvin Prize to Prof Cao Lei (Chinese Academy of Sciences), who accepted the Prize at the 20th Goose Specialist Group Meeting in Mongolia (page 6), and to award the 2023 Janet Kear Union Medal to Steve Dudley, who accepted the medal at BOU2023 (page 7).

Elected members of Council, as Trustees of the charity, confirm that they have referred to the guidance contained in the Charity Commission's general guidance on public benefit when reviewing objectives and activities.

Activities in Scotland

The BOU is an unincorporated charity registered in Scotland (SC044850). As well as having members in Scotland, at the time of this report, five of our Trustees, Dr Graeme Buchanan, Prof Emma Cunningham, Dr Tom Finch, Dr Julie Miller and Dr

ALFRED NEWTON LECTURE



Prof Jane Reid delivered the 10th Alfred Newton Lecture at BOU2023.

Jane's Alfred Newton Lecture, entitled *Integrating seasonal movements into evolutionary ecology,* considered the various factors influencing spatio-seasonal population dynamics in the context of dramatic environmental variation.

GODMAN-SALVIN PRIZE



Prof Cao Lei received the Godman-Salvin Prize at the 20th International Goose Specialist Group Meeting, Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia in August 2023.

The award recognises Lei's extraordinary coordination of waterbird researchers around the world, her role in pioneering research and monitoring programmes that have broken new ground in ornithology and movement ecology, and her creation of functional research and conservation networks across cultural divides.

For the full citation see IBIS 166: 345-347 doi: 10.1111/ibi.13255

Catriona Morrison, and two of our journal editors, Dr Rudolf Nager and Prof Jeremy Wilson, also resided there.

Achievements & Performance

Reports on our activities from the BOU Office and Standing Committees

The BOU Office

Staff

During the year, the BOU employed two home-based staff members within the BOU Office: Angela Langford (Journal & Office Manager) and Leila Walker (Chief Operations Officer).

Office duties

The BOU Office is responsible for the effective running of the BOU, managed by the Chief Operations Officer and overseen by Council and the Union's standing committees.

The BOU Office's key responsibilities are:

- to undertake the day to day running of the BOU;
- to support BOU Council and its committees, implementing much of the work arising from them, specifically;
  - working with the IBIS Management Committee, manage non-editorial, business and marketing of the Union's journal, IBIS;
  - working with the Meetings Committee, organise BOU conferences and meetings;
  - working with the Engagement Committee, develop and deliver engagement initiatives including equality and diversity items;
  - working with the Grants Committee, manage the Union's Small Grants and Career Development Bursary schemes, the John & Pat Warham Studentships and the Brenda & Tony Gibbs Awards;
  - working with the Records Committee, manage the British List and associated areas;
  - working with the Awards Nominations Committee to develop and deliver changes to our nominations processes and awards criteria;
- working with the Honorary Treasurer, to maintain accounts and budgets and the preparation of annual accounts and annual forecasts;
- working with the IBIS Editorial Team, to oversee and manage the manuscript process and flow for IBIS, and to oversee marketing of the journal;
- to oversee the business and contractual sides of IBIS;
- to service the BOU membership;
- to develop and manage the BOU's web content;
- to develop and manage the BOU's social media activity;
- to undertake routine administration;
- to manage BOU sales, stock and storage facility;

JANET KEAR UNION MEDAL



Steve Dudley received the Janet Kear Union Medal at BOU2023.

The award recognises Steve's outstanding service to the BOU, and his remarkable contribution to the community that BOU serves, from his appointment as BOU Administrator in 1997 to his retirement as BOU Chief Operations Officer in 2022.

For the full citation see IBIS 165: 1088-1089 doi: 10.1111/ibi.13203

- to handle general enquiries, press and publicity.

In addition to working with the Union's various committees (see individual committee reports below) the BOU Office undertook the activities outlined below.

Website

BOU.ORG.UK

In 2023, the BOU website received 220,287 page views (232,544 in 2022, -5%), representing 95,584 users (100,007 in 2022; -4%).

Table 1: Top-10 most viewed areas of the BOU website by number of page views (2023). Percentage change with 2022 indicated in brackets.

1.	The British List * /the-british-list/	26,817 (+3%)	6.	Small Research Grants /funding/small-research-grants/	3,780 (+12%)
2.	Home page /bou.org.uk/	12,942 (-18%)	7.	Member login /login/	3,744 (+23%)
3.	IBIS † /ibis/	10,003 (-16%)	8.	BOU2024 *Urban birds* /event/urban-birds-bou2024/	3,142 (NA)
4.	Conferences & meetings ‡ /conferences-and-meetings/	5,983 (-9%)	9.	#theBOUblog § /blog/	2,801 (-23%)
5.	BOUsci23 *Global flyways* /event/bousci23-global-flyways/	5,555 (NA)	10.	BOU2023 *Evo. responses* /bou2023-evolutionary-responses/	2,569 (+2%)

* Includes landing page, The British List page (https://bou.org.uk/british-list/) and recent announcements page (https://bou.org.uk/british-list/recent-announcements/); † Includes landing page, author guidelines (https://bou.org.uk/ibis/author-guidelines/) and submission guidelines (https://bou.org.uk/ibis/author-guidelines/submission/); ‡ Includes landing page and international calendar page (https://bou.org.uk/conferences-and-meetings/international-calendar/) § Landing page, not including visits to individual blogs; Data from Google Analytics

Table 1 illustrates those areas of the website that received the most page views during the year, mapping closely onto core BOU activities. The majority of users arrived to the website via organic search (47%), followed by direct-to-site (34%), via Social Media (11%) and by referrals from other websites (7%). The top-10 countries from where users arrive to the website are listed in Table 2, with 62% of website users based outside the UK (64% in 2022).

Table 2: Top-10 countries from where users arrive to the BOU website (2023)

1.	United Kingdom	38%	6.	Canada	2%
2.	United States	18%	7.	Spain	2%
3.	Germany	5%	8.	Australia	2%
4.	China	4%	9.	Netherlands	2%
5.	India	3%	10.	France	1%

OUR SOCIAL YEAR

@IBIS_JOURNAL

Audience at 31 Dec 23	22,234	+5%
Posts	3,431	-34%
Impressions	3.7m	-19%
Engagements	69,330	-21%
Engagement rate	1.9%	-3.4%

IBISJOURNAL

Audience at 31 Dec 23	13,764	+10%
Posts	2,876	-27%
Impressions	1.9m	-41%
Engagements	88,947	-30%
Engagement rate	4.7%	+18%

IBIS_JOURNAL

Audience at 31 Dec 23	1,769	+6%
Posts	144	-20%
Impressions	29,528	+13%
Engagements	629	-35%
Engagement rate	2.1%	-42%

@ibisjournal.bsky.social

Audience at 31 Dec 23	366
Posts	175

Social media

BOU.ORG.UK/SOCIAL-MEDIA/

We continue to use various social media channels to inform people about BOU activities, drive traffic towards out website and keep people abreast of the latest ornithology research via the #ornithology hashtag.

X (formally Twitter) has continued to undergo changes in the last year, and this is reflected in the reduced engagement and impressions our content has generated in 2023 (see side panel). While follower numbers continue to increase, the rate of increase is not as great as in previous years, and our follower numbers have grown more – in percentage terms – on both Facebook and Instagram.

Given disillusionment within the academic community on X, we have explored alternative platforms, including Threads (operated by Meta Platforms) and Bluesky (from Twitter co-founder Jack Dorsey). Despite initial interest in Threads, our content received limited attention, and since joining Bluesky in late October we focused efforts on growing followers there. In recent years Twitter has very successfully delivered as our parallel conference platform, alongside both in-person and online conferences. The ability of alternative platforms to deliver parallel conferences will be an important consideration when evaluating their adoption.

Across our Social Media platforms, our performance measures favourably compared to the industry standard (Civic, Non-Profit and Membership Groups), with 5.3 million total impressions (vs. 1.8 million standard), 4,200 posts published (vs. 1,100) and 156,000 total engagement (vs. 86,000).

Social Media is a significant contributor to the online attention that IBIS articles receive, as measured by Altmetric Attention Score, and IBIS continues to score well when compared to other ornithology journals (Table 3).

Table 3: Online mentions for IBIS and competitor ornithology journals (in 2023)

	# outputs	Mentions						
		Total	News	Blog	Twitter	Facebook	Wiki	Policy
IBIS	739	36,702	698	443	32,083	1,830	1,484	145
change 2022 v 2023	+4%	+1%	-8%	-9%	+0.5%	+11%	-6%	+190%
Ornithology	577	7,287	367	195	3,989	171	2,510	26
change 2022 v 2023	+8%	+9%	+14%	+7%	+6%	+4%	+12%	+8%
J Avian Biology	194	6,031	316	70	4,564	346	480	31
change 2022 v 2023	-18%	-15%	+14%	-23%	-19%	-22%	+0.6%	+84%
J Ornithology	311	4,729	304	103	3,417	209	658	30
change 2022 v 2023	-4%	+16%	+41%	+22%	+15%	+13%	+5%	+77
Bird Study	167	4,100	34	42	3,722	116	152	31
change 2022 v 2023	+9%	+20%	-3%	+14%	+19%	+30%	+19%	+84%

Data from Altmetric Explorer (almertic.com/explorer) downloaded 19 January 2024.

#THEBOUBLOG

Our most-read blog posts published in 2023:

Parrot poaching in Peru and Ecuador
Preferred species poached far beyond their abundances in the wild
Pedro Romero-Vidal
Universidad Pablo de Olavide, Seville, Spain

How to use BirdNET
Reviewing the applications, performance and opportunities of BirdNET for bird monitoring
Cristian Pérez-Granados
University of Alicante, Spain

Why do gulls steal from humans?
What affects Herring Gull food stealing behaviour in towns?
Shubhi Raghav
University of Exeter, UK

Moult terminology
Let's make it simpler!
Yosef Kiat
Field Museum of Natural History, Chicago, USA

The rise of passive acoustic monitoring
Using passive acoustic monitoring for surveying birds in the UK
Oliver Metcalf
Manchester Metropolitan University, UK

#theBOUblog

BOU.ORG.UK/BLOG/

Our blog continues to be the most-read section of our website, accounting for 28% of all page views in 2023 (60,928 views, including views of individual blog posts). During the year we published 111 blog posts (99 in 2022) – see the side panel for the most read blog posts published in 2023.

E-newsletters

BOU.ORG.UK/E-NEWSLETTERS /

We published a total of 32 e-newsletters during the year, covering IBIS new articles and new issue highlights, and various BOU news items (e.g. conferences, grants, nomination rounds).

Sponsorship

We are very grateful to Leica Camera (UK) who continued their support by providing a pair of binoculars as the prize for the best paper in IBIS by an Early Career Researcher (ECR) as lead author. See page 15 for the recipient of the Best IBIS ECR Paper 2022 (voted for and awarded in 2023).

General administrative items

We continue to maintain a storage facility in Peterborough.

Awards Nominations Committee

BOU.ORG.UK/MEDALS-AND-AWARDS/

AWARDS NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE

Chair

Dr Lucy Wright (RSPB)

Members

Dr Marta Acácio (Tel Aviv University)
Dr Adham Ashton-Butt (BTO)
Dr Niall Burton (BTO) (to July 2023)
Dr Annette Fayet (from July 2023)
Prof Keith Hamer (University of Leeds) (to July 2023)
Dr Robert Hawkes (from July 2023)
Dr Grant Humphries (HiDef Aerial Surveying)
Dr Rebecca Laidlaw (Natural Resources Wales)
Dr Elizabeth Masden (University of Highlands & Islands) (to July 2023)
Dr Kate Rogerson (from July 2023)
Dr Alice Trevail (University of Exeter)
Dr Leila Walker, BOU COO

The Awards Nominations Committee was set up in 2020 to oversee the criteria and nominations process for each of the BOU's awards: the Godman Salvin Prize, Janet Kear Union Medal and Alfred Newton Lecture, and, as of 2023, the Early Professional Award. Two meetings were held during 2023 with further business conducted by email.

In 2023, we ran an art competition for an early-career ornithological artist to design the artwork prize for the new Early Professional Award. We received nine qualifying submissions from six countries and at a selection meeting in April, the panel of judges (Tom Cadwallender, Steve Dudley, Rebecca Laidlaw, Darren Rees, Rachel Taylor and Lucy Wright) selected Zosia Frankowska's silkcreen Giant Ibis (pictured as this report's cover image) as the winning entry. Zosia received a £1,000 commission to produce 10 pieces of the artwork, to be used as the prize for the Early Professional Award. The first recipient of the Early Professional Award, to be announced during the course of 2024, will receive a framed silkscreen print of Zosia's artwork.

The Committee's membership changed during the year, with the terms of three members, Niall Burton, Keith Hamer and Elizabeth Masden, coming to an end. Three new members, Annette Fayet, Robert Hawkes and Kate Rogerson, were appointed to the Committee at the July Council meeting.

The open call for nominations was run for all four BOU awards from July to September 2023. Four people (three women and one man) were nominated for the 2024 Godman Salvin Prize, seven people (two women and five men) were nominated for the 2025 Alfred Newton Lecture, and seven people (two women and five men) were nominated for the 2024 Early Professional Award. For the Janet Kear Union Medal, no new nominations were received, but last year the JKUM subcommittee recommended rolling forward the 2nd and 3rd ranked nominations for consideration in 2024. For each award, nominations were independently ranked following previously agreed procedures. The top three ranked nominees for each award were presented to, and approved by, Council at their November meeting, and the top-ranked nominee for each award has accepted their invitation. Professor Judy Shamoun-Baranes will give the 2025 Alfred Newton Lecture and the recipients of the 2024 Godman Salvin Prize, the 2024 Janet Kear Union Medal and the 2024 Early Professional Award will be announced during the course of the year.

ENGAGEMENT COMMITTEE

Chair

Dr Tom Finch (RSPB)

Members

Dr Ailidh Barnes (BTO)
Mr Ondřej Belfín (Czechia)
Dr Aonghais Cook (BTO)
Dr Daniel Hayhow (Earthwatch Europe)
Dr Katharine Keogan (HiDef Ariel Surveys)
Dr Nicola Largey (University of Highlands and Islands)
Dr Veronica Mendez (University of Iceland)
Dr Julie Miller (University of Glasgow)
Mr Connor Panter, Blog Editor (University of Nottingham) (to August 2023)
Mr Charlie Russell (University of East Anglia) (from August 2023)
Dr Ashley Sendell-Price (Uppsala University, Sweden)
Dr Elwyn Sharps (Natural Resources Wales)
Dr Leila Walker, BOU COO
Dr Saskia Wischnewski (RSPB)
Dr Natalia Zielonka, Social Media Support Officer (University of East Anglia)

Engagement Committee

The Engagement Committee oversees engagement between different parts of the BOU, our members and the wider ornithological community, primarily through conferences and social media activities. The Committee's role is to increase awareness of the BOU's activities, facilitate communication and collaboration within the community, and champion equity, diversity and inclusion.

The Committee met only once during 2023, due to the Committee Chair being on parental leave for part of the year. Committee membership remained unchanged through the year, though the terms of four of our members are due to come to an end in July 2024, with the public round of nominations to seek their replacements recently having closed.

Social media

We are continuing to explore alternatives to X (Twitter), which remains our primary social media platform both day-to-day and for the delivery of 'open' conferences (in parallel with Zoom or in-person events). The BOU is currently active on Bluesky (https://bsky.app/profile/ibisjournal.bsky.social) which, as of late 2023, is now open to view without an account. At the time of writing, users still require an 'invite code' to create an account of their own, but there seem to be plenty of these codes going around.

Membership

This year saw the launch of our revamped Member Conference Attendance Grants, with a focus on funding low-carbon travel and remote attendance. The grant supported 11 BOU members to attend the European Ornithologists' Union (EOU) Conference in Lund, Sweden, and the Australasian Ornithological Conference in Brisbane, Australia. Several of our grantees have written about their experience over on #theBOUblog: see https://bou.org.uk/?s=%23eou2023. Applications for the 2024 round of Member Conference Attendance Grants closed on 18 Feb 2024, with funding available for the EOU Fledglings Meeting (Prague, Czechia) and the American Ornithological Society Annual Meeting (Colorado, USA).

We have also changed the way in which low- and middle-income countries are defined, in order to ensure consistency and fairness across BOU activities. So, if you are from and/or living in a country that appears on the DAC List of ODA Recipients (https://www.oecd.org/dac/financing-sustainable-development/development-finance-standards/daclist.htm) then you will be eligible for reduced membership subscription rates, and can also apply for some of our grants, bursaries and awards as a non-member.

Support Officers

The Committee's Support Officers drive a large part of our work around conference delivery, journal publicity, social media activities and the BOU blog.

SUPPORT OFFICERS



Our new Conference Support Officer from 2023, **Ondřej Belfín**.



Our new Blog Editor from 2023, **Charlie Russell**.



Our new Journal Support Officer, **Ashleigh Marshall**.

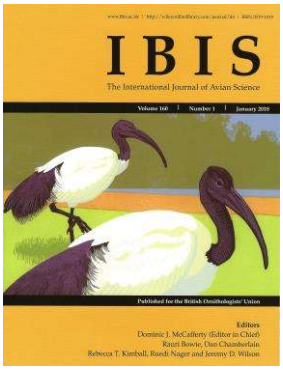
2023 saw the retiral of three of our four Support Officers, leaving us with several vacancies to fill. In all cases we were really encouraged by both the quality and quantity of applications.

In August we interviewed candidates for the role of Blog Editor, previously held by Connor Panter. The Blog Editor is responsible for sourcing, editing and publishing content for our twice-weekly blog (#theBOUblog). This year saw 111 new posts on #theBOUblog, including articles written by our Journal Support Officer, authors of IBIS papers, authors of papers published in other journals, community articles (including our #DiversityBlog series) and other member articles (including, for example, reports from events attended by members supported through our Conference Attendance Grants). We are delighted to have Charlie Russell, a PhD student at UEA, on board as our new Blog Editor. Since starting in September, Charlie has been working on some exciting developments for #theBOUblog, so watch this space!

In September we conducted interviews for the role of Conference Support Officer. This role supports the delivery of our online and in-person conferences, and has been expertly sculpted by Ryan Burrell since 2020. We're pleased to now have Ondřej Belfín in place as our new Conference Support Officer. Ondřej has lots of experience organising Zoom events for the Czech Society for Ornithology and has hit the ground running, helping to deliver our online member Warham evening and our autumn *Global Flyways* conference in early and late November, respectively.

Finally, in December we interviewed for a replacement for our long-serving and highly-productive Journal Support Officer, Jente Ottenburghs. Jente wrote 25 articles (https://bou.org.uk/author/jente/) for the BOU blog in 2023 (and an impressive total of 123 blogs during his time with us), summarising a variety of papers published in our journal IBIS. We are really pleased to have recently appointed Ashleigh Marshall as our new Journal Support Officer – she will be responsible for writing fortnightly blog posts covering published IBIS articles. An unexpected outcome of a highly competitive recruitment process is the appointment of Bob Montgomerie, an Emeritus Professor from Queen's University, Canada, as a regular contributor to #theBOUblog. covering the history of ornithology – watch this space!

We're very pleased that Natalia Zielonka has agreed to stay on as Social Media Support Officer for another two years. Despite the turmoil following the change of ownership (and name!) at Twitter/X, our follower count continues to grow (22,000, compared to 21,000 this time last year), and our Twitter/X conferences continue to be successful. In April 2023, Natalia devised and delivered our very first Twitter/X conference to be run in parallel with an in-person conference (BOU2023 Evolutionary Responses) – no mean feat when Twitter presentations are delivered alongside live in-person talks – and was successful in reaching over 62,000 accounts via the conference hashtag (#BOU2023 https://twitter.com/search?q=%23BOU2023&src=typed_query&f=live). Our follower



IBIS MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

Chair

Dr Rosemarie Kentie (IBED, University of Amsterdam)

Members

Mr Graham Appleton, BOU Hon. Treasurer

Dr Beatriz Arroyo Lopez (Instituto de Investigacion en Recursos Cinegeticos (IREC) (CSIC-UCLM-JCCM)

Dr Rauri Bowie, Editor (University of California – Berkeley)

Dr Richard Broughton (UK Centre for Ecology & Hydrology)

Dr Simon Butler (University of East Anglia)

Dr Richard Fuller, Editor (University of Queensland)

Prof Jenny Gill, Editor in Chief (University of East Anglia)

Dr Rebecca Kimball, Editor (University of Florida)

Mrs Angela Langford, Journal Manager

Dr Ruedi Nager, Editor (University of Glasgow)

Dr Leila Walker, BOU COO

Prof Jeremy Wilson, Editor (RSPB)

count has also increased on Facebook (from 12,000 to 13,000) and on Instagram (from 1,650 to 1,875).

Many thanks to our outgoing officers Connor, Ryan and Jente for their huge contributions over the last few years, and a big BOU welcome to Charlie, Ondřej and Ashleigh.

IBIS Management Committee

BOU.ORG.UK/IBIS/

Committee membership and business

The IBIS Management Committee provides strategic direction, support and advice to editors and staff on the management of the journal including with our publisher, Wiley. The IBIS Management Committee consists of the Editor in Chief, all editors, the Chief Operations Officer, the Honorary Treasurer, the Journal Manager and up to four regular members operating at Associate Editor level for IBIS or similar journals.

IBIS is published on behalf of the BOU by Wiley Publishing, from whom we continue to receive excellent service, support and advice. Towards the end of 2023, Wiley underwent some reorganization of their teams, and we now work closely with both Andreas Petersen, previously our Journal Publishing Manager and now our society contact in the Partner Publishing team, and with Genevieve Richards, our editorial contact in the Publishing Development team. The efforts of Wiley staff during 2023 are greatly appreciated, and we are enjoying working closely with both Andreas and Genevieve. Within Wiley, several specialized teams (such as Journal Marketing) are now available to provide guidance in the fast-changing publishing landscape. We have an excellent relationship with Wiley and maintain constant communication throughout the year, with both parties striving to improve IBIS, to ensure the journal remains at the forefront of ornithology.

Our annual meeting with Wiley was held on Zoom in March. At the meeting, annual reports covering editorial, production, marketing and finance were presented and discussed. Our close working relationship comes to the fore during these meetings with both sides able to talk openly about our joint management of the journal.

TOP CITED PAPERS

From most recent Impact Factor period (2021-2022)

Estimating bird density using passive acoustic monitoring: a review of methods and suggestions for further research / Cristian Pérez-Granados, Juan Traba / DOI: 10.1111/ibi.12944

Intra-specific variation in migration phenology of American Kestrels (*Falco sparverius*) in response to spring temperatures / Breanna F. Powers, Jason M. Winiarski, Juan M. Requena-Mullor, Julie A. Heath / DOI: 10.1111/ibi.12953

Null effects of the Garcelon harnessing method and transmitter type on soaring raptors / Víctor García, Juan José Iglesias-Lebrija, Rubén Moreno-Opo / DOI: 10.1111/ibi.12942

MOST DOWNLOADED IBIS PAPERS

Papers published in 2023

BirdNET: applications, performance, pitfalls and future opportunities / Cristian Pérez-Granados / DOI: 10.1111/ibi.13193

Nest survival of threatened Eurasian Curlew (*Numenius arquata*) breeding at low densities across a human-modified landscape / Harry Ewing, Samantha Franks, Jennifer Smart, Niall Burton, Jennifer A. Gill / DOI: 10.1111/ibi.13180

Human activities at night negatively impact Little Penguin (*Eudyptula minor*) numbers and behaviours / Emily C. Costello, Diane Colombelli-Négrel / DOI: 10.1111/ibi.13217

Journal metrics

With Wiley becoming a signatory of the Declaration on Research Assessment (DORA), the Wiley IBIS website now displays a range of journal and article metrics. The overarching goal of DORA is to shift emphasis away from journal-based metrics, towards article-level metrics and individual author contribution for a broader, more equitable view and assessment of research impact. Alongside Journal Impact Factor (2.1 in 2022), authors can now view CiteScore (4.5 in 2022), Journal Citation Indicator (1.56 in 2022), full text views (323,608 in 2022), acceptance rate (46% in 2022), submission to first decision (71 days in 2022) and submission to acceptance (263 days in 2022). Difficulties in finding reviewers has been identified as one cause of delays in the submission to acceptance process, and something that IBIS Management Committee is looking to address.

Editorial team

Our Associate Editor Board plays a vital role in the management of the journal and we thank each and every one of them for their time and dedication to the journal. We welcomed two new Associate Editors: Andrea Soriano Redondo and Juan Navedo. Four Associate Editors retired from the board after many years and handling many manuscripts, and we want to thank them for their excellent work: Staffan Roos, Eivin Røskaft, Jose Antonio Sanchez Zapata and Arjun Amar. We currently have 51 Associate Editors.

Reviews and mini reviews

IBIS has a proud history of publishing critical reviews of current topics in ornithology, and we continue to encourage review submissions today, especially from Early Career Researchers. Thanks to this active promotion, we have increased the number of review submissions and subsequent publications. From 2020 until now, 66 review submissions have been handled by our Review Editor Jeremy Wilson, of which 26 were published (with a couple still in the pipeline). In comparison, between 2013 and 2019 66 review manuscripts were submitted of which 16 published.

Some of these highly cited reviews feature in a 2023 'Best of Reviews' virtual issue (https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/toc/10.1111/(ISSN)1474-919X.best-of-reviews), covering topics as diverse as the global expansion of avian influenza, declines of Afro-palearctic migrant birds, effects of climate change on mountain birds, shorebird survival, seabird foraging, and a range of technological developments in ornithological monitoring.

In 2023, we launched a new category of mini reviews; these are reviews with a 6000-word limit and are well suited for emerging areas of research interest which currently have limited primary literature, or for critical reviews of more specific sub-topics within broader research areas.

Themed issues

Two IBIS themed issues, inspired by recent BOU conferences, *Avian Reproduction* and *Citizen Science and Birds*, are in progress and due to appear in upcoming issues of IBIS.

TOP ALTMETRIC PAPERS

Papers published in 2023

High pathogenicity avian influenza (H5N1) in Northern Gannets (*Morus bassanus*): Global spread, clinical signs and demographic consequences Jude V. Lane, Jana W.E. Jeglinski, Stephanie Avery-Gomm, Elmar Ballstaedt, Ashley C. Banyard et al. DOI: 10.1111/ibi.13275

Reduced breeding success in Great Black-backed Gulls (*Larus marinus*) due to harness-mounted GPS device Samuel Langlois Lopez, Gary D. Clewley, Daniel T. Johnston, Francis Daunt, Jared M. Wilson, Nina J. O'Hanlon, Elizabeth Masden DOI: 10.1111/ibi.13247

Nest survival of threatened Eurasian Curlew (*Numenius arquata*) breeding at low densities across a human-modified landscape Harry Ewing, Samantha Franks, Jennifer Smart, Niall Burton, Jennifer A. Gill DOI: 10.1111/ibi.13180

Dietary niche overlap and resource partitioning among six steppe passerines of Central Spain using DNA metabarcoding Julia Zurdo, Adrián Barrero, Luís P. da Silva, Daniel Bustillo-de la Rosa, Julia Gómez-Catasús et al. DOI: 10.1111/ibi.13188



Yosef Kiat's paper was voted the best ECR paper published in IBIS in 2022.

Moult terminology: Let's make it simpler! Yosef Kiat / DOI: 10.1111/ibi.13164

ReX submission portal

2023 was the first complete year with Wiley's new Research Exchange (ReX) submission portal fully operational for IBIS, having gone live in November 2022. The ReX portal aims to improve the submission experience for authors, reducing the work and time that goes into manuscript submissions, via a streamlined process and intuitive platform. The roll-out has gone smoothly and with some minor tweaks (for example making the Dual Language Abstracts optional file designation more prominent) we are happy that ReX is performing well.

Marketing

IBIS papers continue to achieve high Altmetric scores, with IBIS attracting the most online mentions (across X, Facebook, blogs and more) in 2023 among all ornithology journals (see Table 3 on page 8). See the side panel for the highest Altmetric scoring IBIS papers published in 2023.

Best ECR paper

We annually award a best IBIS Early Career Researcher (ECR) paper, where the first or corresponding author was an ECR. In 2022, 59 papers qualified, of which 11 were nominated for the award by our Associate Editors. These 11 nominated papers went to a public vote in 2023, with Yosef Kiat's paper on making moult terminology simpler being voted the winner (see side panel and https://bou.org.uk/ibis/ibis-best-ecr-paper-of-2022/).

MEETINGS COMMITTEE

Chair

Dr Francis Daunt (UK Centre for Ecology & Hydrology) (to April 2023)

Dr Cat Morrison (University of East Anglia) (from April 2023)

Members

Dr José Alves (University of Aveiro, Portugal and University of Iceland) (to July 2023)

Dr Maria Bogdanova (UK Centre for Ecology & Hydrology) (to July 2023)

Dr Katherine Booth Jones (BTO Northern Ireland)

Dr Christine Howard (Durham University)

Dr Joelene Hughes (RSPB)

Mrs Angela Langford, Journal & Office Manager

Dr Barry McMahon (University College Dublin) (from July 2023)

Dr Ana Payo-Payo (University of Aberdeen)

Dr Alice Risely (Salford University) (from July 2023)

Dr Emily Simmonds (Norwegian University of Science and Technology & University of Edinburgh) (from July 2023)

Dr Amanda Trask (Institute of Zoology) (to July 2023)

Dr Leila Walker, BOU COO

Dr Kevin Wood (Wildfowl & Wetlands Trust)

Meetings Committee

BOU.ORG.UK/CONFERENCES-AND-MEETINGS/

The Meetings Committee is responsible for maintaining the ongoing programme of BOU conferences and providing advice and support to the BOU Office and others responsible for organising and running BOU events. The Committee met remotely via Zoom three times during the year and also conducted business by email. Jose Alves, Maria Bogdanova and Amanda Trask left the Committee this year and we would like to thank them for their great work. Huge thanks are also due to Francis Daunt, who left the Committee as Chair in April 2023, having steered the Committee and BOU conferences through some challenging times. Catriona Morrison has stepped into the Chair role and Barry McMahon, Emily Simmonds and Alice Risely all joined as new members and we welcome and look forward to working with them.

The Committee would like to thank our expanded 2023 conference delivery team of Bryam Aguilar, Sarah Binnie, Ryan Burrell, Camilo Carneiro, Ana Luiza Catalano, Hannah Hereward, Triin Kassiku, Angela Langford, Claire Nemes, Charlie Russell, Nicola Sockhill, Samantha Wong Topp, Qiqi Yang and Natalia Zielonka for all their hard work. Our Conference Support Officer Ryan Burrell stepped down this year and we thank him for his fantastic work, being instrumental in the development and delivery of our online conferences over the last few years. Ryan is succeeded by Ondřej Belfín who got off to a strong start with the successful delivery of our online member Warham evening in early November 2023 and our autumn conference, BOUsci23 *Global Flyways*, later in the same month.

2023 annual conference

Evolutionary responses **(#BOU2023) 4–6 April 2023**

This was our first in-person meeting since the global pandemic and it was great to be back together. The conference was held in Nottingham and focused on evolutionary and plastic responses of birds to environmental change. We had 84 people in attendance of whom 34 were Early Career Researchers (ECRs), which made for a friendly environment with great networking opportunities. The conference sessions spanned phenological changes, movement and space use, responses to environmental pollution, genetic and epigenetic responses, rapid responses to urbanisation, behavioural and morphological changes in novel environments and species interactions and community-level responses. Jane Reid (University of Aberdeen, UK & Norwegian University of Science and Technology) delivered the Alfred Newton Lecture titled 'Integrating seasonal movements into evolutionary ecology'. The keynote presenters were Ben Sheldon (University of Oxford, UK), Joe Wynn (Institute of Avian Research, Germany & University of Oxford, UK), Caroline Isaksson (Lund University, Sweden), Ariid Husby (Uppsala University, Sweden), Anne Charmantier (Centre for Functional and Evolutionary Ecology, CEFE, France), Daniel Sol (Centre of Ecological Research and Applied Forestry's, CREAF, Spain) and Rose Thorogood (University of Helsinki, Finland). We thank the Scientific Programme Committee (SPC) for putting together an excellent programme. The Committee was chaired by Amanda Trask (Zoological Society of London, UK) and María Moirón (Institute of Avian Research, Germany), supported by

2023 ANNUAL CONFERENCE



EVOLUTIONARY RESPONSES

4–6 April 2023 | Nottingham & X
#BOU2023

Image: Siberian Stonechat | Mprasannak CC BY SA 4.0 Wikimedia Commons

2023 AUTUMN CONFERENCE



GLOBAL FLYWAYS

21-22 November 2023 | Zoom & X
#BOUsci23

Image: Black-tailed Godwit | Frank Vassen CC BY 2.0 Wikimedia Commons

Michela Corsini (University of Warsaw, Poland), Ferran Sayol (University College London, UK), Jelmer Samplonius (University of Edinburgh, UK) and Emily Simmonds (Norwegian University of Science and Technology).

Two ECR events also took place at the conference. The first included two workshops on 'elevator pitches' and 'careers outside academia', led by Cat Morrison (University of East Anglia, UK), Natalia Zielonka (University of East Anglia, UK), Ailidh Barnes (British Trust for Ornithology, UK) and Charlotte Regan (UK Centre for Ecology & Hydrology); thanks to all. The second was a roundtable event where students got to grill the keynote speakers on subjects ranging from careers tips to their favourite fieldwork experiences, over a drink or two served by our outgoing President Juliet Vickery.

2023 autumn conference

Global flyways **(#BOUsci23) 21–22 November 2023**

This novel conference spanned a 24-hour period during which presenters covered three global flyways – Africa-Eurasia, Americas and Asia-Pacific – and was attended by 176 online participants. The Africa-Eurasia sessions covered drivers of population change and conservation, determinants of migration routes and schedules, and tracking applications, concluding with a panel discussion on making flyway ecology global. The panel was chaired by Juliet Vickery with contributions from panel members Mohamed Henriques (University of Groningen, the Netherlands), Yahkat Barshep (A.P. Leventis Ornithological Institute, Nigeria) and Leon Bennun (The Biodiversity Consultancy & Conservation Science, University of Cambridge, UK). This great event opened up discussion on how to tackle barriers constraining more regionally balanced research and conservation. Following a Trans-Atlantic keynote bridging flyways, the Americas flyway sessions covered global perspectives and big data in the study of migration, full annual cycle ecology of Nearctic-neotropical migrants, monitoring migration in the Americas, and genomics and evolution of migration. Next up was the Trans-Pacific keynote, leading us seamlessly into the Asia-Pacific sessions, which spanned flyway threats and conservation, from migration patterns to habitat conservation, and novel tracking discoveries.

This conference was a truly international collaboration bringing together researchers from across the globe. It was a tribute to the hard work of the SPC members and we thank them enthusiastically! The SPC was co-chaired by Wouter Vansteelant (University of Groningen, the Netherlands) and José Alves (University of Iceland & University of Aveiro, Portugal) and included Vojtech Brlik (Charles University, Czechia), Maria Dias (University of Lisbon, Portugal), Steve Dudley (Consultant, Scotland), Cat Morrison (University of East Anglia, UK) and Elham Nourani (Max Planck Institute of Animal Behaviour, Germany) (Africa-Eurasia flyway); Elly Knight (University of Alberta, Canada), Camila Gómez (SELVA, Colombia), Fengyi Guo (Princeton University, USA), Bryant Dossman (Georgetown University, USA) (Americas flyway); and Yachang Cheng (Sun Yat-sen University, People's Republic of China), Sayam Chowdhury (University of Cambridge, UK), (Yong Ding Li, BirdLife International, Singapore), Judit Szabo (Charles Darwin University, Australia), R.

Suresh Kumar (Wildlife Institute of India, India) and Batmunkh Davaasuren (Wildlife Science and Conservation Center of Mongolia, Mongolia) (Asia-Pacific flyway).

2024 CONFERENCES



URBAN BIRDS

9-11 April 2024 | Nottingham & X #BOU2023

Image: House Sparrow | Zeynel Cebeci CC BY-SA 4.0 Wikimedia Commons



BIRDS AND NET ZERO

24 October 2024 | York & Zoom & X #BOUasm24

Image: Misty morning | Susanne Nilsson CC BY-SA 2.0 Wikimedia Commons



AVIAN CONSERVATION TRANSLOCATIONS

12-13 November 2024 | Zoom & X #BOUsci24

Image: Common Crane | Zeynel Cebeci CC BY-SA 4.0 Wikimedia Commons

Future conferences

We have a diverse selection of topics covered by our upcoming conference program:

2024 annual conference – *Urban birds* (#BOU2024) 9-11 April 2024 – University of Nottingham, UK

A conference aimed at discussing the unique issues faced by urban dwelling bird populations in our changing world. The Alfred Newton Lecture will be delivered by Amanda D. Rodewald, Garvin Professor of Ornithology and Senior Director of the Center for Avian Population Studies, Cornell Lab of Ornithology and Department of Natural Resources and the Environment, Cornell University, Ithaca, NY.

2024 autumn conference – *Birds and net zero* (#BOUasm24) 24 October 2024 – York, UK

This conference aims to showcase the latest research into the ecological impacts of our transition to net zero on birds.

2024 autumn conference – *Avian conservation translocations* (#BOUsci24) 12-13 November 2024 – Zoom

This conference aims to share knowledge and experiences from past, ongoing and planned translocation programmes to inform future translocation efforts.

2025 annual conference – *Frontiers in ornithology* (#BOU 2025) 1-3 April 2025 – University of Nottingham, UK

This is an exciting conference, bringing together researchers, conservationists, and policy makers working at the cutting edge of ornithological research and conservation, to share their knowledge on how innovative technologies and novel approaches can help us find solutions to conserve birds in a changing world. The Alfred Newton Lecture will be delivered by Judy Shamoun-Baranes, Professor of Animal Movement Ecology and the head of the Department of Theoretical and Computational Ecology, Institute of Biodiversity and Ecosystem Dynamics (IBED) at the University of Amsterdam, the Netherlands.

Conference review

This year a conference review panel, chaired by Mark Eaton, met in June 2023 to discuss the future of BOU conferences. We discussed the aims of our conferences, metrics of success and possible future developments. The panel concluded that our conferences should aim "to support the ornithological community around ornithological science" with our main metrics measuring the success of this being attendance numbers, scientific quality/attendee satisfaction, financial income and membership recruitment. We already have several active new ideas to make our conferences more accessible, for example our first hybrid conference *Birds and net zero*, one of our 2024 autumn conferences, will take place in the well-connected location of York. In planning future conferences, the Meetings Committee will aim to

fulfil the criteria set by the review, acknowledging that not all criteria have to be met by each conference.

GRANTS COMMITTEE

Chair

Dr Sonya Clegg (University of Oxford)

Members

Dr Tom Bradfer-Lawrence (RSPB)
Dr Davide Dominoni (University of Glasgow)
Ros Green (University of Liverpool & BTO) (from March 2023, role-sharing)
Dr Sam Patrick (University of Liverpool) (role-sharing)
Dr Martin Sullivan (Manchester Metropolitan University)
Dr Leila Walker, BOU COO

Grants Committee

BOU.ORG.UK/FUNDING/

This Committee advises Council on the selection of research grant and bursary applications that the BOU should support.

The Committee considers applications for:

- Small Research Grants;
- Career Development Bursaries;
  - open to BOU members and non-members in low- and middle-income countries.
- John & Pat Warham Studentships;
  - funded by a bequest left to the BOU by the late John and Pat Warham for the study of Spheniscifom (penguins) and Procellariiform (tubenoses) seabirds.
- Brenda and Tony Gibbs Awards;
  - funded by a bequest left to the BOU by the late Brenda and Tony Gibbs, for research on tracking and migration studies including the use of new technologies.

The Committee met twice via Zoom in 2023. The meeting to consider research grant and career development bursary applications was held in February, and the meeting to consider applications for the Brenda and Tony Gibbs Award was held in June. The remainder of the Committee's business was conducted by email.

Ros Green joined the Committee in a role-sharing capacity with existing member Sam Patrick, from March 2023.

Small Ornithological Research Grant scheme

The Committee received 31 grant applications (45 in 2022, 54 in 2021, 51 in 2020). One application was rejected due to breaches in submission criteria, leaving 30 to be assessed ahead of the annual meeting held on 1 February 2023. Two qualified for funding consideration under the Brenda and Tony Gibbs bequest. Each application was scored by two committee members and based on these scores, the associated comments and on-the-day discussions, the committee determined which projects to support.

Council approved seven awards, totalling £12,837, to be made in 2023:

FUNDING ORNITHOLOGY





Two of the species being researched by projects funded by the BOU in 2023.

From the top:
Sand Martin *Riparia riparia*
Charles J. Sharp CC BY-SA 4.0 Wikimedia Commons

Crested Guan *Penelope purpurascens*
Randall Ortega Chaves CC BY-SA 4.0 Wikimedia Commons

Laura Céspedes Arias (Colombian) | £2,000 (amount requested)
PhD student, University of Chicago, USA
The evolution of reproductive isolation within a broken ring species: genetic and phenotypic variation across a west Himalaya hybrid zone in the Greenish Warbler complex.

Claire Branston (British) | £1,498 (amount requested)*
PDRA, University of Glasgow, UK
Effects of ectoparasite prevalence on the fitness and development of the Sand Martin (Riparia riparia) nesting in artificial nesting banks.

Andrea Estandía (Spanish) | £1,950 (amount requested)
PhD student, University of Oxford, UK
Ghost introgression in Norfolk Island Zosterops: searching for genomic remnants of the extinct White-chested white-eye.

Katarzyna Janas (Polish) | £1,500 (amount requested)*
Assistant Professor (adjunct), Museum and Institute of Zoology, Polish Academy of Sciences, Poland
A riddle of multiple ornaments: the Great Tit case.

Rosanne José Michielsen (Dutch) | £2,000 (amount requested)
PhD student, Mammal Research Institute, Polish Academy of Sciences, Poland
Long-term legacy of forest disturbance and breeding birds in Białowieża Primeval Forest.

Gabriel López Segoviano (Mexican) | £1,915 (amount requested)
Postdoctoral researcher, Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, Mexico
Identifying key plant species in the plant-frugivore network as the first step to conserving frugivorous bird in the face of the expansion of the avocado crop.

Enriqueta Velarde (Mexican) | £1,974 (amount requested)
Senior researcher, Universidad Veracruzana, Mexico
Food partitioning between four seabird species in their main nesting site in the Mexican portion of the Gulf of Mexico, and indication of fisheries resources availability.

*Awards funded from £10,000 donation received in 2022 (small grants fund)

Laura Céspedes Arias declined the award, so the £2,000 allocated here was not paid out.

Brenda and Tony Gibbs small research award
Separate to the main Gibbs Award (awards up to £20,000 – see page 27) we are using the remainder of the bequest left to us by Brenda and Tony Gibbs to fund

smaller awards for applications within the parameters of the Gibbs bequest coming in through our small grant scheme.

One award was made in 2023:

Federico De Pascalis (Italian) | £1,675 (amount requested)
Postdoctoral Associate, Italian Institute for Environmental Protection and Research (ISPRA), Italy
Saving ghosts: shedding light on the at-sea behaviour, risk exposure and microplastic ingestion in the endangered Polynesian Storm Petrel (Nesofregetta fuliginosa).

In March 2023, Council approved the Committee's proposal that the funding amount available via the Small Ornithological Research Grant scheme be raised to a maximum of £2,000 (rather than £1,500, or £2,000 in exceptional circumstances). This change will be implemented in the next round of applications and seeks to account for rising research costs. The total pot of money available via this scheme remains the same.

Career Development Bursary scheme

The committee received two applications (6 in 2022, scheme not offered in 2020, 7 in 2019, 5 in 2018, 10 in 2017) and both were assessed by the Committee. Council approved one award totalling £2,500:

Akshay Bharadwaj (India) | £2,500 (amount requested)
Masters student, Indian Institute of Science, India
More the merrier?: Examining the relationship between structural diversity of vegetation cover and biodiversity in the Swiss Jura mountains.
Project location: University of Neuchâtel, Switzerland
Supervisor: Prof. Clara Zemp

John and Pat Warham Studentships

The fourth and final John and Pat Warham Studentship was awarded in 2022. Updates on all four fully funded studentships are provided below.

Kirsty Franklin, University of East Anglia, UK (commenced 2018)
The 'Round Island petrel' conundrum
Principal supervisor: Prof Jennifer Gill

Kirsty provided us with her final report via #theBOUblog, reproduced here:

PhDone! After four and a half years, field work in some exciting places, a global pandemic, and a 3-month interlude on a placement with the RSPB, I graduated with my PhD.

As I've shared on this blog before, my BOU-funded PhD focused on the enigmatic population of tropical *Pterodroma* petrels on Round Island, Mauritius. The primary

WARHAM STUDENT



Our 2018 Warham Student, **Kirsty Franklin**, University of East Anglia, UK.

aim of my thesis was to explore how individual Round Island petrels do, and don't, vary in their migratory journeys, and the consequences for the conditions experienced by individuals. I was fortunate to use a long-term geolocator tracking dataset collected by the Institute of Zoology (IOZ; Zoological Society of London), in collaboration with the Mauritian Wildlife Foundation (MWF) and National Parks and Conservation Service (NPCS; Government of Mauritius), as well as getting to visit Round Island myself, in order to answer my PhD questions.

These data revealed extraordinary levels of variation in Round Island petrel migratory strategies, with migrations covering much of the Indian Ocean. However, we found no strong evidence for their unusual hybrid status or monsoon-driven seasonal environment to drive this variation. Repeat tracking of individuals across multiple years showed petrels to consistently migrate to the same place at roughly the same time in consecutive years and, despite the characteristically very different ocean conditions over which non-breeding petrels occur, petrel night-time activity patterns were remarkably similar and closely tracked the lunar cycle in all cases. My main field season on Round Island, where I installed a system of time lapse cameras, also proved a valuable tool for monitoring breeding phenology and nest success of tropical ground-nesting seabirds. Overall, the work in my thesis has contributed to the understanding of migratory systems and how they form and change, as well as expanding our knowledge of poorly studied tropical systems.

Despite the majority of my PhD taking place during the pandemic, I feel I accomplished and gained so much. I've presented at multiple in-person and online conferences, been able to share and promote my research (with lots of help from the BOU), made many collaborations, published papers (see side panel), supervised three undergraduate and four postgraduate students, and had two field trips to Mauritius (with a third planned for 2024), to name a few. With support from the BOU and my supervisors, I was also able to join a BAS project in Iceland tracking Guillemots as well as taking a 3-month interlude on a seabird tracking placement with the RSPB; the latter likely the main reason I managed to get my current job as a Conservation Scientist, with the same lovely team, straight out of my PhD.

I'm incredibly grateful to my supervisors (Jenny Gill, Malcolm Nicoll, Norman Ratcliffe, Ken Norris and Simon Butler) and the BOU for providing me with such a positive and supportive PhD experience. And of course, a big thank you to John and Pat Warham – I am so proud to be a part of the BOU family and funded through the Warham Studentship. It's exciting to see the data generated from my PhD already being used in new collaborative studies, such as BirdLife's recent identification of Marine Flyways. I've really enjoyed the challenging (tropical) nature of this project and hope to continue my involvement with the research on Round Island and these fascinating petrels.

WARHAM PUBLICATIONS

Franklin, K.A., Nicoll, M.A.C., Butler, S.J., Norris, K., Nakagawa, S., & Gill, J.A. 2022. Individual repeatability of avian migratory phenology: a systematic review and meta-analysis. Journal of Animal Ecology 91 https://doi.org/10.1111/1365-2656.13697

Franklin, K.A., Norris, K., Gill, J.A., Ratcliffe, N., Bonnet-Lebrun, A.S., Butler, S.J., Cole, N.C., Jones, C.G., Lisovski, S., Ruhomaun, K., Tatayah, V., & Nicoll, M.A.C. 2022. Individual consistency in migration strategies of a tropical seabird, the Round Island petrel. Movement Ecology 10:13 https://doi.org/10.1186/s40462-022-00311-y

Paige Greene, University of Tasmania, Australia (commenced 2019)
Quantifying the ecological factors under-pinning population trends in crested penguins
Principal supervisor: Prof Mark Hindell

WARHAM STUDENT



Our 2019 Warham Student, **Paige Green,** University of Tasmania, Australia.

WARHAM PUBLICATIONS

Green C-P., Ratcliffe N., Mattern T., Thompson D., Lea M-A., Wotherspoon S., et al. 2022. The role of allochrony in influencing interspecific differences in foraging distribution during the nonbreeding season between two congeneric crested penguin taxa. PLoS ONE 17(2): e0262901 https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0262901

Green C-P., Green D.B., Ratcliffe N., Thompson D., Lea M-A., Baylis A.M.M, et al. 2023. Potential for redistribution of post-moult habitat for Eudyptes penguins in the Southern Ocean under future climate conditions. Global Change Biology 29(3): 648-667 https://doi.org/10.1111/gcb.16500

Paige provided us with her final report via #theBOUblog, reproduced here:

My thesis explored the at-sea behaviours and foraging ecology of *Eudyptes* penguin species, a group of penguins that are both highly threatened and understudied. Through a collection of multi-taxa studies, my work provides valuable insights into factors influencing the distribution and foraging ecology of *Eudyptes* penguins during their nonbreeding migrations; a critical period of their annual cycle which has so far remained poorly studied. Additionally, my research contributes new knowledge on the nonbreeding migrations of five *Eudyptes* penguin populations from the Australasian Subantarctic islands, including erect-crested penguins, which had previously never been tracked. Finally, my thesis investigated the vulnerability of some populations of *Eudyptes* penguins to anticipated changes in the marine environment.

I have published two papers from my thesis, which I passed with minor corrections, including: "The role of allochrony in influencing interspecific differences in foraging distribution during the nonbreeding season between two congeneric crested penguin taxa" (Green et al. 2022) and "Potential for redistribution of post-moult habitat for Eudyptes penguins in the Southern Ocean under future climate conditions" (Green et al. 2023) (see side panel).

My thesis, for the first time since Warham's studies in the 1970s, has filled a complementary knowledge gap of where some of these same populations go during their nonbreeding migrations when they are at sea – and by and large unobservable to researchers (without tracking devices). To achieve this, I used a comprehensive tracking dataset obtained from geolocators – small logging devices, which estimate location based on recorded light levels. My hope is that I have demonstrated the powerful potential of small data loggers, attached to birds' legs, in advancing our understanding of migratory behaviour and its implications for conservation and climate change research. Further, despite the work being presented in two dimensions, I aimed to tell the story of the four-dimensional exploration of the space, time, depth and oceanographic systems exploited by these penguins. Thus, together my and Warham's studies, though 50 years apart, have made a significant contribution to rectifying the lack of ecological information of *Eudyptes* penguins which Stonehouse stressed in 1967. So, following in the footsteps of John Warham, I like to think we've come full circle and hope that he would have been delighted to see where the *Eudyptes* penguins, that he studied so intricately for over ten years, migrate to when at sea.

The relevance of these findings extends beyond ecological theory and climate change science. *Eudyptes* penguins are charismatic and iconic creatures, and my research provides critical insights into their behaviour and survival. It can also help inform conservation and management efforts to protect these species, especially those listed as Vulnerable and Endangered. By understanding their movements, we can develop strategies to safeguard their habitats and ensure their long-term survival in a rapidly changing marine environment.

WARHAM EVENING



On 2 November 2023, we held an online Warham evening for BOU members. During the Zoom event, chaired by BOU President Graeme Buchanen, members enjoyed presentations from Warham students Kirsty Franklin, Paige Green and Émile Brisson-Curadeau, and an introduction to the fourth Warham project by Rohan Clarke.

Members had the opportunity to put questions to the presenters and learn more about John and Pat Warham, thanks to some reflections provided by Paul Sagar, a former student of John's, delivered by Graeme. The evening was a wonderful way to celebrate the legacy of the Warhams and learn more about the fascinating studentships they have generously funded.

Image: © Tom Johnson (Macaulay Library), © Liam Quinn (Wikipedia)

Reflecting on my experience as a PhD student, I must say it was a challenging yet immensely rewarding journey. Conducting research on such a unique and enigmatic group of animals was a privilege. It required countless hours of tracking data processing, analysis, and fieldwork in some of the most remote and beautiful places on Earth. It was a constant learning process, and I am grateful for the support and guidance of my advisors and colleagues throughout this endeavor.

One aspect that significantly facilitated my research was the BOU Warham scholarship I received. Research scholarships play a pivotal role in enabling students to pursue their academic and research goals. Unfortunately, the majority of my PhD was during covid and due to Covid related restrictions I could not attend as many conferences as I would've liked, and we were restricted from doing the full set of fieldwork that had originally been planned for. Nonetheless, the BOU Warham scholarship provided the financial support needed to attend one in-person conference (the International Penguin Conference held in New Zealand in 2019), purchase tags for fieldwork, go on a fieldtrip to the Bounty Islands, New Zealand, as well as finance essential running costs. Without this support, my research would have been considerably more challenging to carry out effectively. Moreover, the scholarship was not just about financial assistance. It represented recognition and belief in the value of my research and its potential impact. It motivated me to strive for excellence and pushed me to contribute meaningfully to the field of penguin ecology. Being part of the IMAS Marine Predator research lab with the backing of this BOU Warham scholarship allowed me to focus on my research, working together with world renowned scientists, without the burden of financial concerns, which was instrumental in achieving the depth and breadth of findings presented in my thesis.

In conclusion, my PhD journey through the world of *Eudyptes* penguins has been both enlightening and fulfilling. The major findings from my research have practical implications for the conservation of these remarkable birds, shedding light on their migration patterns, niche partitioning behaviors, and responses to climate change. As a recent PhD graduate, I am grateful and privileged for the scholarship that supported my research and for the opportunity to contribute to our understanding of these charismatic marine predators.

Émile Brisson-Curadeau, McGill University, Canada (commenced 2020)
Foraging behaviour of King Penguins under extreme climatic events
Principal supervisor: Dr Kyle Elliott

In Émile's end of year communication, he wrote:

The end is near for me! At least when it comes to my life as a student...

WARHAM STUDENT



Our 2020 Warham Student, **Émile Brisson-Curadeau**, McGill University, Canada.

WARHAM PUBLICATIONS

Brisson-Curadeau, É., Handrich, Y., Elliott, K. H., & Bost, C. A. 2021. Accelerometry predicts prey-capture rates in the deep-diving king penguin Aptenodytes patagonicus. Marine Biology 168: 1-10. https://doi.org/10.1007/s00227-021-03968-y

Brisson-Curadeau, É., Elliott, K., & Bost, C. A. 2023. Contrasting bottom-up effects of warming ocean on two king penguin populations. Global Change Biology 29(4): 998-1008. https://doi.org/10.1111/gcb.16519

Brisson-Curadeau, É., Bost, C. A., Cherel, Y., & Elliott, K. 2023. King Penguins adjust foraging effort rather than diet when faced with poor foraging conditions. Ibis. https://doi.org/10.1111/ibi.13287

Brisson-Curadeau, É., Scheffer, A., Trathan, P., Roquet, F., Cotté, C., Delord, K., ... & Bost, C. A. 2023. Investigating two consecutive catastrophic breeding seasons in a large king penguin colony. Scientific Reports 13(1): 12967. https://doi.org/10.1038/s41598-023-40123-7

In April, I will be submitting my thesis. What a journey! In the last year, I've had the time to concentrate on my writing, and three of my papers got published. My proudest: a publication in Global Change Biology which discussed the differences in sensitivity to climate change that different populations from the same species (here King Penguins) can display. This paper is important, in my opinion, because it challenges the habit that some scientists have to generalize the response of a whole species to climate change using few limited studies conducted on one population. My dataset was composed of >20 years of foraging and breeding data from two large colonies of King Penguin, and I showed that, despite being neighbouring colonies, the two colonies reacted very differently to climate change. Indeed, due to differences in biogeographic features surrounding the two colonies, one population would suffer from climate change, while the other one would benefit from it. Surprising, isn't it?

As my PhD is coming to an end, I really want to thank the BOU, which made this whole project possible. The support that the organization has given me has been huge and I think it is fair to say that the outcome of that project was truly beneficial for King Penguin research. Throughout my PhD, I have published four peer-reviewed papers, participated in three international congresses, and made several contributions to popular science. Soon, I will have to think about what the next steps for me will be. A career as a seabird biologist? Who knows!

John Lamaris, Monash University, Australia (commenced 2023)
Recovering the critically endangered Beck's Petrel
Principal supervisor: Assoc. Prof. Rohan Clarke

Firstly, a special thank you goes to John and Pat Warham, and the BOU, for funding this PhD research project. Also, thank you to my supervisory team – Rohan Clarke, Richard Fuller and Jeremy Bird – for getting me on board the Beck's Petrel team, providing me with this research opportunity.

After a long wait for the processing of my student visa, I was able to arrive in Melbourne on the 13th of December. Whilst this did align with the university shutdown for the Christmas break, it was convenient for me as it is summer in Melbourne which helps me to acclimatize and settle in. I am also grateful for Clarke's Lab team for making me feel welcome and helping me settle in.

This study is aimed at recovering the Critically Engendered Beck's Petrel and will focus on locating a breeding colony and studying the species ecology. It is important that we locate the Beck's Petrel nesting grounds, and assess threats to the population, so that better conservation strategies can be developed to protect the species. The approach to achieving that will be through the following proposed key chapters:

1) *Tracking the seasonal distribution and terrestrial visits of Beck's Petrel.* Employing methods developed in 2017, we currently have seven PTT satellite tags available for deployment. These will increase the existing sample size for

WARHAM STUDENT



Our 2023 Warham Student, **John Lamaris**, Monash University, Australia.

analysing seasonal movements, assessing overlap with threatening at-sea processes and elucidating additional breeding locations.

2) *Breeding habitat suitability modelling*. Using satellite tracking data combined with environmental variables, we will build a model predicting suitable breeding habitat for Beck's Petrels in New Ireland and potentially elsewhere. This output would guide further on-ground searches for breeding birds.
3) *Phenology and breeding biology of Beck's Petrels*. Using tracking data, shore-based observations and research at breeding colonies, this chapter will provide new and comprehensive data on colony attendance, timing and shift duration of incubation, chick rearing and fledging.
4) *Beck's Petrel status and threats*. Coastal boat-based observations will be done to complete a mark-recapture population estimate using data from satellite-tagged individuals and simultaneous raft counts in Silur Bay, New Ireland. In addition, use of remote monitoring technologies at a colony in southern New Ireland will collect data on breeding success and invasive species impacts.

Given the very recent start, my focus to date has been on the following:

1) *Literature review*: This review will summarize all that is known about the Beck's Petrel to date and will ensure I am well placed for the first HDR Initial Project Review milestone scheduled for the mid-June 2024.
2) *Research program and plan*: Notwithstanding the proposed outline of my four data chapters, as outlined above, I have begun working on a more comprehensive research plan that will provide the framework for all of my research activities focused on Beck's Petrel. I have met one-on-one with my supervisors a number of times since commencing in mid-December 2023 and have a meeting scheduled with the entire supervisory team in late January to discuss and progress this further.
3) *Papua New Guinea research permits*: I will need research permits to conduct the fieldwork in New Ireland, PNG. I am liaising with the Conservation Environment Protection Authority (CEPA) in Papua New Guinea for Research Permits. Progress to acquire the Research Permits has been positive and I'm hoping to get feedback from CEPA by the end of January. I have also been working with my supervisory team on this, as collectively we will draft the required permit applications.
4) *Animal ethics*: While liaising with CEPA for permits to conduct research in PNG, the team is also working on the Animal Ethics submission to the Monash University Animal Ethics Committee.
5) *Completion of HDR Program Compulsory Courses*: As a part of my Higher Degrees program there are several compulsory courses required to be completed within a month from the date of enrolment. I have completed three of these courses. The last of these courses is scheduled for the end of February 2024.

It is only the beginning of my research journey, and I know that searches for the Beck's Petrel have been challenging, and those challenges remain. Despite that, I am excited and looking forward to the adventures ahead.

RECORDS COMMITTEE

Chair

Dr Alexander Lees (Manchester Metropolitan University (from July 2023)

Dr James Gilroy (until June 2023)

Secretary

Dr Chris McInerny (University of Glasgow)

Members

Mr Ross Ahmed (Northumberland) (from July 2023)

Mr Chris Batty (Lancashire)

Dr Pierre-Andre Crochet (French National Centre for Scientific Research (CNRS))

Mr Paul French (BBRC Chair)

Mr Mark Golley (Norfolk, UK)

Mr Mark Thomas (RSPB)

Dr Leila Walker, BOU COO

BOURC CATEGORY F SUB-COMMITTEE (BOURC CFSC)

Dr Joanne Cooper

Prof John R. Stewart

Dr Dale Serjeantson

BOURC consultants

Mr Steve Dudley (Category C)

Dr Bob McGowen, National Museums of Scotland (museums)

Keith Naylor (historical records)

Andrew Owen, Chester Zoo (captive bird trade)

Brenda and Tony Gibbs bequest

We received and assessed 33 applications. The combined scores and comments from Committee members were used for the basis of the on-the-day discussions at a meeting on 21 June 2023.

Council approved a single award of £20,000:

Arjun Amar (South Africa)
Associate Professor, FitzPatrick Institute of African Ornithology, South Africa
Impacts of Artificial Light at Night (ALAN) on two nocturnal birds – a natural experiment triggered by the collapse of power supply in South Africa.

Records Committee

BOU.ORG.UK/BRITISH-LIST/

The Records Committee is responsible for maintaining the British List, the official list of birds recorded in Britain.

The Committee met twice (remotely) during the year with other business conducted by email.

James Gilroy retired as a member of the Committee in July 2023. James served on the Committee since 2010 and as Chair from March 2019, and we extend our gratitude to him for all his hard work spanning 13 years. Alex Lees stepped into the Chair role from July 2023 and we welcomed Ross Ahmed as a new member – Ross is an experienced birder with a particular passion for analysing bird migration data, and he is already contributing his extensive knowledge to the Committee.

Changes to the British List

The BOURC's 56th Report was published in January 2024 and covers the period October 2022 to September 2023 (*IBIS* 166: 348–352). This announced a number of changes to Category A of the British List, including:

- Kelp Gull *Larus dominicanus* – species added to the List.
- Least Bittern *Ixobrychus exilis* – species added to the List.
- Sulphur-bellied Warbler *Phylloscopus griseolus* – species added to the List.
- The addition of the Common Eider subspecies *Somateria mollissima faeroeensis* and the British and Irish endemic Greenfinch subspecies *Chloris chloris harrisoni* in accordance with an earlier iterations of the IOC World Bird List (https://www.worldbirdnames.org).

In addition, the release of versions 13.1 and 13.2 of the IOC World Bird List resulted in a number of changes to the British List, as detailed in the 56th Report.

Subsequent to the publication of the 56th Report, the Committee announced the removal of Lesser Short-toed Lark *Alaudala rufescens* from Category A of the

ADDITIONS TO THE BRITISH LIST



Kelp Gull *Larus dominicanus*, admitted to the British List in 2023.

Image © Richard Patient, from record file



Least Bittern *Ixobrychus exilis*, admitted to the British List in 2023.

Image © Steve Keightley, from record file



Sulphur-bellied Warbler *Phylloscopus griseolus*, admitted to the British List in 2023.

Image © Dean Jones

British List (to be included in the 57th Report).

Also, it was noted that through oversight the IOC split of Tibetan Sand Plover *Charadrius atrifrons* from Lesser Sand Plover *C. mongolus* (re-named Siberian Sand Plover) was not included in the Category species totals in the 56th Report.

In total, these changes to the British List, together with taxonomic changes in line with IOC taxonomy (detailed in *IBIS* 164: 929–931) bring the total to 633 species as at 31 December 2023.

Also in the 56th Report, the Committee outlined its approach to cryptic bird species, indicating that it would take a pragmatic case-by-case approach to assessment of species where it is overwhelmingly likely that a record pertains to one cryptic species and not others in a complex (e.g. due to vagrancy likelihood linked to life history traits). In the same report the Committee also indicated that it would consider submissions of records without a human observer (e.g. records from passive acoustic recorders, camera traps or tracking data) and that this will occur on a case-by-case basis, with submissions requiring as much observation metadata as possible.

Committee recruitment

New Committee members continue to be recruited via public calls for nominations. For the 2024 round of Committee nominations, Alex, in his role as BOURC Chair, together with Dawn Balmer, penned a contribution on #theBOUblog acknowledging BOURC's failure to recruit female members and asking what can be done about it. The blog hopes to highlight the issue to the community and encourage people to nominate women for the Committee.

Links with other groups

The Committee maintains close links with the British Birds Rarities Committee (BBRC). The BOURC Secretary continues to work closely with BBRC's Secretariat and other European committees, and close links are maintained with Association of European Records Committees (AERC).

BOURC online intranet

The Committee operates an online intranet site that is used for the storage of images and documents to assist with its work.

Acknowledgements

The Union would like to extend its thanks and gratitude to the following who have assisted with the many BOU activities throughout the year:

All those members of Council and our committees as listed throughout the report who give up their time willingly to develop, oversee and deliver our wide range of activities;

Raurie Bowie, Richard Fuller, Jenny Gill, Rebecca Kimball, Ruedi Nager, Jeremy Wilson, Patrick Smith, all Associate Editors (listed in each issue of IBIS) and the hundreds of reviewers (listed annually in IBIS) for their invaluable work for IBIS;

Richard Sale (on behalf of the Alexander Library, Oxford University) for his editing of the IBIS book reviews;

Prof Christopher Perrins and Neil Bucknell for arranging the obituaries published in IBIS;

Graham Allen, Farhath Jabeen, Andreas Petersen, Genevieve Richards, Janany Sudarshan, Jo Wood and colleagues at Wiley, for their help in delivering our high quality journal;

Andrew Hopwood, Adrian Morris and colleagues at Henry Ling Ltd for providing member print copies of IBIS;

Leica (UK) for their support of our IBIS early career researcher award;

Nigel Crocker, Richard Price and Stephen Rumsey for their excellent management of the Union's investment portfolio;

Amanda Trask (Zoological Society of London, UK), María Moirón (Institute of Avian Research, Germany), Michela Corsini (University of Warsaw, Poland), Ferran Sayol (University College London, UK), Jelmer Samplonius (University of Edinburgh, UK) and Emily Simmonds (Norwegian University of Science and Technology) for their work preparing the programme for the annual conference (*Evolutionary responses*);

Bryam Aguilar, Ondřej Belfín, Sarah Binnie, Ryan Burrell, Camilo Carneiro, Ana Luiza Catalano, Hannah Hereward, Triin Kassiku, Angela Langford, Claire Nemes, Charlie Russell, Nicola Sockhill, Samantha Wong Topp, Qiqi Yang and Natalia Zielonka for supporting the delivery of our conferences;

Cont/.

Membership

At the end of the year our total membership stood at 1,089 (1,017 at 31 Dec 2022) comprising 781 full members (721 at 31 Dec 2022) and 308 reduced rate subscribers (296 at 31 Dec 2022), made up of 277 early career researchers (ECRs) and 31 from/living in low-and-middle-income countries.

44 members sent their formal resignation during the year (26 in 2022), and Council noted, with sadness, the following deaths: Mr Norman Arlott, Mr Manuel Orobitg Duarte, Mr Donald Greenhalgh, Prof Mike Harris, Dr Susan Haysom, Dr Neville Skinner.

As ever, we remain extremely grateful for the continued support of our members.

Financial review

Graham Appleton, Honorary Treasurer



The BOU made a loss of £3,140 in 2023, which is less than predicted. The most significant variances will be discussed below. As indicated last year, Council has been setting budgets that are designed to be negative, by investing money in the future of ornithology, especially through support for early-career ornithologists.

The BOU has done well to weather the long-standing Covid crisis but there is still some uncertainty about income generation due to changes in ways of working post-Covid. Many now think more carefully about the carbon cost of travel and the health consequences of conference attendance, especially for those who are more vulnerable. As you will have read in the President's report, much thought has been given to new models for BOU meetings. We are fortunate to have annual income from Ibis and money in the bank to trial new initiatives.

Changes of personnel

Having helped us to negotiate a new publishing contract with Wiley and provided support for Leila through her first annual report and accounts, Steve Dudley's call-off contract ceased at the end of March 2023. As a consequence, staff costs were lower in 2023 than in 2022.

During the year, our three Investment Trustees indicated that they felt that it was time to make changes, after decades of service. We are very grateful to Richard Price, Nigel Crocker and Stephen Rumsey for stewarding our investments so wisely. Three new Investment Trustees have been recruited to take over, once the accounts for 2023 have been finalised.

Acknowledgements

CONT/.

Wouter Vansteelant (University of Groningen, the Netherlands), José Alves (University of Iceland & University of Aveiro, Portugal), Vojtech Brlik (Charles University, Czechia), Maria Dias (University of Lisbon, Portugal), Steve Dudley (Consultant, Scotland), Cat Morrison (University of East Anglia, UK), Elham Nourani (Max Planck Institute of Animal Behaviour, Germany), Elly Knight (University of Alberta, Canada), Camila Gómez (SELVA, Colombia), Fengyi Guo (Princeton University, USA), Bryant Dossman (Georgetown University, USA), Yachang Cheng (Sun Yat-sen University, People's Republic of China), Sayam Chowdhury (University of Cambridge, UK), (Yong Ding Li, BirdLife International, Singapore), Judit Szabo (Charles Darwin University, Australia), R. Suresh Kumar (Wildlife Institute of India, India) and Batmunkh Davaasuren (Wildlife Science and Conservation Center of Mongolia, Mongolia) for the planning and delivery of our *Global flyways* autumn conference;

Daniel Blanco and Charlie Douglass at Douglass Digital for maintenance and development of the BOU website;

Maria Rogers and the conference staff at the University of Nottingham Conferences for helping to deliver our first in-person annual conference since 2019;

Andy Musgrove for continued help with maintaining the electronic versions of the British List;

British Birds Rarities Committee (BBRC) and bird records committees across Europe under the auspices of the Association of European Records Committees (AERC) who have assisted BOURC during the year;

Karen Kragesand Thomsen at Kovsted & Skovgård;

and Caroline Gillis, Tracey Richardson and colleagues at Azets (accountants and auditors).

We apologise to anyone we have inadvertently omitted.

I am due to finish my second term as Hon Treasurer in spring 2025 and it would have been good to have started the handover by recruiting a Treasurer Elect to Council in spring 2024. We are still trying to find someone but, should we fail, I am prepared to serve for a ninth year, through to the 2026 AGM, subject to the approval of members at the 2025 AGM.

Gibbs Investments

I reported last year that payments from the Gibbs Fund were being made from core funds, in the hope that the value of the investments in the Amity Balanced Fund for Charities could be recovered. An initial investment of £130,000 was made in early 2020, just before Covid hit and before the uncertainties associated with Russia's invasion of Ukraine. The value had dropped to £117,977.22 by 31 December 2022 and then dropped to £112,326.25 by the time that the Fund was closed by Eden Tree, the fund managers, in September 2023. The Investment Trustees were reluctant to reinvest the money, given uncertain medium term prospects. and £112,326.25 was credited to the BOU's CAF account, as a cheque.

Given that the Gibbs Fund is a legacy, Council has felt morally obliged to make up the loss on investments (£17,673.75) and this is reflected in the accounts for 2023. The new Investment Trustees will be asked to think about whether there is a sensible medium term investment route that will help recover some of this loss.

The period of the investment of the Gibbs money was unfortunate. For comparison, we realised assets in the Warham Fund at the same time as we bought investments for the Gibbs Fund. This timing was excellent, allowing us to support a fourth PhD studentship, when the original budget had been for three.

Reviews in 2023

I highlighted the continuing drop in membership numbers in my report on the 2021 accounts and the 2022 Annual Report included mention of two new reviews, looking at membership retention/growth and how BOU should develop its conference programme (and income stream) in a post-Covid world. Membership numbers increased marginally in 2023 but, because of changes we made in 2022 to the way that renewals are allocated, income dropped slightly. During the year under review a third strand to the review emerged, as Council considered a refresh of the BOU's strategy. With strong leadership from the expanded Management Group, there has been good progress in all three areas, as you will see in the report of Council from Graeme Buchanan.

Variations between 2022 and 2023

Higher interest rates contributed to an increase of 38% in income from investments but inflation had a negative effect on most of the BOU's outgoings. Conference costs in 2022 were inflated by the loss of a deposit on a cancelled conference which explains why 2023 costs were significantly lower. Expenditure on charitable activities was relatively low in 2023, as less money was spent on Warham Studentships, in line with the schedules of payments. Publication income remains

strong at £118,906, compared to £108,752 in 2022. There was further reduction in the value of BOU's long-term investments during 2023, in line with market trends.

Looking forwards to 2024

The budget prepared for 2024 includes extra resources for conferences, as we trial new engagement methods, and we will need to invest more in marketing and promotion, after a period of restraint. We expect to make a loss of about £24,000 during the year, which is in line with a strategy that sees us reducing reserves to £350,000. Unrestricted reserves stood at £642,362 at the year end.

Responsibilities of the Trustees

The Members of Council are responsible for preparing the Trustees' Report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

The law applicable to charities in England and Wales and in Scotland requires the Members of Council to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charity and of the incoming resources and application of resources of the charity for that year.

In preparing these financial statements, the Members of Council are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP;
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable accounting standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements; and
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in operation.

The Members of Council are responsible for keeping sufficient accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Charities Act 2011, the Charity (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008, the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005, the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006 (as amended) and the provisions of the trust deed. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

Staff remuneration is reviewed annually in January by the principal officers (President, Honorary Treasurer and Honorary Secretary). The decision on whether to make a pay award is contingent on affordability and the 12-month average CPIH for the previous calendar year. Benchmarking of pay and pension against comparators within the same sector, including the main avian research charities, is undertaken periodically according to availability and affordability of information.

Approved by the Council on 6 March 2024 and signed on their behalf by:



Dr Graeme Buchanan President

BRITISH ORNITHOLOGISTS' UNION

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

Current financial year	**Notes**	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Endowment funds £	**Total 2023 £**	Total 2022 £
Income from:						
Donations and legacies	**3**	38,052	–	–	**38,052**	47,967
Charitable activities	**4**	149,262	–	–	**149,262**	129,240
Investments	**5**	28,492	4,453	1,656	**34,601**	25,116
Total income and endowments		215,806	4,453	1,656	**221,915**	202,323
Expenditure on:						
Raising funds	**6**	51,869	–	–	**51,869**	57,738
Charitable activities	**7**	125,561	43,647	–	**169,208**	196,029
Total expenditure		177,430	43,647	–	**221,077**	253,767
Net gains/(losses) on investments	**12**	(5,903)	–	1,925)	**(3,978)**	(49,901)
Net incoming/(outgoing) resources before transfers		32,473	(39,194)	3,581	**(3,140)**	(101,345)
Gross transfers between funds		4,064	(4,064)	–	–	–
Net movement in funds		36,537	(43,258)	3,581	**(3,140)**	(101,345)
Fund balances at 1 January 2023		605,825	314,449	153,658	**1,073,932**	1,175,277
Fund balances at 31 December 2023		642,362	271,191	157,239	**1,070,792**	1,073,932

The statement of financial activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year.

All income and expenditure is derived from continuing activities.

BRITISH ORNITHOLOGISTS' UNION

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES (CONTINUED)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

Prior financial year (2022)	**Notes**	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Endowment funds £	**Total 2022 £**
Income from:					
Donations and legacies	**3**	37,967	10,000	–	**47,967**
Charitable activities	**4**	129,240	–	–	**129,240**
Investments	**5**	19,321	4,323	1,472	**25,116**
Total income and endowments		186,528	14,323	1,472	**202,323**
Expenditure on:					
Raising funds	**6**	57,738	–	–	**57,738**
Charitable activities	**7**	139,690	56,339	–	**196,029**
Total expenditure		197,428	56,339	–	**253,767**
Net gains/(losses) on investments	**12**	(39,644)	–	(10,257)	**(49,901)**
Net incoming/(outgoing) resources before transfers		(50,544)	(42,016)	(8,785)	(101,345)
Gross transfers between funds		5,633	(5,633)	–	–
Net movement in funds		(44,911)	(47,649)	(8,785)	(101,345)
Fund balances at 1 January 2022		650,736	362,098	162,443	1,175,277
Fund balances at 31 December 2022		605,825	314,449	153,658	1,073,932

BRITISH ORNITHOLOGISTS' UNION

BALANCE SHEET
AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2023

		2023		2022	
Fixed assets	**Notes**	**£**	**£**	£	£
Investments	**14**		407,682		519,707
Current assets					
Debtors	**16**	**55,724**		47,702	
Cash at bank and in hand		**648,913**		545,662	
		704,637		593,364	
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	**17**	**(41,527)**		(39,139)	
Net current assets			**663,110**		554,225
Total assets less current liabilities			**1,070,792**		1,073,932
Capital funds					
Endowment funds - general					
General endowment funds	**21**		**157,239**		153,658
Income funds					
Restricted funds	20		**271,191**		314,449
Unrestricted funds			**642,362**		605,825
			1,070,792		1,073,932

The accounts were approved by the Members of Council on 6 March 2024.

Graeme Buchanan

Dr Graeme Buchanan President

BRITISH ORNITHOLOGISTS' UNION

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

1 Accounting policies

Charity information

The British Ornithologists' Union is a registered charity in England and Wales (249877) and Scotland (SC044850) and is unincorporated.

The charity is a public benefit company.

The charity's place of business is:
PO Box 79, Pembroke, SA72 9AX, United Kingdom.

1.1 Accounting convention

The accounts have been prepared in accordance with the charity's trust deed, the Charities Act 2011, the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005, the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006 (as amended) and "Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102)" (as amended for accounting periods commencing from 1 January 2016). The charity is a Public Benefit Entity as defined by FRS 102.

The charity has taken advantage of the provisions in the SORP for charities applying FRS 102 Update Bulletin 1 not to prepare a Statement of Cash Flows.

The financial statements have departed from the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 only to the extent required to provide a true and fair view. This departure has involved following the Statement of Recommended Practice for charities applying FRS 102 rather than the version of the Statement of Recommended Practice which is referred to in the Regulations but which has since been withdrawn.

The financial statements are prepared in sterling, which is the functional currency of the charity. Monetary amounts in these financial statements are rounded to the nearest £.

The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention, modified to include the revaluation of certain financial instruments at fair value. The principal accounting policies adopted are set out below.

1.2 Going concern

At the time of approving the financial statements, the Members of Council have a reasonable expectation that the charity has adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future. Thus the Members of Council continue to adopt the going concern basis of accounting in preparing the financial statements.

1.3 Charitable funds

Unrestricted funds are available for use at the discretion of the Members of Council in furtherance of their charitable objectives unless the funds have been designated for other purposes.

Designated funds are unrestricted funds earmarked by the trustees for particular future project or commitment.

Restricted funds are subjected to restrictions on their expenditure declared by the donor or through the terms of an appeal, and fall into one of two sub-classes: restricted income funds or endowment funds.

Endowment funds are subject to specific conditions by donors that the capital must be maintained by the charity.

BRITISH ORNITHOLOGISTS' UNION

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

1 Accounting policies (continued)

1.4 Income

All incoming resources are included in the statement of financial activities when entitlement has passed to the charity; it is probable that the economic benefits associated with the transaction will flow to the charity and the amount can be reliably measured. The following specific policies are applied to particular categories of income:

- Income from donations or grants is recognised when there is evidence of entitlement to the gift, receipt is probable and its amount can be measured reliably.
- Legacy income is recognised when receipt is probable and entitlement is established.
- Income from donated goods is measured at the fair value of the goods unless this is impractical to measure reliably, in which case the value is derived from the cost to the donor or the estimated resale value. Donated facilities and services are recognised in the accounts when received if the value can be reliably measured. No amounts are included for the contribution of general volunteers.
- Income from contracts for the supply of services is recognised with the delivery of the contracted service. This is classified as unrestricted funds unless there is a contractual requirement for it to be spent on a particular purpose and returned if unspent, in which case it may be regarded as restricted.

1.5 Expenditure

Expenditure is recognised on an accruals basis as a liability is incurred. Expenditure includes any VAT which cannot be fully recovered, and is classified under headings of the statement of financial activities to which it relates:

- Expenditure on raising funds includes the costs of all fundraising activities, events, non-charitable trading activities, and the sale of donated goods.
- Expenditure on charitable activities includes all costs incurred by a charity in undertaking activities that further its charitable aims for the benefit of its beneficiaries, including those support costs and costs relating to the governance of the charity apportioned to charitable activities.
- Other expenditure includes all expenditure that is neither related to raising funds for the charity nor part of its expenditure on charitable activities.

All costs are allocated to expenditure categories reflecting the use of the resource. Direct costs attributable to a single activity are allocated directly to that activity. Shared costs are apportioned between the activities they contribute to on a reasonable, justifiable and consistent basis.

BRITISH ORNITHOLOGISTS' UNION

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

1 Accounting policies (continued)

Overheads

Overhead costs are allocated to the relevant cost centres in the following proportions:

	Office costs	A F Langford remuneration	L Walker remuneration	S P Dudley remuneration
Conference costs	15%	7.5%	22.5%	22.5%
Management and administration	45%	47.5%	60%	60%
IBIS publishing costs	37.5%	45%	15%	15%
Research costs	2.5%	–	2.5%	2.5%
	100%	100%	100%	100%

These proportions were decided upon by the trustees, who believe that they represent a fair reflection of the resources expended by the charity on each activity.

1.6 Fixed asset investments

Unlisted equity investments are initially recorded at cost, and subsequently measured at fair value. If fair value cannot be reliably measured, assets are measured at cost less impairment.

Listed investments are measured at fair value with changes in fair value being recognised in income or expenditure.

1.7 Cash and cash equivalents

Cash and cash equivalents include cash in hand, deposits held at call with banks, other short-term liquid investments with original maturities of three months or less, and bank overdrafts. Bank overdrafts are shown within borrowings in current liabilities.

1.8 Financial instruments

The charity has elected to apply the provisions of Section 11 'Basic Financial Instruments' and Section 12 'Other Financial Instruments Issues' of FRS 102 to all of its financial instruments.

Financial instruments are recognised in the charity's balance sheet when the charity becomes party to the contractual provisions of the instrument.

Financial assets and liabilities are offset, with the net amounts presented in the financial statements, when there is a legally enforceable right to set off the recognised amounts and there is an intention to settle on a net basis or to realise the asset and settle the liability simultaneously.

Basic financial assets

Basic financial assets, which include debtors and cash and bank balances, are initially measured at transaction price including transaction costs and are subsequently carried at amortised cost using the effective interest method unless the arrangement constitutes a financing transaction, where the transaction is measured at the present value of the future receipts discounted at a market rate of interest. Financial assets classified as receivable within one year are not amortised.

BRITISH ORNITHOLOGISTS' UNION

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

1 Accounting policies (continued)

Basic financial liabilities

Basic financial liabilities, including creditors and bank loans are initially recognised at transaction price unless the arrangement constitutes a financing transaction, where the debt instrument is measured at the present value of the future payments discounted at a market rate of interest. Financial liabilities classified as payable within one year are not amortised.

Debt instruments are subsequently carried at amortised cost, using the effective interest rate method.

Trade creditors are obligations to pay for goods or services that have been acquired in the ordinary course of operations from suppliers. Amounts payable are classified as current liabilities if payment is due within one year or less. If not, they are presented as non-current liabilities. Trade creditors are recognised initially at transaction price and subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method.

Derecognition of financial liabilities

Financial liabilities are derecognised when the charity's contractual obligations expire or are discharged or cancelled.

1.9 Employee benefits

The cost of any unused holiday entitlement is recognised in the period in which the employee's services are received.

Termination benefits are recognised immediately as an expense when the charity is demonstrably committed to terminate the employment of an employee or to provide termination benefits.

2 Critical accounting estimates and judgements

In the application of the charity's accounting policies, the Members of Council are required to make judgements, estimates and assumptions about the carrying amount of assets and liabilities that are not readily apparent from other sources. The estimates and associated assumptions are based on historical experience and other factors that are considered to be relevant. Actual results may differ from these estimates.

The estimates and underlying assumptions are reviewed on an ongoing basis. Revisions to accounting estimates are recognised in the period in which the estimate is revised where the revision affects only that period, or in the period of the revision and future periods where the revision affects both current and future periods.

3 Donations and legacies	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	**2023**	2022
	£	£	**£**	£
Donations and gifts	1,395	-	**1,395**	10,738
Subscriptions	36,657	-	**36,657**	37,229

BRITISH ORNITHOLOGISTS' UNION

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

4 Charitable activities

	2023	2022
	£	£
Publication income – IBIS	**118,906**	108,752
Other publication income	**–**	71
Conference income	**30,356**	20,417
	149,262	129,240

5 Investments

	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Endowment funds general	**Total 2023**	Total 2022
	£	£	£	**£**	£
Income from listed investments	17,749	4,453	1,656	**23,858**	22,894
Interest receivable	10,743	–	–	**10,743**	2,222
	28,492	4,453	1,656	**34,601**	25,116
For the year ended 31 December 2022	19,321	4,323	1,472		25,116

6 Raising funds

	2023	2022
Fundraising and publicity	**£**	£
Management costs – purchases	**4,637**	5,774
Management costs – wages and salaries	**42,911**	47,070
Management costs – employer's NIC	**–**	1,244
Management costs – pension costs	**4,321**	3,650
Fundraising and publicity	**51,869**	57,738

7 Charitable activities

	2023	2022
	£	£
Research – administration costs	**1,574**	1,861
Publication costs – IBIS	**60,097**	59,281
Conference costs	**32,166**	46,723
	93,837	107,865
Grant and bursary funding of activities (see note 8)	**58,686**	71,356
Share of governance costs (see note 9)	**16,685**	16,808
	169,208	196,029

BRITISH ORNITHOLOGISTS' UNION

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

8 Grants and bursaries payable

	2023	2022
	£	£
Awards payable (nine in 2022):		
Claire Branston (Post-doctoral Research Assistant, University of Glasgow, UK)	**1,498**	-
Andrea Estandia (PhD student, Edward Grey Institute of Field Ornithology, UK)	**1,950**	-
Katarzyna Janas (Assistant Professor (adjunct), Polish Academy of Sciences, Poland)	**1,500**	-
Rosanne José Michielsen (PhD student, Polish Academy of Sciences, Poland)	**2,000**	-
Gabriel López Segoviano (Postdoc, Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, Mexico)	**1,915**	-
Enriqueta Velarde (Senior Researcher, Universidad Veracruzana, Mexico)	**1,974**	-
Akshay Bharadwaj (Masters student, Indian Institute of Science, India)	**2,500**	-
Federico De Pascalis (Postdoctoral Associate, ISPRA, Italy)	**1,675**	-
Michał Jezierski (PhD student, University of Oxford, UK)	-	1,500
Verónica Méndez Aragón (Academic Director, University Centre of the Westfjords, Iceland)	-	1,500
Kristen Wacker (PhD candidate, University of Michigan, US)	-	2,000
Klara K. Nordén (PhD student, Princeton University, US)	-	1,885
Teresa Pegan (PhD student, University of Michigan, US)	-	1,683
Anap Isphaku Afan (Research Associate, A P Leventis, Nigeria)	-	2,449
Roman Alberto Ruggera (Profesor Adjunto, Instituto de Ecorregiones Andinas, Argentina)	-	1,500
Chima Josiah Nwaoga (Junior Research Fellow, University of Groningen, Netherlands)	-	2,500
Olufemi Olubodun (PhD student, FitzPatrick Institute of African Ornithology, South Africa)	-	1,955
Conference attendance awards	**4,700**	-
Grants to institutions (three in 2022):		
University of Tasmania (John & Pat Warham Studentship - Paige Green)	-	9,289
McGill University (John & Pat Warham Studentship - Émile Brisson-Curadeau)	**8,669**	25,095
Monash University (John & Pat Warham Studentship - Dr Rohan Clarke)	**30,747**	-
University of East Anglia, UK (John & Pat Warham Studentship – Kirsty Franklin)	(442)	-
Lancaster University (Brenda and Tony Gibbs Award - Stuart Sharp)	-	20,000
	58,686	71,356

9 Support and governance costs

	Support costs	Governance costs	2023	2022
	£	£	**£**	£
Audit fees	–	5,580	**5,580**	5,220
Legal and professional	–	1,024	**1,024**	2,585
Accountancy	–	3,418	**3,418**	3,036
Costs of trustees' and committee meetings	–	3,112	**3,112**	1,217
Support Officers honoraria	–	3,551	**3,551**	4,750
	–	16,685	**16,685**	16,808
Analysed between				
Charitable activities	–	16,685	**16,685**	16,808

Governance costs includes payments to the auditors of £5,580 (2022 - £5,220) for audit fees and £3,418 (2022 - £3,036) for other services.

BRITISH ORNITHOLOGISTS' UNION

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

10 Members of Council

None of the Members of Council (or any persons connected with them) received any remuneration or benefits from the charity during the year.

During the year two of the Members of Council were reimbursed expenses totalling £417 (2022 - no members were reimbursed expenses). These expenses represent travelling costs incurred by the Members of Council in the performance of their duties.

11 Employees

Number of employees	**2023**	2022
The average monthly number employees during the year was:	**2**	2

Employment costs	**2023**	2022
	£	£
Wages and salaries	**78,231**	84,488
Social security costs	**-**	2,222
Other pension costs	**7,983**	6,809
	86,214	93,519

No employee received employee benefits of more than £60,000 during the year (2022 – nil).

12 Net gains/(losses) on investments

	Unrestricted funds	**Endowment funds**	**2023 Total**	Unrestricted funds	Endowment funds general	2022 Total
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Revaluation of investments	11,771	1,925	13,696	(39,644)	(10,257)	(49,901)
Gain/(loss) on sale of investments	(17,674)	–	(17,674)	–	–	–
	(5,903)	1,925	(3,978)	(39,644)	(10,257)	(49,901)

13 Taxation

The charity is exempt from tax on income and gains falling within section 505 of the Taxes Act 1988 or section 252 of the Taxation of Chargeable Gains Act 1992 to the extent that these are applied to its charitable objects.

14 Fixed asset investments

	Listed investments
Cost or valuation	**£**
At 1 January 2023	519,707
Additions	4,278
Valuation changes	13,697
Disposals	(130,000)
At 31 December 2023	407,682
Carrying amount	
At 31 December 2023	407,682
At 31 December 2022	519,707

BRITISH ORNITHOLOGISTS' UNION

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

15	**Financial instruments**	**2023**	2022
	Carrying amount of financial assets	**£**	£
	Trade debtors	**47,353**	45,676
	Other debtors	**1,118**	766
	Bank and cash	**648,913**	545,662
	Measured at cost	**697,384**	592,104
	Listed investments	**407,682**	519,707
	Measured at market value	**407,682**	519,707
	Carrying amount of financial liabilities		
	Other taxation and social security	**683**	604
	Accruals	**17,982**	14,141
	Measured at cost	**18,665**	14,745

16	**Debtors**	**2023**	2022
		£	£
	Amounts falling due within one year:		
	Trade debtors	**47,353**	**45,676**
	Other debtors	**1,118**	766
	Prepayments and accrued income	**7,253**	1,260
		55,724	47,702

17	**Creditors**	**Notes**	**2023**	2022
			£	£
	Amounts falling due within one year:			
	Other taxation and social security		**683**	**604**
	Deferred income	**18**	**22,862**	24,394
	Accruals		**17,982**	14,141
			41,527	39,139

BRITISH ORNITHOLOGISTS' UNION

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

18 Deferred income

	2023	2022
	£	£
Other deferred income	**22,862**	24,394

Deferred income relates to subscriptions received in advance of £20,649 (2022 - £19,698) and income received in advance for conferences in future years of £2,213 (2022 - £4,696).

19 Pensions and other post-retirement benefits

Defined contribution pension plans

Contributions to defined contribution plans are recognised as an expense in the period in which the related service is provided.

The charge to profit or loss in respect of defined contribution plans was £7,983 (2022 - £6,809).

20 Restricted funds

The income funds of the charity include restricted funds comprising the following unexpended balances of donations and grants held on trust for specific purposes:

		Movement in funds (2022)			
	Balance at 1 Jan 2022	Income	Expenditure	Transfers	Balance at 31 Dec 2022
	£	£	£	£	£
Research Fund	79,633	4,323	–	–	83,956
John & Pat Warham Scholarship Fund	172,421	–	(34,384)	(3,438)	134,599
Brenda & Tony Gibbs Bequest	110,044	–	(21,955)	(2,195)	85,894
Small grants	–	10,000	–	–	10,000
	362,098	14,323	(56,339)	(5,633)	314,449

		Movement in funds (2023)			
	Balance at 1 Jan 2023	**Income**	**Expenditure**	**Transfers**	**Balance at 31 Dec 2023**
	£	£	£	£	**£**
Research Fund	83,956	4,453	–	–	**88,409**
John & Pat Warham Scholarship Fund	134,599	–	(38,974)	(3,897)	**91,728**
Brenda & Tony Gibbs Bequest	85,894	–	(1,675)	(167)	**84,052**
Small grants	10,000	–	(2,998)	–	**7,002**
	314,449	4,453	(43,647)	(4,064)	**271,191**

Restricted funds include the Research Fund. This includes the income arising from investments held in the Endowment Fund.

The John & Pat Warham Scholarship Fund is to be used for research on Sphenisciform and Procellariiform seabirds and the income arising from investments.

The Brenda and Tony Gibbs Bequest is to be used for research on tracking and migration studies including the use of new technologies.

The transfer to the unrestricted fund represents an administration fee of 10% of the grants awarded from the John and Pat Warham Scholarship Fund and the Brenda and Tony Gibbs Bequest.

The small grants fund represents a donation that was received in 2022 that is to be used to award small grants in future years.

BRITISH ORNITHOLOGISTS' UNION

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

21 Endowment funds

Endowment funds represent assets which must be held permanently by the charity. Income arising on the endowment funds can be used in accordance with the objects of the charity and is included as restricted income. Any capital gains or losses arising on the assets form part of the fund.

		Movement in funds (2022)				
	Balance at 1 Jan 2022	Income	Expenditure	Transfers	Revaluations gains and losses	Balance at 31 Dec 2022
	£	£	£	£	£	£
L & MT Fund	128,596	1,472	–	–	(8,372)	121,696
Research Fund	11,236	–	–	–	(626)	10,610
Hutt Legacy	22,611	–	–	–	(1,259)	21,352
	162,443	1,426	–	–	(10,257)	153,658

		Movement in funds (2023)				
	Balance at 1 Jan 2023	**Income**	**Expenditure**	**Transfers**	**Revaluations gains and losses**	**Balance at 31 Dec 2023**
	£	£	£	£	£	£
L & MT Fund	121,696	1,656	–	–	2,676	126,028
Research Fund	10,610	–	–	–	(249)	10,361
Hutt Legacy	21,352	–	–	–	(502)	20,850
	153,658	1,656	–	–	(1,925)	157,239

The Landsborough and Mary Thomson Research Fund (L & MT Fund) and the Hutt Legacy represent funds set up by individual donors. The purpose of the L&MT Fund was to fund research. Income arising from the capital held in investments within Endowment Funds is credited to the restricted Research Fund. The Research Fund represents permanent capital, the income from which is transferred to the fund of the same name in Restricted Funds to be spent solely on research activities (e.g. grants and bursaries). The Hutt Legacy is intended for the general purposes of the Union and interest arising from this item is credited to General Unrestricted Funds which itself represents investments and net assets which are held for the daily running and maintenance of the charity.

22 Analysis of net assets between funds

	Unrestricted funds	**Restricted funds**	**2023 Endowment funds**	**Total 2023**
Fund balances at 31 December 2023 are represented by:	£	£	£	£
Investments	250,443	–	157,239	407,682
Current assets/(liabilities)	391,919	271,191	–	663,110
	642,362	271,191	157,239	1,070,792

BRITISH ORNITHOLOGISTS' UNION

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

22 Analysis of net assets between funds (continued)

	2022			
	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Endowment funds	Total 2022
Fund balances at 31 December 2022 are represented by:	£	£	£	**£**
Investments	248,052	117,997	153,658	**519,707**
Current assets/(liabilities)	357,773	196,452	–	**554,225**
	605,825	314,449	153,658	**1,073,932**

23 Financial commitments, guarantees and contingent liabilities

During the year the charity awarded a grant of £20,000 from the Brenda & Tony Gibbs Bequest of which no payments had been made by the year end. The project is due to run from January 2024 to July 2025.

During 2022 the charity awarded the final John and Pat Warham Studentship grant of £85,000 of which £54,253 is still to be paid to the recipient. This Studentship is due to run from 2023 to 2027.

24 Related party transactions

There were no disclosable related party transactions during the year (2022 - none).

Remuneration of key management personnel

The remuneration of key management personnel including employer pension contributions is as follows:

	2023	2022
	£	£
Aggregate compensation	**48,570**	56,154

Transactions with related parties

During the year payments of £4,796 (2022 - £1,842) were made to Professor J Gill, wife of G Appleton, a Trustee. This was for IBIS editorial services and the transactions were on an arms length basis.

Independent auditor's report

to the members of the British Ornithologists' Union for the year ended 31 December 2023

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of British Ornithologists' Union (the 'charity') for the year ended 31 December 2023 which comprise the statement of financial activities, the balance sheet and the notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including Financial Reporting Standard 102 The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

In our opinion, the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the charity's affairs as at 31 December 2023 and of its incoming resources and application of resources, for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011, the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005 and regulation 8 of the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006 (as amended).

Basis for opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs (UK)) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of our report. We are independent of the charity in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the UK, including the FRC's Ethical Standard, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Conclusions relating to going concern

In auditing the financial statements, we have concluded that the Trustees' use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate.

Based on the work we have performed, we have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on the charity's ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve months from when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

Our responsibilities and the responsibilities of the Members of Council with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this report.

Other information

The other information comprises the information included in the annual report other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. The Members of Council are responsible for the other information contained within the annual report. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon. Our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our

knowledge obtained in the course of the audit, or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether this gives rise to a material misstatement in the financial statements themselves. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact.

We have nothing to report in this regard.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters in relation to which the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 and the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006 (as amended) require us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- the information given in the financial statements is inconsistent in any material respect with the Trustees' report; or
- sufficient and proper accounting records have not been kept; or
- the financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records; or
- we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit.

Responsibilities of Members of Council

As explained more fully in the statement of Trustees' responsibilities, the Members of Council are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the Members of Council determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error. In preparing the financial statements, the Members of Council are responsible for assessing the charity's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the Members of Council either intend to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

We have been appointed as auditor under section 144 of the Charities Act 2011 and section 44(1)(c) of the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005 and report in accordance with the Acts and relevant regulations made or having effect thereunder.

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

A further description of our responsibilities is available on the Financial Reporting Council's website at: https://www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities. This description forms part of our auditor's report.

Extent to which the audit was considered capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud

Irregularities, including fraud, are instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations. We design procedures in line with our responsibilities, outlined above and on the Financial Reporting Council's website, to detect material misstatements in respect of irregularities, including fraud.

We obtain and update our understanding of the entity, its activities, its control environment, and likely future developments, including in relation to the legal and regulatory framework applicable and how the entity is complying with that framework. Based on this understanding, we identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion. This includes consideration of the risk of acts by the entity that were contrary to applicable laws and regulations, including fraud.

In response to the risk of irregularities and non-compliance with laws and regulations, including fraud, we designed procedures which included:

- Enquiry of management and those charged with governance around actual and potential litigation and claims as well as actual, suspected and alleged fraud;
- Reviewing minutes of meetings of those charged with governance;
- Assessing the extent of compliance with the laws and regulations considered to have a direct material effect on the financial statements or the operations of the entity through enquiry and inspection;
- Reviewing financial statement disclosures and testing to supporting documentation to assess compliance with applicable laws and regulations;
- Performing audit work over the risk of management bias and override of controls, including testing of journal entries and other adjustments for appropriateness, evaluating the business rationale of significant transactions outside the normal course of business and reviewing accounting estimates for indicators of potential bias.

Because of the inherent limitations of an audit, there is a risk that we will not detect all irregularities, including those leading to a material misstatement in the financial statements or non-compliance with regulation. This risk increases the more that compliance with a law or regulation is removed from the events and transactions reflected in the financial statements, as we will be less likely to become aware of instances of non-compliance. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.

Other matters

Your attention is drawn to the fact that the charity has prepared financial statements in accordance with "Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102)" (as amended) in preference to the Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice issued on 1 April 2005 which is referred to in the extant regulations but has now been withdrawn.

This has been done in order for the financial statements to provide a true and fair view in accordance with current Generally Accepted Accounting Practice.

Use of this report

This report is made solely to the charity's trustees, as a body, in accordance with part 4 of the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 and regulation 10 of the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to

the charity's trustees those matters we are required to state to them in an auditors' report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the charity and the charity's trustees as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.



Tracey Richardson BSc (Hons) FCA (Senior Statutory Auditor) 11 March 2023
Chartered Accountants
Statutory Auditor
Westpoint
Lynch Wood
Peterborough
Cambridgeshire
United Kingdom
PE2 6FZ

Azets Audit Services is eligible for appointment as auditor of the charity by virtue of its eligibility for appointment as auditor of a company under section 1212 of the Companies Act 2006.

BRITISH ORNITHOLOGISTS' UNION

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

Current financial year	**Notes**	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Endowment funds £	**Total 2023 £**	Total 2022 £
Income from:						
Donations and legacies	**3**	38,052	–	–	**38,052**	47,967
Charitable activities	**4**	149,262	–	–	**149,262**	129,240
Investments	**5**	28,492	4,453	1,656	**34,601**	25,116
Total income and endowments		215,806	4,453	1,656	**221,915**	202,323
Expenditure on:						
Raising funds	**6**	51,869	–	–	**51,869**	57,738
Charitable activities	**7**	125,561	43,647	–	**169,208**	196,029
Total expenditure		177,430	43,647	–	**221,077**	253,767
Net gains/(losses) on investments	**12**	(5,903)	–	1,925)	**(3,978)**	(49,901)
Net incoming/(outgoing) resources before transfers		32,473	(39,194)	3,581	**(3,140)**	(101,345)
Gross transfers between funds		4,064	(4,064)	–	–	–
Net movement in funds		36,537	(43,258)	3,581	**(3,140)**	(101,345)
Fund balances at 1 January 2023		605,825	314,449	153,658	**1,073,932**	1,175,277
Fund balances at 31 December 2023		642,362	271,191	157,239	**1,070,792**	1,073,932

The statement of financial activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year.

All income and expenditure is derived from continuing activities.

BRITISH ORNITHOLOGISTS' UNION

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES (CONTINUED)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

Prior financial year (2022)	**Notes**	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Endowment funds £	**Total 2022 £**
Income from:					
Donations and legacies	**3**	37,967	10,000	–	**47,967**
Charitable activities	**4**	129,240	–	–	**129,240**
Investments	**5**	19,321	4,323	1,472	**25,116**
Total income and endowments		186,528	14,323	1,472	**202,323**
Expenditure on:					
Raising funds	**6**	57,738	–	–	**57,738**
Charitable activities	**7**	139,690	56,339	–	**196,029**
Total expenditure		197,428	56,339	–	**253,767**
Net gains/(losses) on investments	**12**	(39,644)	–	(10,257)	**(49,901)**
Net incoming/(outgoing) resources before transfers		(50,544)	(42,016)	(8,785)	(101,345)
Gross transfers between funds		5,633	(5,633)	–	–
Net movement in funds		(44,911)	(47,649)	(8,785)	(101,345)
Fund balances at 1 January 2022		650,736	362,098	162,443	1,175,277
Fund balances at 31 December 2022		605,825	314,449	153,658	1,073,932

BRITISH ORNITHOLOGISTS' UNION

BALANCE SHEET
AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2023

		2023		2022	
Fixed assets	**Notes**	**£**	**£**	£	£
Investments	**14**		407,682		519,707
Current assets					
Debtors	**16**	**55,724**		47,702	
Cash at bank and in hand		**648,913**		545,662	
		704,637		593,364	
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	**17**	**(41,527)**		(39,139)	
Net current assets			**663,110**		554,225
Total assets less current liabilities			**1,070,792**		1,073,932
Capital funds					
Endowment funds - general					
General endowment funds	**21**		**157,239**		153,658
Income funds					
Restricted funds	20		**271,191**		314,449
Unrestricted funds			**642,362**		605,825
			1,070,792		1,073,932

The accounts were approved by the Members of Council on 6 March 2024.

Graeme Buchanan

Dr Graeme Buchanan President

BRITISH ORNITHOLOGISTS' UNION

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

1 Accounting policies

Charity information

The British Ornithologists' Union is a registered charity in England and Wales (249877) and Scotland (SC044850) and is unincorporated.

The charity is a public benefit company.

The charity's place of business is:
PO Box 79, Pembroke, SA72 9AX, United Kingdom.

1.1 Accounting convention

The accounts have been prepared in accordance with the charity's trust deed, the Charities Act 2011, the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005, the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006 (as amended) and "Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102)" (as amended for accounting periods commencing from 1 January 2016). The charity is a Public Benefit Entity as defined by FRS 102.

The charity has taken advantage of the provisions in the SORP for charities applying FRS 102 Update Bulletin 1 not to prepare a Statement of Cash Flows.

The financial statements have departed from the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 only to the extent required to provide a true and fair view. This departure has involved following the Statement of Recommended Practice for charities applying FRS 102 rather than the version of the Statement of Recommended Practice which is referred to in the Regulations but which has since been withdrawn.

The financial statements are prepared in sterling, which is the functional currency of the charity. Monetary amounts in these financial statements are rounded to the nearest £.

The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention, modified to include the revaluation of certain financial instruments at fair value. The principal accounting policies adopted are set out below.

1.2 Going concern

At the time of approving the financial statements, the Members of Council have a reasonable expectation that the charity has adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future. Thus the Members of Council continue to adopt the going concern basis of accounting in preparing the financial statements.

1.3 Charitable funds

Unrestricted funds are available for use at the discretion of the Members of Council in furtherance of their charitable objectives unless the funds have been designated for other purposes.

Designated funds are unrestricted funds earmarked by the trustees for particular future project or commitment.

Restricted funds are subjected to restrictions on their expenditure declared by the donor or through the terms of an appeal, and fall into one of two sub-classes: restricted income funds or endowment funds.

Endowment funds are subject to specific conditions by donors that the capital must be maintained by the charity.

BRITISH ORNITHOLOGISTS' UNION

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

1 Accounting policies (continued)

1.4 Income

All incoming resources are included in the statement of financial activities when entitlement has passed to the charity; it is probable that the economic benefits associated with the transaction will flow to the charity and the amount can be reliably measured. The following specific policies are applied to particular categories of income:

- Income from donations or grants is recognised when there is evidence of entitlement to the gift, receipt is probable and its amount can be measured reliably.
- Legacy income is recognised when receipt is probable and entitlement is established.
- Income from donated goods is measured at the fair value of the goods unless this is impractical to measure reliably, in which case the value is derived from the cost to the donor or the estimated resale value. Donated facilities and services are recognised in the accounts when received if the value can be reliably measured. No amounts are included for the contribution of general volunteers.
- Income from contracts for the supply of services is recognised with the delivery of the contracted service. This is classified as unrestricted funds unless there is a contractual requirement for it to be spent on a particular purpose and returned if unspent, in which case it may be regarded as restricted.

1.5 Expenditure

Expenditure is recognised on an accruals basis as a liability is incurred. Expenditure includes any VAT which cannot be fully recovered, and is classified under headings of the statement of financial activities to which it relates:

- Expenditure on raising funds includes the costs of all fundraising activities, events, non-charitable trading activities, and the sale of donated goods.
- Expenditure on charitable activities includes all costs incurred by a charity in undertaking activities that further its charitable aims for the benefit of its beneficiaries, including those support costs and costs relating to the governance of the charity apportioned to charitable activities.
- Other expenditure includes all expenditure that is neither related to raising funds for the charity nor part of its expenditure on charitable activities.

All costs are allocated to expenditure categories reflecting the use of the resource. Direct costs attributable to a single activity are allocated directly to that activity. Shared costs are apportioned between the activities they contribute to on a reasonable, justifiable and consistent basis.

BRITISH ORNITHOLOGISTS' UNION

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

1 Accounting policies (continued)

Overheads

Overhead costs are allocated to the relevant cost centres in the following proportions:

	Office costs	A F Langford remuneration	L Walker remuneration	S P Dudley remuneration
Conference costs	15%	7.5%	22.5%	22.5%
Management and administration	45%	47.5%	60%	60%
IBIS publishing costs	37.5%	45%	15%	15%
Research costs	2.5%	–	2.5%	2.5%
	100%	100%	100%	100%

These proportions were decided upon by the trustees, who believe that they represent a fair reflection of the resources expended by the charity on each activity.

1.6 Fixed asset investments

Unlisted equity investments are initially recorded at cost, and subsequently measured at fair value. If fair value cannot be reliably measured, assets are measured at cost less impairment.

Listed investments are measured at fair value with changes in fair value being recognised in income or expenditure.

1.7 Cash and cash equivalents

Cash and cash equivalents include cash in hand, deposits held at call with banks, other short-term liquid investments with original maturities of three months or less, and bank overdrafts. Bank overdrafts are shown within borrowings in current liabilities.

1.8 Financial instruments

The charity has elected to apply the provisions of Section 11 'Basic Financial Instruments' and Section 12 'Other Financial Instruments Issues' of FRS 102 to all of its financial instruments.

Financial instruments are recognised in the charity's balance sheet when the charity becomes party to the contractual provisions of the instrument.

Financial assets and liabilities are offset, with the net amounts presented in the financial statements, when there is a legally enforceable right to set off the recognised amounts and there is an intention to settle on a net basis or to realise the asset and settle the liability simultaneously.

Basic financial assets

Basic financial assets, which include debtors and cash and bank balances, are initially measured at transaction price including transaction costs and are subsequently carried at amortised cost using the effective interest method unless the arrangement constitutes a financing transaction, where the transaction is measured at the present value of the future receipts discounted at a market rate of interest. Financial assets classified as receivable within one year are not amortised.

BRITISH ORNITHOLOGISTS' UNION

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

1 Accounting policies (continued)

Basic financial liabilities

Basic financial liabilities, including creditors and bank loans are initially recognised at transaction price unless the arrangement constitutes a financing transaction, where the debt instrument is measured at the present value of the future payments discounted at a market rate of interest. Financial liabilities classified as payable within one year are not amortised.

Debt instruments are subsequently carried at amortised cost, using the effective interest rate method.

Trade creditors are obligations to pay for goods or services that have been acquired in the ordinary course of operations from suppliers. Amounts payable are classified as current liabilities if payment is due within one year or less. If not, they are presented as non-current liabilities. Trade creditors are recognised initially at transaction price and subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method.

Derecognition of financial liabilities

Financial liabilities are derecognised when the charity's contractual obligations expire or are discharged or cancelled.

1.9 Employee benefits

The cost of any unused holiday entitlement is recognised in the period in which the employee's services are received.

Termination benefits are recognised immediately as an expense when the charity is demonstrably committed to terminate the employment of an employee or to provide termination benefits.

2 Critical accounting estimates and judgements

In the application of the charity's accounting policies, the Members of Council are required to make judgements, estimates and assumptions about the carrying amount of assets and liabilities that are not readily apparent from other sources. The estimates and associated assumptions are based on historical experience and other factors that are considered to be relevant. Actual results may differ from these estimates.

The estimates and underlying assumptions are reviewed on an ongoing basis. Revisions to accounting estimates are recognised in the period in which the estimate is revised where the revision affects only that period, or in the period of the revision and future periods where the revision affects both current and future periods.

3 Donations and legacies	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	**2023**	2022
	£	£	**£**	£
Donations and gifts	1,395	-	**1,395**	10,738
Subscriptions	36,657	-	**36,657**	37,229

BRITISH ORNITHOLOGISTS' UNION

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

4 Charitable activities

	2023	2022
	£	£
Publication income – IBIS	**118,906**	108,752
Other publication income	**–**	71
Conference income	**30,356**	20,417
	149,262	129,240

5 Investments

	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Endowment funds general	**Total 2023**	Total 2022
	£	£	£	**£**	£
Income from listed investments	17,749	4,453	1,656	**23,858**	22,894
Interest receivable	10,743	–	–	**10,743**	2,222
	28,492	4,453	1,656	**34,601**	25,116
For the year ended 31 December 2022	19,321	4,323	1,472		25,116

6 Raising funds

	2023	2022
Fundraising and publicity	**£**	£
Management costs – purchases	**4,637**	5,774
Management costs – wages and salaries	**42,911**	47,070
Management costs – employer's NIC	**–**	1,244
Management costs – pension costs	**4,321**	3,650
Fundraising and publicity	**51,869**	57,738

7 Charitable activities

	2023	2022
	£	£
Research – administration costs	**1,574**	1,861
Publication costs – IBIS	**60,097**	59,281
Conference costs	**32,166**	46,723
	93,837	107,865
Grant and bursary funding of activities (see note 8)	**58,686**	71,356
Share of governance costs (see note 9)	**16,685**	16,808
	169,208	196,029

BRITISH ORNITHOLOGISTS' UNION

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

8 Grants and bursaries payable

	2023	2022
	£	£
Awards payable (nine in 2022):		
Claire Branston (Post-doctoral Research Assistant, University of Glasgow, UK)	**1,498**	-
Andrea Estandia (PhD student, Edward Grey Institute of Field Ornithology, UK)	**1,950**	-
Katarzyna Janas (Assistant Professor (adjunct), Polish Academy of Sciences, Poland)	**1,500**	-
Rosanne José Michielsen (PhD student, Polish Academy of Sciences, Poland)	**2,000**	-
Gabriel López Segoviano (Postdoc, Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, Mexico)	**1,915**	-
Enriqueta Velarde (Senior Researcher, Universidad Veracruzana, Mexico)	**1,974**	-
Akshay Bharadwaj (Masters student, Indian Institute of Science, India)	**2,500**	-
Federico De Pascalis (Postdoctoral Associate, ISPRA, Italy)	**1,675**	-
Michał Jezierski (PhD student, University of Oxford, UK)	-	1,500
Verónica Méndez Aragón (Academic Director, University Centre of the Westfjords, Iceland)	-	1,500
Kristen Wacker (PhD candidate, University of Michigan, US)	-	2,000
Klara K. Nordén (PhD student, Princeton University, US)	-	1,885
Teresa Pegan (PhD student, University of Michigan, US)	-	1,683
Anap Isphaku Afan (Research Associate, A P Leventis, Nigeria)	-	2,449
Roman Alberto Ruggera (Profesor Adjunto, Instituto de Ecorregiones Andinas, Argentina)	-	1,500
Chima Josiah Nwaoga (Junior Research Fellow, University of Groningen, Netherlands)	-	2,500
Olufemi Olubodun (PhD student, FitzPatrick Institute of African Ornithology, South Africa)	-	1,955
Conference attendance awards	**4,700**	-
Grants to institutions (three in 2022):		
University of Tasmania (John & Pat Warham Studentship - Paige Green)	-	9,289
McGill University (John & Pat Warham Studentship - Émile Brisson-Curadeau)	**8,669**	25,095
Monash University (John & Pat Warham Studentship - Dr Rohan Clarke)	**30,747**	-
University of East Anglia, UK (John & Pat Warham Studentship – Kirsty Franklin)	(442)	-
Lancaster University (Brenda and Tony Gibbs Award - Stuart Sharp)	-	20,000
	58,686	71,356

9 Support and governance costs

	Support costs	Governance costs	2023	2022
	£	£	**£**	£
Audit fees	–	5,580	**5,580**	5,220
Legal and professional	–	1,024	**1,024**	2,585
Accountancy	–	3,418	**3,418**	3,036
Costs of trustees' and committee meetings	–	3,112	**3,112**	1,217
Support Officers honoraria	–	3,551	**3,551**	4,750
	–	16,685	**16,685**	16,808
Analysed between				
Charitable activities	–	16,685	**16,685**	16,808

Governance costs includes payments to the auditors of £5,580 (2022 - £5,220) for audit fees and £3,418 (2022 - £3,036) for other services.

BRITISH ORNITHOLOGISTS' UNION

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

10 Members of Council

None of the Members of Council (or any persons connected with them) received any remuneration or benefits from the charity during the year.

During the year two of the Members of Council were reimbursed expenses totalling £417 (2022 - no members were reimbursed expenses). These expenses represent travelling costs incurred by the Members of Council in the performance of their duties.

11 Employees

Number of employees	**2023**	2022
The average monthly number employees during the year was:	**2**	2

Employment costs	**2023**	2022
	£	£
Wages and salaries	**78,231**	84,488
Social security costs	**-**	2,222
Other pension costs	**7,983**	6,809
	86,214	93,519

No employee received employee benefits of more than £60,000 during the year (2022 – nil).

12 Net gains/(losses) on investments

	Unrestricted funds	**Endowment funds**	**2023 Total**	Unrestricted funds	Endowment funds general	2022 Total
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Revaluation of investments	11,771	1,925	13,696	(39,644)	(10,257)	(49,901)
Gain/(loss) on sale of investments	(17,674)	–	(17,674)	–	–	–
	(5,903)	1,925	(3,978)	(39,644)	(10,257)	(49,901)

13 Taxation

The charity is exempt from tax on income and gains falling within section 505 of the Taxes Act 1988 or section 252 of the Taxation of Chargeable Gains Act 1992 to the extent that these are applied to its charitable objects.

14 Fixed asset investments

	Listed investments
Cost or valuation	**£**
At 1 January 2023	519,707
Additions	4,278
Valuation changes	13,697
Disposals	(130,000)
At 31 December 2023	407,682
Carrying amount	
At 31 December 2023	407,682
At 31 December 2022	519,707

BRITISH ORNITHOLOGISTS' UNION

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

15	**Financial instruments**	**2023**	2022
	Carrying amount of financial assets	**£**	£
	Trade debtors	**47,353**	45,676
	Other debtors	**1,118**	766
	Bank and cash	**648,913**	545,662
	Measured at cost	**697,384**	592,104
	Listed investments	**407,682**	519,707
	Measured at market value	**407,682**	519,707
	Carrying amount of financial liabilities		
	Other taxation and social security	**683**	604
	Accruals	**17,982**	14,141
	Measured at cost	**18,665**	14,745

16	**Debtors**	**2023**	2022
		£	£
	Amounts falling due within one year:		
	Trade debtors	**47,353**	**45,676**
	Other debtors	**1,118**	766
	Prepayments and accrued income	**7,253**	1,260
		55,724	47,702

17	**Creditors**	**Notes**	**2023**	2022
			£	£
	Amounts falling due within one year:			
	Other taxation and social security		**683**	**604**
	Deferred income	**18**	**22,862**	24,394
	Accruals		**17,982**	14,141
			41,527	39,139

BRITISH ORNITHOLOGISTS' UNION

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

18 Deferred income

	2023	2022
	£	£
Other deferred income	**22,862**	24,394

Deferred income relates to subscriptions received in advance of £20,649 (2022 - £19,698) and income received in advance for conferences in future years of £2,213 (2022 - £4,696).

19 Pensions and other post-retirement benefits

Defined contribution pension plans

Contributions to defined contribution plans are recognised as an expense in the period in which the related service is provided.

The charge to profit or loss in respect of defined contribution plans was £7,983 (2022 - £6,809).

20 Restricted funds

The income funds of the charity include restricted funds comprising the following unexpended balances of donations and grants held on trust for specific purposes:

		Movement in funds (2022)			
	Balance at 1 Jan 2022	Income	Expenditure	Transfers	Balance at 31 Dec 2022
	£	£	£	£	£
Research Fund	79,633	4,323	–	–	83,956
John & Pat Warham Scholarship Fund	172,421	–	(34,384)	(3,438)	134,599
Brenda & Tony Gibbs Bequest	110,044	–	(21,955)	(2,195)	85,894
Small grants	–	10,000	–	–	10,000
	362,098	14,323	(56,339)	(5,633)	314,449

		Movement in funds (2023)			
	Balance at 1 Jan 2023	**Income**	**Expenditure**	**Transfers**	**Balance at 31 Dec 2023**
	£	£	£	£	**£**
Research Fund	83,956	4,453	–	–	**88,409**
John & Pat Warham Scholarship Fund	134,599	–	(38,974)	(3,897)	**91,728**
Brenda & Tony Gibbs Bequest	85,894	–	(1,675)	(167)	**84,052**
Small grants	10,000	–	(2,998)	–	**7,002**
	314,449	4,453	(43,647)	(4,064)	**271,191**

Restricted funds include the Research Fund. This includes the income arising from investments held in the Endowment Fund.

The John & Pat Warham Scholarship Fund is to be used for research on Sphenisciform and Procellariiform seabirds and the income arising from investments.

The Brenda and Tony Gibbs Bequest is to be used for research on tracking and migration studies including the use of new technologies.

The transfer to the unrestricted fund represents an administration fee of 10% of the grants awarded from the John and Pat Warham Scholarship Fund and the Brenda and Tony Gibbs Bequest.

The small grants fund represents a donation that was received in 2022 that is to be used to award small grants in future years.

BRITISH ORNITHOLOGISTS' UNION

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

21 Endowment funds

Endowment funds represent assets which must be held permanently by the charity. Income arising on the endowment funds can be used in accordance with the objects of the charity and is included as restricted income. Any capital gains or losses arising on the assets form part of the fund.

		Movement in funds (2022)				
	Balance at 1 Jan 2022	Income	Expenditure	Transfers	Revaluations gains and losses	Balance at 31 Dec 2022
	£	£	£	£	£	£
L & MT Fund	128,596	1,472	–	–	(8,372)	121,696
Research Fund	11,236	–	–	–	(626)	10,610
Hutt Legacy	22,611	–	–	–	(1,259)	21,352
	162,443	1,426	–	–	(10,257)	153,658

		Movement in funds (2023)				
	Balance at 1 Jan 2023	**Income**	**Expenditure**	**Transfers**	**Revaluations gains and losses**	**Balance at 31 Dec 2023**
	£	£	£	£	£	£
L & MT Fund	121,696	1,656	–	–	2,676	126,028
Research Fund	10,610	–	–	–	(249)	10,361
Hutt Legacy	21,352	–	–	–	(502)	20,850
	153,658	1,656	–	–	(1,925)	157,239

The Landsborough and Mary Thomson Research Fund (L & MT Fund) and the Hutt Legacy represent funds set up by individual donors. The purpose of the L&MT Fund was to fund research. Income arising from the capital held in investments within Endowment Funds is credited to the restricted Research Fund. The Research Fund represents permanent capital, the income from which is transferred to the fund of the same name in Restricted Funds to be spent solely on research activities (e.g. grants and bursaries). The Hutt Legacy is intended for the general purposes of the Union and interest arising from this item is credited to General Unrestricted Funds which itself represents investments and net assets which are held for the daily running and maintenance of the charity.

22 Analysis of net assets between funds

	Unrestricted funds	**Restricted funds**	**2023 Endowment funds**	**Total 2023**
Fund balances at 31 December 2023 are represented by:	£	£	£	£
Investments	250,443	–	157,239	407,682
Current assets/(liabilities)	391,919	271,191	–	663,110
	642,362	271,191	157,239	1,070,792

BRITISH ORNITHOLOGISTS' UNION

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

22 Analysis of net assets between funds (continued)

	2022			
	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Endowment funds	Total 2022
Fund balances at 31 December 2022 are represented by:	£	£	£	**£**
Investments	248,052	117,997	153,658	**519,707**
Current assets/(liabilities)	357,773	196,452	–	**554,225**
	605,825	314,449	153,658	**1,073,932**

23 Financial commitments, guarantees and contingent liabilities

During the year the charity awarded a grant of £20,000 from the Brenda & Tony Gibbs Bequest of which no payments had been made by the year end. The project is due to run from January 2024 to July 2025.

During 2022 the charity awarded the final John and Pat Warham Studentship grant of £85,000 of which £54,253 is still to be paid to the recipient. This Studentship is due to run from 2023 to 2027.

24 Related party transactions

There were no disclosable related party transactions during the year (2022 - none).

Remuneration of key management personnel

The remuneration of key management personnel including employer pension contributions is as follows:

	2023	2022
	£	£
Aggregate compensation	**48,570**	56,154

Transactions with related parties

During the year payments of £4,796 (2022 - £1,842) were made to Professor J Gill, wife of G Appleton, a Trustee. This was for IBIS editorial services and the transactions were on an arms length basis.

THE BRITISH ORNITHOLOGISTS' UNION

England & Wales - Charity number 249877

Accounts

British Ornithologists' Union

advancing ornithithology

Annual Report & Accounts

birds | people | science



2022

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President's statement

Prof Juliet Vickery



This is my fourth and final 'President's statement', rounding off a term of office marked by change. First came Covid, which impacted us all, and then Steve Dudley's retirement as Chief Operations Officer after 25 years. I am extremely grateful to those who helped in coping with, planning and supporting these changes. In 2020 we ran our first virtual conference; we've now successfully delivered five. Each has showcased great science by great scientists, through pre-recorded talks, interactive question-times and parallel Twitter presentations, supported by a highly skilled team behind the scenes. Virtual conferences are here to stay and I am confident BOU's will remain some of the best.

Steve Dudley's drive and enthusiasm as COO transformed the BOU. His expert guidance and support of his successor, Dr Leila Walker, has been central to a seamless transition, alongside ongoing support from Journal and Office Manager, Angela Langford. Particular thanks go to BOU Treasurer, Graham Appleton, whose advice and expertise has been invaluable during my presidency.

This year has not been without its challenges. One conference was cancelled after a last-minute venue closure, and with it our hoped-for return to a face-to-face meetings. Conference attendance is slightly down, perhaps reflecting Zoom fatigue and the increased cost of living, and there has been a degree of unrest on Twitter, which has been the main plank of our social media work. The fact that the BOU membership rose during 2022, in the face of all this uncertainty, is evidence that we are getting a lot of things right!

The ornithological community's ability to generate new and exciting science has remained a wonderful constant throughout my presidency. This is evident in the breadth of research we were able to fund, through our grants, and the quality of papers published in our flagship journal, IBIS. In 2022, IBIS articles received more online attention than any other ornithology journal and six IBIS papers appear among the 10 highest Altmetric-scoring ornithology papers of all time. We are enormously grateful to Dr Dominic McCafferty for all he has done as Editor in Chief, over five years and almost 1,500 manuscripts, and delighted that IBIS' future is in excellent hands, with Professor Jenny Gill taking on this important role. New and exciting scientific ideas are generated by diverse and engaged communities of scientists. The BOU continues to invest in exploring new ways to increase inclusivity and foster a sense of belong for all, particularly through an active Engagement Committee and our relatively new Awards Nominations Committee.

ADMINISTRATION DETAILS

BRITISH ORNITHOLOGISTS' UNION

Founded 1858

Registered as a Charity:

England and Wales, no. 249877

Scotland, no. SC044850

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Web: bou.org.uk / ibis.ac.uk

As at 31 December 2022

BOU Staff

Chief Operations Officer
Dr Leila K. Walker

Journal & Office Manager
Mrs Angela F. Langford

Council Officers

President	Prof Juliet Vickery
Vice Presidents	Prof Tony Fox
	Dr Richard Bradbury
Honorary Secretary	Dr Mark Eaton
Honorary Treasurer	Mr Graham F. Appleton

Ordinary Members of Council

Dr Sonya Clegg (Chair, Grants Committee), Dr Francis Daunt (Chair, Meetings Committee), Dr Mark Eddowes, Dr Tom Finch (Chair, Engagement Committee), Dr James Gilroy (Chair, Records Committee), Dr Cat Horswill, Dr Rosemarie Kentie (Chair, IBIS Management Committee), Dr Julie Miller, Dr Rosemary Trevelyan and Dr Lucy Wright (Chair, Awards Nominations Committee).

The opportunity to serve as BOU President has been rewarding and huge fun, supported as I was by dynamic and effective Council and committee members and talented Support Officers. I want to thank them all for giving their time and expertise to the BOU, amid busy lives, and making my term as President such a rich one personally and professionally. I would have welcomed fewer changes and challenges in my four years but they have certainly highlighted the resilience, adaptability and skill of the ornithological research community, a community I feel lucky to be part of.

Structure, Governance & Management

The British Ornithologists' Union is an unincorporated charity, no. 249877 (England & Wales) and SC044850 (Scotland).

The object of the BOU is the promotion of the science of ornithology. Its governing document is the Rules adopted at the Annual General Meeting in 2010, and last updated by Council in July 2020. Under the rules, the governing body, the Council of the Union, is responsible for the running of the Union's business, supported by its staff. Council may delegate functions to standing or ad hoc committees that report to Council. The Union's Council retains overall responsibility for matters so delegated.

The BOU has six standing committees: the Awards Nominations Committee, the Engagement Committee, the Grants Committee, the IBIS Management Committee, the Meetings Committee and the Records Committee.

Elected members of Council are Trustees of the charity. Members of Council are recruited from within the ornithological community. Where possible, Council members will have served on one or more of the BOU's standing committees prior to nomination for election to Council. Those standing for election to BOU Council as an incoming chair of a standing committee will have served for at least two years on the respective committee. On election, new Council members are provided with relevant Union documents to help familiarise them with current Union activities and to provide information on the duties and responsibilities of being a Trustee of the Union.

Council continually reviews the risks to which the Union is exposed and is satisfied that, as far as is practicable, it has taken appropriate steps to mitigate any risk.

The Union employs full-time staff who work from their respective home offices. Staff salaries are reviewed annually, as part of our staff appraisal process, conducted by the President and Honorary Secretary. Pay is normally adjusted in line with inflation (CPIH) and there is an option to award an unconsolidated performance-based bonus, in exceptional circumstances.

ADMINISTRATION DETAILS

CONT/.

Trustees

The following individuals served as Trustees of the charity at the time of Council approving this annual report and accounts:
Mr Graham F. Appleton, Dr Richard Bradbury, Dr Sonya Clegg, Dr Francis Daunt, Dr Mark Eaton, Dr Mark Eddowes, Dr Tom Finch, Prof Tony Fox, Dr James Gilroy, Dr Cat Horswill, Dr Rosemarie Kentie, Dr Julie Miller, Prof Juliet Vickery, Dr Rosie Trevelyan and Dr Lucy Wright.

The following individuals also served as Trustees of the charity for part of the year covered by these annual report and accounts:
Dr Helen Baker and Dr Emma Cunningham.

Editorial positions

At 31 December 2022 the following editorial positions were held:

IBIS Editor in Chief	Prof Jennifer Gill
IBIS Editors	Dr Rauri Bowie
	Dr Richard Fuller
	Prof Rebecca Kimball
	Dr Ruedi Nager
	Prof Jeremy Wilson
Blog Editor	Mr Connor Panter

Investment Trustees

The following individuals served as Investment Trustees for the Union during the period of this report and accounts:
Mr Nigel J. Crocker, Mr Richard Price and Mr Stephen J. Rumsey.

Objectives & Activities

Mission statement

The British Ornithologists' Union will promote understanding and conservation of the world's birds, advance ornithology within the scientific community and promote scientific ornithology to the wider birdwatching public. The BOU mission will be achieved by the following means:

- Publishing IBIS as a leading international journal of ornithological science.
- Organising a programme of meetings and conferences.
- Awarding grants and bursaries for ornithological research.
- Encouraging liaison between those actively engaged in ornithological research.
- Providing a representative body of the scientific community, able to provide ornithological information and advice to government and other policy makers.
- Maintaining and publishing the official list of birds recorded in Britain– The British List.

Council activities

At our AGM in April, held on Zoom, Dr Mark Eaton was elected as Honorary Secretary to replace Dr Helen Baker, and Dr Mark Eddowes was elected as an Ordinary member of Council to replace Dr Emma Cunningham.

We were delighted that Professor Nicholas B. Davies (University of Cambridge) accepted our invitation to deliver the 9th Alfred Newton Lecture at BOU2022 and accepted our award of the Godman Salvin Prize for his outstanding and distinguished contribution to ornithology (page 3).

Elected members of Council, as Trustees of the charity, confirm that they have referred to the guidance contained in the Charity Commission's general guidance on public benefit when reviewing objectives and activities.

Activities in Scotland

The BOU is an unincorporated charity registered in Scotland (SC044850). As well as having members in Scotland, at the time of this report, two of our Trustees, Dr Francis Daunt and Dr Julie Miller, and two of our journal editors, Dr Rudolf Nager and Prof Jeremy Wilson, also resided there.

ADMINISTRATION DETAILS

CONT/.

Bankers

The Union holds accounts with the following banks:

CAF Bank Ltd
25 Kings Hill, West Malling, Kent ME19 4JQ

Natwest Bank plc
PO Box 6037, Brompton Road, London SW13 1XJ

Solicitor

The Union's solicitors are:
Laytons
Ranger House, Walnut Tree Close, Guildford, Surrey GU1 4UL

Accountant & Auditor

The Union's accountant and auditor are:
Azets Audit Services
Ruthlyn House, 90 Lincoln Road, Peterborough PE1 2SP

Achievements & Performance

Reports on our activities from the BOU Office and Standing Committees

The BOU Office

Staff

During the year, the BOU employed three home-based staff members: Steve Dudley (Chief Operations Officer, to 27 July), Angela Langford (Journal & Office Manager) and Leila Walker (Chief Operations Officer, from 30 May). The outgoing and incoming COOs overlapped in the role for two months (30 May – 27 July), with Steve Dudley being retained on a 4-hour / week contract for the remainder of the year (and until 31 March 2023).

Office duties

The BOU Office is responsible for the effective running of the BOU, managed by the Chief Operations Officer and overseen by Council and the Union's standing committees.

The BOU Office's key responsibilities are:

- undertake the day to day running of the BOU;
- to support BOU Council and its committees, implementing much of the work arising from them, specifically;
  - working with the IBIS Management Committee, manage non-editorial, business and marketing of the Union's journal, IBIS;
  - working with the Meetings Committee, organise BOU conferences and meetings;
  - working with the Engagement Committee, develop and deliver engagement initiatives including equality and diversity items;
  - working with the Grants Committee, manage the Union's Small Grants and Career Development Bursary schemes, the John & Pat Warham Studentships and the Brenda & Tony Gibbs Awards;
  - working with the Records Committee, manage the British List and associated areas;
  - working with the Awards Nominations Committee to develop and deliver changes to our nominations processes and awards criteria;
- working with the Honorary Treasurer, maintain accounts and budgets and the preparation of annual accounts and prepare annual forecasts;
- working with the IBIS Editorial Team
  - oversee and manage the manuscript process and flow for IBIS;
  - oversee marketing of the journal;
- to oversee the business and contractual sides of IBIS;
- to service the BOU membership;
- to develop and manage the BOU's web content;
- to develop and manage the BOU's social media activity;
- to undertake routine administration;

GODMAN SALVIN PRIZE & ALFRED NEWTON LECTURE



Prof Nick Davies was presented with the Godman Salvin Prize at our annual conference in April, alongside his delivery of the 9th Alfred Newton Lecture.

The Godman Salvin Prize recognizes Nick's outstanding academic career in science, including his pivotal role in developing the field of behavioural ecology; his superb skill as an educator, communicator and naturalist; and his detailed studies of British birds like Pied Wagtails, Dunnocks and Common Cuckoos.

Nick's Alfred Newton Lecture, entitled *Cuckoos and curious naturalists,* paid tribute to past curious naturalists whose field observations paved the way for current experimental studies.

For the full citation see IBIS 164: 858-859 doi: 10.1111/ibi.13057.

The Godman Salvin Prize is the Union's highest scientific award and recognises an individual's outstanding contribution to ornithology.

- to manage BOU sales, stock and storage facility;
- to handle general enquiries, press and publicity.

In addition to working with the Union's various committees (see individual committee reports below) the BOU Office undertook the activities outlined below.

Website

BOU.ORG.UK

2022 was a relatively quiet year, in terms of website development, as we reaped the benefits of the hard work that had previously gone in to developing our new-look website and associated member area. Some work was undertaken during the year to refine MemberPress functionality and this is now working well. The website continues to be a fundamental part of our wider communication and promotion strategy, providing the static content for IBIS, membership, conferences, and grants and awards, that we link to from social media and other online promotion.

Our key website metrics showed some encouraging increases when compared with 2021, with an 8.7% increase in the number of overall website visitors, an 8.0% increase in the number of new visitors and a 0.6% increase in the total number of page views. This minimal change in the total number of page views is reflected in the page views that different sections of the website received, with limited fluctuation compared to 2021: The British List (-3%), conferences (-1%), funding (-4%), IBIS (-1%) and the blog (+22%).

As a global society, it is encouraging that visitors to our website from outside the UK continue to be very well represented: 64% of all users in 2022 (66% in 2021).

Conferences

BOU.ORG.UK/BOU-CONFERENCES/

See also Meetings Committee (page 16).

We had hoped that 2022 would be the year in which we returned (in part) to in-person conferences, but this was unfortunately not to be. Our conference schedule continued to feel the effects of Covid-19, with the associated unpredictability of conference attendance seeing our annual conference switch, in late 2021, from the planned in-person format to Zoom. Our planned in-person autumn conference, on the theme of 'Birds as Individuals', also appeared to suffer from the effects of post-pandemic uncertainty, with lower-than-hoped-for registration numbers, although it's likely a number of factors were at play. However, having taken the decision to continue with the event, the conference venue, the Great Northern Hotel in Peterborough, announced their immediate closure 11 days prior to the event, sadly forcing a cancellation of the conference.

Despite these challenges, we still held two well-received online conferences, both run over Zoom and Twitter. The successful delivery of these was very much aided by the format having been honed over the course of our previous virtual conferences

OUR SOCIAL YEAR

@IBIS_JOURNAL

Tweets	5,226	-6%
Engagements	87,585	-37%
Organic impressions	4.6m	-56%
Followers at 31 Dec 22	21,176	+9%

Twitter (@IBIS_JOURNAL) is our primary social platform and, consistent with previous years, we saw an increase in followers in 2022. Recent years saw a reduction in engagements and impressions, likely driven by both a slightly reduced output and decreased community activity on Twitter. This trend has continued into 2022, no doubt confounded by changes on the platform itself. Nevertheless, @IBIS_JOURNAL remains the largest ornithology society/journal account on Twitter, continuing to provide an active news service for ornithologists around the world.

IBISJOURNAL

Posts	3,956	-6%
Engagements	127,486	+43%
Impressions/reach	3.19m	+44%
Fans at 31 Dec 22	11,191	+8%

Our follower-base on Facebook (FACEBOOK.COM/IBISJOURNAL) continues to grow, and although there was a slight reduction in content posted, we saw sizeable increases in engagements and impressions.

in 2020 and 2021 and by the wonderful support of our conference delivery team (Sarah Binnie, Ryan Burrell, Camilo Carneiro, Kirsty Franklin, Ros Green, Triin Kassiku, Angela Langford and Natalia Zielonka).

As in 2021, the dual format of our conferences, with parallel delivery of all presentations over Twitter, ensured this component of our conferences was free and accessible for researchers around the world.

Sponsorship

We are very grateful to Leica Camera (UK) who continued their support in providing a prize for the best paper in IBIS with an early career researcher as lead author.

Social media

BOU.ORG.UK/SOCIAL-MEDIA/

See also Engagement Committee (page 11).

The latter part of 2022 was a turbulent time for Twitter (our primary social media platform), with the arrival of a new owner and CEO. Twitter has been incredibly valuable for the BOU and the wider ornithological community, so the changes being played out at the platform are inevitably of some consequence for the society. Although our follower growth increased by 9% (on 2021), other key Twitter metrics were down this year, including engagements (-37%) and organic impressions (-56%). Although this continues the downward trend seen in 2021, at the time attributed to a slightly reduced output and less engaged community during the pandemic, the changes at Twitter are likely to have played into this year's trends to some extent. In contrast, engagements and impressions on Facebook increased in 2022 (up 43% and 44%, respectively, on 2021).

The BOU has long relied on social media to drive visitors to our website, allowing us to effectively inform the wider ornithological community about our activities. In 2022, as in previous years, social media was the third most important originating source for website users (12%), after search engines (40%) and direct-to-site visits (40%) visits.

OUR SOCIAL YEAR

IBIS_JOURNAL

Posts	181	+6%
Engagements	970	-49%
Followers at 31 Dec 22	1,666	+13%

We continue to gain followers on Instagram (IBIS_JOURNAL), although engagements are notably down on 2021. Instagram is less able to drive traffic to the BOU website (URLs cannot be included in posts), but our presence there is nonetheless valuable.

ALTMETRICS

We saw continued growth in the number of online mentions of IBIS articles in 2022, with a total Altmetric Attention Score notably higher than for competitor ornithology journals (Table 1).

IBIS articles received more online attention in 2022, as measured by Altmetric Attention Score, than articles from any other ornithology journal (Table 1). The key Altmetric contributing sources – news media, blogs and social media – all saw growth in mentions this year, with Wikipedia seeing an impressive 60% growth, thanks largely to the efforts of our Journal Support Officer referencing papers on the site.

Table 1: Online mentions for IBIS and competitor ornithology journals (in 2022)

			Mentions					
	# Articles	Total AAS*	News	Blog	Twitter	Facebook	Wiki	Policy
IBIS	708	20,906	756	487	31,925	1,649	1,586	50
change 2021 v 2022	+24%	+14%	+28%	+5%	+10%	+37%	+60%	-10%
The Auk	529	6,628	316	181	3,755	165	2,198	24
change 2021 v 2022	+9.8%	+5.9%	+1.3%	-1.7%	+15%	+20%	+58%	+67%
J Avian Biology	228	5,099	271	86	5,413	421	477	5
change 2021 v 2022	+9.6%	+11%	+62%	+4.7%	-16%	+5%	+63%	-60%
J Ornithology	323	3,843	178	80	2,914	181	622	7
change 2021 v 2022	+18%	+13%	+42%	+26%	-12%	+36%	+52%	+29%
Bird Study	152	2,195	35	36	3,016	81	123	5
change 2021 v 2022	-24%	-43%	+23%	-42%	-58%	-27%	+46%	-200%

* AAS = Altmetric Attention Score (here combined for # Articles)

Data from Altmetric Explorer (almertic.com/explorer) downloaded 6 January 2023.

The extent of online attention received by individual IBIS articles is evident in the fact that six IBIS papers appear among the 10 highest Altmetric-scoring ornithology papers of all time. Table 2 illustrates the frequency and type of mentions received in order to reach these high Altmetric Attention Scores. Our ability to influence these various channels is variable, but we continue to exert the most effort where we have the greatest capacity to have impact, namely blogs and social media.

Table 2: Altmetric breakdown for the top Altmetric-scoring articles in IBIS (all time)

		Mentions				
	AAS	News	Blog	Twitter	Facebk	Wiki
Dogs disturbing nesting plovers (1) * doi: 10.1111/ibi.12879	3,933	18	4	11,330	4	2
Diet of urban gulls (2) doi: 10.1111/ibi.12892	1,112	131	11	217	8	0
Hill Myna extinction-in-progress (5) ** doi: 10.1111/ibi.12839	395	85	1	76	4	3
Geophagy in Amazonian parrots (6) doi: 10.1111/ibi.12515	388	45	1	41	1	3
Decline of Common Cuckoo (8) doi: 10.1111/ibi.12612	340	1	6	580	6	1
Driven shooting of Red Grouse (10) doi: 10.1111/ibi.12356	332	8	7	550	4	0

* Rank among highest Altmetric-scoring ornithology papers indicated in brackets; ** Voted best paper by an early-career researcher in IBIS in 2020; AAS = Altmetric Attention Score; Data from Altmetric Explorer (almertic.com/explorer) downloaded 25 January 2023.



#THEBOUBLOG

Our most-read blog posts in 2022:

The secret lives of Nightjars
Shedding some light on a mysterious nocturnal species . . . (published 2015)
Katrina Sharps
UK Centre for Ecology and Hydrology

The mixed-up world of swifts
Two species of swifts hybridize with each other in an unsuspected way (published 2022)
Alice Cibois
Natural History Museum of Geneva, Switzerland

The heat is on for British birds
The State of the UK's Birds (SUKB) report for 2017 reviews the impact of climate change (published 2017)
James Pearce-Higgins
British Trust for Ornithology, UK



E-NEWSLETTERS

Our regular e-newsletters are sent to over 8,000 researchers, and others interested in ornithology, all around the world.

#theBOUblog

BOU.ORG.UK/BLOG/

Our blog is the main arrival point for visitors and the most-read section of our website, consistently accounting for around a third of overall page views annually. During the year we published 99 blog posts (slightly down on our highest ever total of 111 in 2021), of which 67 were on IBIS papers (50 in 2021) (see Engagement Committee on page 11 for more detail).

E-newsletters

BOU.ORG.UK/E-NEWSLETTERS /

We published a total of 37 e-newsletters during the year, with a focus on IBIS (monthly new articles and quarterly new issues), conferences, funding and BOU news.

General administrative items

We continue to maintain a storage facility in Peterborough.

Awards Nominations Committee

AWARDS NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE

Chair

Dr Lucy Wright (RSPB)

Members

Dr Marta Acácio (Tel Aviv University)
Dr Adham Ashton-Butt (BTO)
Dr Niall Burton (BTO)
Mr Steve Dudley, BOU COO (to July 2022)
Prof Keith Hamer (University of Leeds)
Dr Grant Humphries (HiDef Aerial Surveying)
Dr Rebecca Laidlaw (Natural Resources Wales)
Dr Elizabeth Masden (University of Highlands & Islands)
Dr Alice Trevail (University of Exeter)
Dr Leila Walker, BOU COO (from May 2022)

The Awards Nominations Committee was set up in 2020 to oversee the criteria and nominations process for each of the BOU's awards, currently the Godman Salvin Prize, Janet Kear Union Medal and the Alfred Newton Lecture. Two meetings were held during 2022 with further business conducted by email.

In March 2022, Council approved the Committee's recommendation for a new award for early professional ornithologists, to recognize an outstanding initial contribution to the field of ornithology. This recommendation included the suggestion for an art competition, in which an early-career ornithological artist designs the prize for this new award. A proposal for the art competition prize was drafted by Steve Dudley with support from Committee members, and this was approved by Council in July. A judging panel was selected in the autumn comprising two artists, two art collectors and two members of the Committee, and the art competition was announced in November with a deadline for submissions of 28 February 2023. The next step will be to judge the entries to the art competition, and then to seek nominations for the early professional award. We aim to present the first early professional award at the 2023 autumn conference.

The Committee's membership changed during the year, with the terms of four members, Steve Dudley (*ex officio* as COO), Aurora Gonzalo-Tarodo, Rhys Green and David Stroud, coming to an end. Three new members, Marta Acácio, Adham Ashton-Butt and Leila Walker (*ex officio* capacity as the incoming COO), were appointed to the Committee at the July Council meeting.

A successful nominations process for the three existing BOU awards was run during September 2022. The call for nominations used the new award criteria developed in 2021 for the first time and received more nominations as a result. Six people (four women and two men) were nominated for the 2023 Godman Salvin Prize, three people (two women and one man) were nominated for the 2023 Janet Kear Union Medal and seven people (two women and five men) were nominated for the 2024 Alfred Newton Lecture on the theme of urban ecology. Nominations were independently ranked following previously agreed procedures. The top three ranked nominees for each award were presented to, and approved by, Council at their November meeting, and the top-ranked nominee for each award has accepted their invitation. Professor Amanda Rodewald will give the 2024 Alfred Newton Lecture and the recipients of the 2023 Godman Salvin Prize and 2023 Janet Kear Union Medal will be announced during the course of the year.

ENGAGEMENT COMMITTEE

Chair

Dr Tom Finch (RSPB)

Members

Dr Ailidh Barnes (BTO)
Dr Lynda Donaldson (Wildfowl & Wetlands Trust) (to July 2022)
Mr Steve Dudley, BOU COO (to July 2022)
Dr Aonghais Cook (BTO)
Dr Jenny Dunn (University of Lincoln) (to July 2022)
Dr Daniel Hayhow (Earthwatch Europe)
Dr Katharine Keogan (HiDef Ariel Surveys) (from July 2022)
Dr Nicola Largey (University of Highlands and Islands) (from July 2022)
Dr Veronica Mendez (University of Iceland)
Dr Julie Miller (University of Glasgow)
Mr Connor Panter, Blog Editor (University of Nottingham)
Dr Ashley Sendell-Price (Uppsala University, Sweden)
Dr Elwyn Sharps (Natural Resources Wales) (from July 2022)
Dr Leila Walker, BOU COO (from July 2022)
Dr Saskia Wischnewski (RSPB)
Ms Natalia Zielonka, Social Media Support Officer (University of East Anglia)

Engagement Committee

The Engagement Committee oversees engagement between all parts of the BOU, our members and the wider community, with the aim of increasing awareness of the BOU's activities, facilitating communication and collaboration within the ornithological community, and championing equality and diversity. The Committee primarily delivers this engagement through our conferences and social media activities.

The Committee met twice during 2022, with both meetings held online. Online meetings were introduced as a result of Covid-19 restrictions and the Committee decided to retain this format in order to reduce the time, financial and environmental costs associated with having a geographically dispersed group of people meet in person. We will continue to review the format of future meetings.

This year saw Lynda Donaldson and Jenny Dunn retire from the Committee, and we welcomed new members Nicola Largey (University of Highlands and Islands), Elwyn Sharps (Natural Resources Walker) and Katharine Keogan (HiDef). Particular thanks go to Lynda for wrangling the data on Early Career Researcher (ECR) retention rates.

2022 also saw the retirement of Steve Dudley as Chief Operations Officer. Whilst this was a big loss for the Union and for the Committee, our new COO Leila Walker has really hit the ground running, and the Committee have enjoyed working with her (and we look forward to continuing to do so!).

Twitter

The Union has invested heavily in establishing an engaged ornithology community on Twitter, where we promote scientific papers and events, foster discussion, and host virtual conferences. No other platform currently comes close in terms of dynamism or breadth of outreach. Academic Twitter was in a tumultuous state in late 2022 following Twitter's change of ownership, but the BOU has decided to stay on the platform in the hope of avoiding a fragmentation of our community across several alternative platforms. We will continue to review the Twitter climate, particularly with an eye on its capacity to provide a safe and nurturing space for our community. Meanwhile, we have provided some tips for users to help reduce the amount of unwanted content appearing in timelines: https://bou.org.uk/blog-bou-twitter/.

Equality and diversity

BOU.ORG.UK/ABOUT-THE-BOU/EQUALITY-DIVERSITY/

Equality and diversity remains a major part of the Committee's remit. Through the Equality and Diversity Working Group (EDWG), we continue to explore ways in which to improve inclusivity and reduce barriers across our activities.

One step we have taken towards this end is to promote the use of gender pronouns across BOU activities, such as in email signatures, virtual meetings and conferences

EQUALITY & DIVERSITY WORKING GROUP (EDWG)

Chair

Prof Juliet Vickery, BOU President (BTO)

Members

Dr Ailidh Barnes (BTO) *
Dr Emma Cunningham (University of Edinburgh)
Mr Steve Dudley, BOU COO (to July 2022)
Dr Jenny Dunn (University of Lincoln) (to July 2022)
Dr Tom Finch (RSPB)
Dr Daniel Hayhow (Earthwatch Europe)
Dr Ashley Sendell-Price (Uppsala University, Sweden) *
Dr Rosie Trevelyan (Cambridge University)
Dr Leila Walker, BOU COO (from July 2022)

* EDWG Secretariat

(https://bou.org.uk/blog_finch_walker_pronouns/). A person's name or physical appearance is not necessarily a good indicator of their gender and making assumptions based on these can lead to mistakes being made. It is important that everyone within our community is referred to by the pronouns they identify with. By promoting pronoun visibility, the BOU aims to help foster a supportive, respectful and inclusive environment for everyone. If you're cis-gender, you can be a better ally by being more open about your pronouns, even if you think they're obvious, to help normalise discussions about gender.

For this year's Pan-African Ornithological Congress (PAOC15), the Union was invited to join a round table discussion on the subject of "Making ornithology accessible, inclusive and diverse", organised by Merlyn Nomusa Nkomo (Percy Fitzpatrick Institute of African Ornithology). Whilst we weren't able to attend in person, the Committee's Chair, Tom Finch, provided a pre-recorded presentation, giving a summary of the Union's actions in this space and highlighting some of the challenges we have faced.

Honorary positions

The Committee's Support Officers assist the BOU office with journal publicity, social media activities and #theBOUblog.

Journal publicity – supported by Dr Jente Ottenburghs

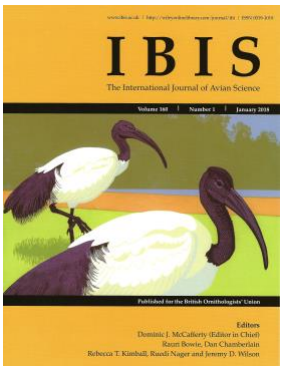
- Produced 26 articles for the BOU blog, summarising a variety of IBIS papers published in 2022.
- Promoted all IBIS paper blog posts across our social media platforms.
- Referenced IBIS papers on Wikipedia, both improving ornithology coverage on Wikipedia and contributing to individual IBIS papers' Altmetric Attention Score
- Promoted IBIS papers on other websites internationally.

Social media – supported by Natalia Zielonka

- Delivered the BOU's Twitter conferences, including BOU2022 and BOUasm22
- The BOU's Twitter account (@IBIS_journal) had over 21,000 followers at the year-end (compared to 19,500 at the same time last year).
- The BOU's Facebook account (@Ibisjournal) had over 12,000 followers at the year-end (compared to 10,500 the previous year).
- The BOU Instagram account (@IBIS_journal) continues to grow, with over 1,650 followers, posting content focused on IBIS papers, BOU blogs, BOU events and the British List.

Blog (#theBOUblog) – edited by Connor Panter

- 99 new posts were published on the #theBOUblog in 2022.
- The 26 posts authored by the Journal Publicity Support Officer were complemented by a further 41 written by the authors of IBIS papers and another 23 written by the authors of papers from other journals.



IBIS MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

Chair

Dr Rosemarie Kentie (IBED, University of Amsterdam)

Members

Mr Graham Appleton, BOU Hon. Treasurer
Dr Beatriz Arroyo Lopez (Instituto de Investigacion en Recursos Cinegeticos (IREC) (CSIC-UCLM-JCCM)
Dr Rauri Bowie, Editor (University of California – Berkeley)
Dr Richard Broughton (UK Centre for Ecology & Hydrology)
Dr Simon Butler (University of East Anglia) (from July 2022)
Mr Steve Dudley, BOU COO (to July 2022)
Dr Richard Fuller, Editor (University of Queensland)
Prof Jenny Gill, Editor in Chief (University of East Anglia) (from August 2022)
Dr Rebecca Kimball, Editor (University of Florida)
Mrs Angela Langford, Journal Manager
Dr Dominic McCafferty, Editor in Chief (University of Glasgow) (to August 2022)
Dr Ruedi Nager, Editor (University of Glasgow)
Dr Staffan Roos (Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences)
Dr Leila Walker, BOU COO (from May 2022)
Prof Jeremy Wilson, Editor (RSPB)

- An additional nine blogs covered community content, including BOU grant reports and personal perspectives on equality, diversity, inclusion and accessibility issues in ornithology.
- The BOU blog continues to reach a global audience and remains the most visited section of the BOU website, accounting for 37% of all page views for the site in 2022.

Conferences

See BOU Office (page 6) and Meetings Committee (page 16).

The Engagement Committee played a key role in organising the ECR workshops at the BOU2022 Avian Reproduction conference, selecting themes and inviting contributors to the three workshops on *How to write a paper for peer review*, *How to review a paper* and *How to promote your paper*. An additional grant-writing workshop was also run for BOU members up to 10 years post-PhD.

IBIS Management Committee

IBIS.AC.UK

Committee membership and business

The IBIS Management Committee provides strategic direction, support and advice to editors and staff on the management of the journal, which includes working with our publisher, Wiley. The IBIS Management Committee consists of the Editor in Chief, all editors, the Chief Operations Officer, the Honorary Treasurer, the Journal Manager and four regular members operating at associate editor level for IBIS or similar journals.

IBIS is published on behalf of the BOU by Wiley Publishing, from whom we continue to receive excellent service, support and advice. The efforts of Wiley staff during 2022 are greatly appreciated, especially from Andreas Petersen, our Journal Publishing Manager. We have an excellent relationship with Wiley and maintain constant communication throughout the year, with both parties striving to improve IBIS, to ensure the journal remains at the forefront of ornithology.

Our annual meeting with Wiley was held on Zoom in February. At the meeting, annual reports covering editorial, production, marketing and finance were presented and discussed. Our close working relationship comes to the fore during these meetings with both sides able to talk openly about our joint management of the journal.

TOP CITED PAPERS

From most recent Impact Factor period (2020-2021)

Estimating bird density using passive acoustic monitoring: a review of methods and suggestions for further research / Cristian Pérez-Granados, Juan Traba / DOI: 10.1111/ibi.12944

Implications of bacterial, viral and mycotic microorganisms in vultures for wildlife conservation, ecosystem services and public health / Pablo I. Plaza, Guillermo Blanco, Sergio A. Lambertucci / DOI: 10.1111/ibi.12865

Urban exploiters have broader dietary niches than urban avoiders Facundo Xavier Palacio / DOI: 10.1111/ibi.12732

MOST DOWNLOADED IBIS PAPERS

Papers downloaded in 2022

Killing of raptors on grouse moors: evidence and effects / Ian Newton / DOI: 10.1111/ibi.12886

Towards redressing inaccurate, offensive and inappropriate common bird names / Robert J. Driver, Alexander L. Bond / DOI: 10.1111/ibi.12984

Urban gulls adapt foraging schedule to human-activity patterns / Anouk Spelt, Oliver Soutar, Cara Williamson, Jane Memmott, Judy Shamoun-Baranes, Peter Rock, Shane Windsor / DOI: 10.1111/ibi.12892

New Editor-in-Chief

After five years at the helm, as Editor-in-Chief, Dr Dominic McCafferty decided to move on to new adventures in 2022. We are hugely grateful for all Dom's hard work over the last five years (handling 1,484 manuscripts in total!) and he was presented with a Robert Gillmor ibis print as a parting thank you gift.

We advertised for a replacement and, following the interview and selection process, were delighted to announce the appointment of Prof Jenny Gill as our new Editor-in-Chief. Jenny is a Professor of Applied Ecology at the University of East Anglia, and has been an active researcher, supervisor and teacher in the field of ornithology for over 20 years. She has served on the editorial boards of several ornithological and ecological journals and has previously served as BOU President and Chair of IBIS Management Committee. Jenny started in the role in August and, with help from Dominic, the handover went very smoothly.

On offering Prof Jenny Gill the role, our Honorary Treasurer Mr Graham Appleton, who is Jenny's spouse, contacted both the BOU Management Group and our auditors asking for any conflicts of interest to be considered. Both the Management Group and auditors were satisfied that there is no cause for concern. We share this information here for full transparency, to report to our membership the consideration we've given this.

Committee changes

The last year has also seen a changeover in the COO role, with Steve Dudley being successfully succeeded by Leila Walker. Leila and Steve shared a two-month overlap to familiarise Leila with the business and marketing aspects of IBIS. To facilitate this transition, we held an additional meeting with the IBIS Management Committee and Wiley Publishing in July, which included discussions around improving the submission and review process. The Committee agreed for IBIS to be included in the pilot of Wiley's Research Exchange (ReX) submission platform, designed to provide an easier submission process for authors.

At our July meeting, we also welcomed new Committee member Dr Simon Butler. Simon is an Associate Professor at the University of East Anglia whose research covers land-use change, multi-species indices and conservation actions. Our management team now comprises 14 members.

TOP ALTMETRIC PAPERS

Papers published in 2022

Male Superb Lyrebirds (*Menura novaehollandiae)* perform an ornate multimodal display immediately following copulation / Anastasia H. Dalziell, Justin A. Welbergen / DOI: 10.1111/ibi.13052

The Red-billed Leiothrix (*Leiothrix lutea*): a new invasive species for Britain? / Richard K. Broughton, Samuele Ramellini, Marta Maziarz, Pedro F. Pereira / DOI: 10.1111/ibi.13090

Non-breeding distribution and at-sea activity patterns of the smallest European seabird, the European Storm Petrel (*Hydrobates pelagicus*) / Teresa Militão, Ana Sanz-Aguilar, Andreu Rotger, Raül Ramos / DOI: 10.1111/ibi.13068

Hidden effects of high numbers of tourists in protected areas: displacement of foraging top scavengers / José A. Donázar, Ainara Cortés-Avizanda, Eneko Arrondo, Alejandro Delgado-González, Olga Ceballos / DOI: 10.1111/ibi.13121



Carlos E. Lara's paper was voted the best ECR paper published in IBIS in 2021.

Tongue spots of Dunnock (*Prunella modularis*) nestlings reflect body condition but exert only conditional influence on parental allocation
Carlos E. Lara, Benedikt Holtmann, Eduardo S.A. Santos, Gabriel J. Castaño-Villa, Shinichi Nakagawa / DOI: 10.1111/ibi.12939

Editorial team

Our Associate Editor Board plays a vital role in the management of the journal and we thank each and every one of them for their time and dedication to the journal. Wouter Vansteenlant retired from the Board this year and we thank him for his support and commitment during his time as an Associate Editor.

Themed issues

We have promoted two IBIS themed issues aligned with two recent BOU conferences, the BOU2022 conference on *Avian Reproduction* (with an IBIS submission deadline of 1 December 2022) and the BOUasm22 conference on *Citizen Science and Birds* (with an IBIS submission deadline of 31 March 2023).

Marketing

IBIS remains the highest scoring ornithology journal measured by Altmetric and we have the two papers with the highest Altmetric Attention Scores in ornithology (see Table 2 on page 8).

New contract with Wiley

2022 was the third year of our current four-year contract with Wiley. During the year, outgoing COO Steve Dudley oversaw contract negotiations with Wiley, and by the close of 2022 we had signed a new agreement covering a further four-year term from 2024 to 2027. We are very pleased to have secured this new agreement with Wiley, with whom we enjoy an excellent working relationship. The Committee would like to thank Steve for his valuable work in delivering this new contract.

Best ECR paper

We annually award a best early-career researcher paper from IBIS, where the first or corresponding author was an early-career researcher. In 2021, 62 papers qualified, of which nine were nominated for the award by our Associate Editors. These nine nominated papers went to a public vote in 2022, with Carlos E. Lara et al's paper on tongue spots of Dunnock nestlings being voted the winner (see left and BOU.ORG.UK/IBIS/BEST-ECR-PAPER-OF-2021/).

MEETINGS COMMITTEE

Chair

Dr Francis Daunt (UK Centre for Ecology & Hydrology)

Members

Dr José Alves (University of Aveiro, Portugal and University of Iceland)
Dr Maria Bogdanova (UK Centre for Ecology & Hydrology)
Dr Katherine Booth Jones (BTO Northern Ireland)
Mr Steve Dudley, BOU COO (to July 2022)
Dr Christine Howard (Durham University)
Dr Joelene Hughes (RSPB)
Mrs Angela Langford, Journal & Office Manager
Dr Cat Morrison (University of East Anglia)
Dr Ana Payo-Payo (University of Aberdeen)
Dr Amanda Trask (Institute of Zoology)
Dr Leila Walker, BOU COO (from May 2022)
Dr Kevin Wood (Wildfowl & Wetlands Trust)

Meetings Committee

BOU.ORG.UK/CONFERENCES-AND-MEETINGS/

The Meetings Committee is responsible for maintaining the ongoing programme of BOU conferences and meetings and providing advice and support to the BOU Office and others responsible for organising and running BOU events. The Committee met remotely via zoom twice during the year and also conducted business by email and telephone. There were no changes in committee membership apart from the switch of COOs.

2022 events and the global pandemic

With restrictions associated with the Covid pandemic easing over the course of 2021 the first in-person events were planned for 2022, including the annual conference and one of the two autumn conferences, with the other planned to be conducted online. Over the course of discussions during the latter part of 2021, it was decided that BOU would deliver a mix of online and in-person events in our future annual programme, not just in 2022 but potentially beyond. With both formats, a parallel Twitter conference would be organised. The rationale was that in-person and online events offer different experiences. In-person events provide unrivalled opportunities for networking, and certain group activities – in particular ECR workshops – generally work better face-to-face. In contrast, virtual events deliver a considerably larger attendance with a much wider international reach than equivalent in-person events.

In the latter part of 2021, due to continued unpredictability of conference attendance due to the pandemic, the 2022 annual conference was switched to Zoom. All members of the Scientific Programme Committee and the majority of speakers remained committed and an excellent conference was delivered. As restrictions eased over the course of 2022, the plan for the autumn conferences was retained with one in-person and one zoom event.

Steve Dudley came to the end of his tenure as BOU COO and handed over the reins to Leila Walker. The Committee would like to thank Steve for all his extraordinary work and commitment to BOU conferences over the years. The excellent programme of events would not have been remotely possible without him. The Committee are delighted that Leila settled into the role immediately and thank her for her support during 2022.

The Committee would also like to thank our expanding conference delivery team of Sarah Binnie, Ryan Burrell, Camilo Carneiro, Kirsty Franklin, Ros Green, Triin Kassiku, Angela Langford and Natalia Zielonka for all their hard work with an ever-increasing workload across multiple platforms.

2022 ANNUAL CONFERENCE



AVIAN REPRODUCTION

12-14 April 2022 | Zoom & Twitter
#BOU2022

Image: Moorhen feeding chick | Francis C. Franklin
CC BY SA 4.0 Wikimedia Commons

2022 annual conference

Avian Reproduction (#BOU2022) – 12–14 April 2022

The 2022 annual conference, originally planned for 2021 but postponed because of the pandemic, was on the topic of avian reproduction (#BOU2022 on Twitter), the theme selected in response to the growing interest in this area and an increased body of recent research. The context for this research is that, within bird life histories, breeding events represent an opportunity to measure some of the fundamental drivers of population and evolutionary processes. It is a crucially important life stage that has heavy energetic demands on parents and offspring, and its consequences can be felt throughout the lifetime of the individuals involved. For offspring, the maternal and environmental effects of their rearing conditions influence their phenotype, which determines their competitive and reproductive success later in life. For adults, the investment in offspring brings great rewards but also incurs costs that might carry-over for years. An understanding of the key components of reproductive success can provide important insights into the mechanisms of change and any potential associated limitations. Whether we are interested in practical conservation or the more theoretical concepts within behaviour and evolution, the breeding stages of bird life histories provide an important focus for many studies. Ranging from nest architecture to egg colouration, clutch sizes, nestling growth patterns, parental care and chick survival, our understanding of drivers of reproductive success has developed exponentially over the past few decades.

The conference delivered a rich programme on a range of topics relating to the nesting period in the life history of birds, including breeding phenology, egg quality and incubation, development and ecophysiology of young, intra-familial interactions, biorhythms and migration, population dynamics and conservation implications. The Alfred Newton Lecture was delivered by Prof Nick Davies (University of Cambridge) and the keynote speakers were Dr Martin Bulla (Max Planck Institute for Ornithology), Dr Emma Cunningham (University of Edinburgh), Dr Lynda Donaldson (Wildlife & Wetlands Trust), Dr Nicola Hemmings (University of Sheffield), Prof Pat Monaghan (University of Glasgow) and Dr Ally Phillimore (University of Edinburgh).

The conference was attended by 168 registrants which was lower than expected for a Zoom conference, based on recent evidence from events organised by BOU and other organisations. There was particularly low attendance from UK-based ornithologists, with 51% of attendees being UK-based, compared to, for example, 66% at BOUasm21. On Twitter, we had 2,805 total engagements with the hashtag #BOU2022 from @IBIS_journal, and an average of 392 impressions per tweet. As in previous Zoom conferences, we used Slack for wider conference engagement, with each session having its own 'channel' allowing for attendees to post additional questions of speakers, and with each poster presenter also having their own dedicated channel. Engagement with Slack was higher than at previous conferences (81% of live attendees), potentially due to greater promotion of Slack. The low overall attendance was potentially due to "Zoom conference fatigue" – it was noted that there was less pre-conference activity on Twitter, particularly from speakers,

and attendance at the ECR workshops and social was poor. The Meetings Committee and the BOU as a whole, including Council, had discussions throughout 2022 regarding the relative merits of in-person and Zoom events, and the apparent waning interest in the latter. We concluded that it was still valuable to have a mix of both types, but to look for ways to make each more engaging, in order to bolster flagging attendance rates. For Zoom events, one concern is that individuals feel isolated while attending, and then get distracted by their work commitments; a potential solution is to encourage virtual audiences to form hubs.

Despite the lower-than-expected attendance, it was an excellent event and the BOU wish to thank the conference Scientific Programme Committee led by Dr Ian Hartley (University of Lancaster, Chair), and supported by Dr José Alves (University of Aveiro, Portugal & BOU Meetings Committee), Dr Sarah Burthe (UK Centre for Ecology & Hydrology), Dr Becky Laidlaw (University of East Anglia) and Dr Rob Robinson (BTO & formerly BOU Meetings Committee).

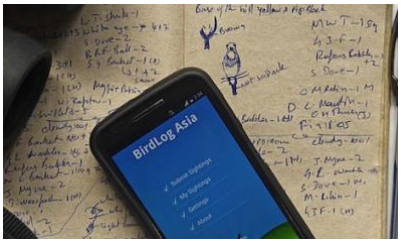
2022 autumn conferences

Citizen Science and Birds (#BOUasm22) – 10-11 October 2022

The first autumn conference in 2022 was delivered on Zoom, on the topic of 'Citizen science and birds: people powering ornithology'. Ornithology has a long history of participation by volunteers who undertake bird surveys and other research, and much of our knowledge of birds would not exist without 'citizen scientists'. This approach has enabled studies to occur across wider areas and over longer time scales than would otherwise be possible. Linking citizen science with technological and analytical advances may further increase our capacity to study birds at scale and meet more of the challenges posed by modern ornithology. Innovative citizen science programmes have unlocked new ornithological data, for example in population ecology, phenology, tracking environmental change and migration. At the same time, new and diverse audiences are engaging in research and conservation. This has led to novel research on who citizen scientists are, how to motivate and support involvement and how to measure the impact of participation. Meanwhile, robust data collection and validation within citizen science programmes remain key areas for learning, particularly as new technologies start to automate much of what citizen scientists record.

This two-day meeting communicated what succeeds and fails in citizen science programmes, what technological advances are available to ornithology, the prominence of rigor and evaluation, and the social science of community participation in ornithology. An excellent programme was delivered including keynote talks by Dr Tom Auer (Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology), Dr Corey Callaghan (German Centre for Integrative Biodiversity Research), Dr Finn Danielsen (Nordic Foundation for Development and Ecology), Dr Alison Johnston (University of St Andrews), Dr Becki Lawson (Institute of Zoology), Dr Dave Leech (BTO) and Dr Suhel Quedar (Nature Conservation Foundation, India). The conference included an insightful discussion chaired by Prof Tom Hart (University of Gloucestershire) with a panel comprising Prof Juliet Vickery (BTO), Prof Ian Owens (Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology) and Dr Mark Eaton (Rare Breeding Birds Panel).

2022 AUTUMN CONFERENCE



CITIZEN SCIENCE

10-11 October 2022 | Zoom & Twitter
#BOUasm22

Image: Birdwatching notes | PJeganathan CC BY SA 4.0 Wikimedia Commons

TWITTER CONFERENCES

The BOU strives to make all our events inclusive and accessible. To help achieve this we run all in-person and virtual Zoom conferences as dual platform events, with a Twitter conference running alongside the main in-person/virtual event.

Every presenter at an in-person or virtual conference tweets a summary of their in-person/virtual presentation as part of the parallel Twitter event. We also include additional Twitter-only presentations during the breaks of the in-person/virtual event.

Our parallel Twitter events increase the accessibility of our conferences, requiring neither travel nor registration, and have delivered a like-for-like 'in-the-room' audience of up to 12x the in-person audience.

Presenters are provided with extensive guidelines on how to tweet a presentation on Twitter, and our Social Media Officer is always on hand to lend assistance.

The conference was attended by 134 people, which was somewhat lower than at previous BOU Zoom events (annual 2022 meeting: 168; autumn 2021 meeting on Monitoring: 217; autumn 2021 meeting on Conflicts: 150). On Twitter, we had 1,292 total engagements with the hashtag #BOUasm22 from @IBIS_journal, and an average of 384 impressions per tweet. As with previous Zoom events, overseas delegates formed a significant proportion (49%) of the audience, with 27 countries represented. The quality of the programme was high and we therefore do not believe that was the cause of the lower attendance. As with the annual conference, it may be that Zoom conference fatigue played its part. We are very grateful to the Scientific Programme Committee for delivering this excellent event, led by Dr Ellie Owen (RSPB), and supported by Dr Arjun Amar (Fitzpatrick Institute, University of Cape Town), Dr Tom Hart (University of Oxford) and Dr Joelene Hughes (RSPB).

Birds as Individuals (#BOUsci22) – 23 November 2022 (cancelled)

The second autumn conference in 2022 was due to take place on 23 November 2022 on the topic of 'Birds as individuals' (#BOUsci22 on Twitter), as an in-person event in Peterborough. Birds have a wide range of predictable and unpredictable challenges including climatic changes, food availability, habitat quality, social interactions and more. How individuals respond to these changes, through variation in morphology, physiology, behaviour or life-history strategies between (and within) individuals, can impact on the ecological and evolutionary success of populations and species, regardless of the source (i.e. genetic or phenotypic plasticity) of this variation. For example, among-individual variation in avian 'personalities' can be related to differences in physiological and behavioural responses, survival and reproductive success. The increased resolution provided by examining questions at the individual-level provides a mechanistic understanding of how and why responses to external and internal challenges vary. It also enables exploration of the extent to which individuals are able to adjust their phenotype (or not), and the consequences of such plasticity. This scales up to explain patterns at population and community levels. For instance, variation in individual traits within populations may generate individuals that consistently consume a small subset of the whole population's resource base (individual diet specialisation). This strategy can allow for fitness-enhancing changes in individual foraging efforts that respond to variation in resource availability, which is a key stabilizing mechanism of complex food webs. Enhancing our knowledge of the consequences of individual-level variation touches on almost all aspects of avian ecology. It increases our ability to understand the dynamics of natural populations, and ultimately to develop more informed management for protection and restoration objectives.

A strong programme was developed on this topic including keynote talks from Prof Niels Dingemanse (Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität München), Prof Damien Farine (University of Zurich, Australian National University & Max Planck Institute of Animal Behavior), Dr Aldina Franco (University of East Anglia), Dr Rosemarie Kentie (Royal Netherlands Institute for Sea Research, NIOZ) and Dr Rachael Miller (Anglia Ruskin University). The conference was due to be the first in-person BOU conference since the pandemic, and we advertised the event widely. However, sign

up for the event was very disappointing (24). Various factors were probably at play here, including the greater reluctance for people to travel since the pandemic, and the high travel and accommodation costs linked to recent price increases. It is possible that the programme was not sufficiently diverse, with a strong focus on a small number of bird groups. Despite the low attendance, it was agreed that the conference should go ahead. However, 11 days prior to the conference, the venue for the event, the Great Northern Hotel, announced that it was closing immediately, so we had no alternative but to cancel. We thank the Scientific Programme Committee led by Dr Thomas Bodey (University of Aberdeen, Chair), supported by Dr José Alves (University of Aveiro, Portugal and BOU Meetings Committee), Dr Karin Maldonado (Universidad Adolfo Ibáñez, Spain) and Dr Ana Payo Payo (University of Aberdeen). Further discussions in the weeks that followed concluded that there is sufficient risk of low registration rates with this topic area that the event should be cancelled as opposed to postponed to a later date.

Future events

2023 annual conference – Evolutionary Responses (#BOU2023)

The BOU annual conference in 2023 will focus on evolutionary and plastic responses of birds to environmental change and will be an in-person event in Nottingham. We are living in a time of rapid environmental change, where humans are altering the climate and transforming land cover. These anthropogenic changes are occurring worldwide and at unprecedented rates, with pervasive and irreversible consequences on biodiversity. This is particularly visible in avian communities, which may respond to human pressures in a variety of ways. In fact, while these environmental changes have resulted in the declines and losses of some birds, other species may be able to cope or even thrive in changing environments. Adaptation is a potential mechanism that could allow species to persist in the face of environmental change (i.e. 'evolutionary rescue'). Rapid evolutionary responses of birds to environmental change can be seen in, for example, changes in beak size and shape in response to bird feeders; changes in migration timing in response to climate change; or resistance to novel and emerging pathogens. But evolutionary responses may be limited by, for example, low adaptive potential, plasticity, or using 'wrong' environmental cues. Furthermore, species may differ in their responses to environmental change, resulting in de-coupling of species interactions. Understanding which populations and species may be able to adapt fast enough, and under which conditions, is essential for predicting how birds, as well as the ecosystems they inhabit, will respond to future environmental changes.

The conference will have sessions on phenological changes, movement and space use, responses to environmental pollution, genetic and epigenetic responses, urbanisation effects, behaviour and morphology, species interactions and community responses. The Alfred Newton Lecture will be delivered by Prof Jane Reid (University of Aberdeen, UK & Norwegian University of Science and Technology). The keynote presenters are Prof Anne Charmantier (Center for Functional and Evolutionary Ecology, CEFE, France), Dr Arild Husby (Uppsala University), Dr Caroline Isaksson (Lund University), Dr Samantha Patrick (University of Liverpool), Prof Ben Sheldon (University of Oxford), Dr Daniel Sol (Research at the

2023 ANNUAL CONFERENCE



EVOLUTIONARY RESPONSES

4–6 April 2023 | Nottingham & Twitter #BOU2023

Alfred Newton Lecture to be delivered by Prof Jane Reid (University of Aberdeen and Norwegian University of Science and Technology).

Scientific Programme Committee co-chaired by Dr Amanda Trask (Zoological Society of London) and Dr María Moirón (Institute of Avian Research, Germany).

Further details at BOU.ORG.UK.

Image: Siberian Stonechat | Mprasannak CC BY SA 4.0 Wikimedia Commons

Centre of Ecological Research and Applied Forestries, CREAF, Spain) and Dr Rose Thorogood (University of Helsinki). We thank the Scientific Programme Committee for putting together an excellent programme. The committee is led by Dr Amanda Trask (Zoological Society of London) and Dr María Moirón (Institute of Avian Research, Germany), supported by Michela Corsini (University of Warsaw), Ferran Sayol (University College London), Jelmer Samplonius (University of Edinburgh) and Emily Simmonds (Norwegian University of Science and Technology).

2023 AUTUMN CONFERENCE



GLOBAL FLYWAYS

21–22 November 2023 | on Zoom & Twitter #BOUsci23

Scientific Programme Committee co-chaired by Dr Wouter Vansteelant (University of Groningen) and Dr José Alves (University of Iceland, University of Aveiro).

Further details at BOU.ORG.UK.

Image: Dunlin, Grey Plover and Red Knot flock | Stephan Sprinz CC BY-SA 4.0 Wikimedia Commons

2023 autumn conference – Global Flyways (#BOUsci23)

The autumn 2023 conference will focus on global flyways, with the objective of providing a synthesis of bird migration research. This research topic is accelerating and diversifying at a very rapid pace. Novel techniques allow us to address new questions that would have been impossible to tackle just a few years ago. Much of this research is currently biased to species breeding in the Global North. Nevertheless, increasingly exciting discoveries are arising from understudied species and flyways, not least by disadvantaged researchers from the Global South.

This event aims to bring together experts tackling a broad range of pressing topics in migration ecology across different flyways, and from diverse perspectives. The conference will help set the research agenda on flyway ecology for the coming decade, by presenting/revising and summarising the current knowledge, and by identifying avenues for future research. To this end, we will promote explanatory research while also considering descriptive studies and basic natural history. We explicitly welcome contributions that seek to improve inclusivity and accessibility of flyway-scale research networks and enable collaborative studies across large spatial scales. To facilitate parallels across taxonomic and flyway boundaries, sessions will be organised according to broad themes, including physiology of migration and flight endurance, individual flexibility and environmental tuning of migratory behaviour, ontogeny of migration, seasonal survival, carry-over effects and demography, responses of migrants to accelerating global change, migrants shaping ecosystems and flyway conservation.

The conference will take place on Zoom to encourage participation from around the globe. It will run over a single 24-hour period, with sessions dedicated to the Trans-Atlantic, Africa-Eurasia and Trans-Pacific flyways, timed to coincide with relevant time zones. The conference Scientific Programme Committee is co-chaired by Dr Wouter Vansteelant (University of Groningen) and Dr José Alves (University of Iceland, University of Aveiro) and includes Dr Elly Knight (University of Alberta), Dr Camila Gómez (SELVA), Dr Yachang Cheng (Sun Yat-sen University), Sayam Chowdhury (University of Cambridge), Vojtech Brlik (Charles University), Dr Maria Dias (University of Lisbon), Steve Dudley (Consultant, Scotland), Dr Cat Morrison (University of East Anglia), Dr Elham Nourani (Max Planck Institute of Animal Behavior). Further committee members, to cover the various flyways, will be added in early 2023.

2024 ANNUAL CONFERENCE



URBAN BIRDS

9–11 April 2024 | Nottingham & Twitter
#BOU2024

Alfred Newton Lecture to be delivered by Prof Amanda Rodewald (Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology).

Scientific Programme Committee chaired by Dr Christine Howard (Durham University).

Further details at BOU.ORG.UK.

Image: House Sparrow | Zeynel Cebeci CC BY SA 4.0 Wikimedia Commons

2024 annual conference – Urban Birds (#BOU2024)

The 2024 annual conference will focus on the topic of urban birds. The expansion of urban environments is a key driver of global biodiversity loss and is likely to have an increasing impact in the future. By altering both the biotic and abiotic environment, the conversion of natural habitats into urban environments can profoundly affect the composition and persistence of avian communities. Yet, whilst urban environments present many challenges to birds – including the loss of natural habitats, and exposure to novel predators and stressors such as noise, light, and air pollution – they also present many opportunities. Milder climates and the availability of new resources has enabled some species to flourish. Although often regarded as highly degraded habitats, these complex ecosystems provide exciting opportunities to study ecological and evolutionary theory. With 20% of all bird species occurring in cities, it is essential that researchers, conservationists, and policy makers now come together to share their knowledge on the impacts of urbanisation on birds, and how avian diversity can be maintained in a changing world.

We are pleased to announce that the Alfred Newton Lecture will be delivered by Prof Amanda Rodewald, Garvin Professor and Senior Director of Center for Avian Population Studies at the Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology and Department of Natural Resources & the Environment, Cornell University. The remainder of the programme for the conference will be developed over the course of 2023 by the conference Scientific Programme Committee, led by Dr Christine Howard (Durham University) and supported by Dr Davide Dominoni (University of Glasgow), Dr Caroline Isaksson (Lund University) and Dr Kate Plummer (BTO).

Improving BOU conferences

Our focus during 2022 was to further improve our delivery of online conferences following the success of our first Zoom conference in November 2020, and to deliver our first in-person event since the pandemic. We have been pleased with the strength of the programmes and delegate participation in our two Zoom events in 2022, encouraging us to continue with the policy to organise parallel Zoom and Twitter conferences, where we wish to maximise international reach and are willing to forego the advantages of in-person events to achieve this. However, we note the declining audiences at these events, and will be looking at ways to maximise registration and participation at our next Zoom event in autumn 2023 (Flyways). Following the cancellation of our planned in-person event in 2022 (Birds as Individuals, autumn 2022), we keenly await the level of interest in our in-person annual conference in 2023 on evolutionary responses, accepting that there remains some uncertainty about people's willingness to travel and attend in-person events.

The BOU strives to make all our events inclusive and accessible. To help achieve this we run all in-person and virtual Zoom conferences as dual platform events with a Twitter conference running alongside the main in-person/virtual event. Every presenter at an in-person/virtual event is now required to tweet a summary of their presentation as part of the parallel Twitter event. We also include additional Twitter-only presentations during the breaks of the in-person/virtual event.

Presenters are provided with extensive guidelines on how to tweet their presentation on Twitter.

The use of blind review of submissions continues to work well for BOU conferences. We have published a conference Code of Conduct (see https://bou.org.uk/about-the-bou/code-of-conduct/) and continue to implement equality, diversity and inclusiveness initiatives (https://bou.org.uk/about-the-bou/equality-diversity/) into all of our activities, working with the Engagement Committee's Equality and Diversity Working Group. For example, 2022 saw the adoption of a pronoun visibility initiative across BOU activities, which included inviting conference attendees to provide their pronouns for inclusion in conference materials. As such, the BOUasm22, BOUsci22 and BOU2023 programmes all listed pronouns for those presenters that provided them, and pronouns will similarly be included on name badges from BOU2023.

GRANTS COMMITTEE

Chair

Dr Sonya Clegg (University of Oxford)

Members

Dr Tom Bradfer-Lawrence (RSPB)
Dr Davide Dominoni (University of Glasgow) (from July 2022)
Mr Steve Dudley, BOU COO (to July 2022)
Dr Ilya Maclean (University of Exeter) (to July 2022)
Dr Sam Patrick (University of Liverpool)
Dr Martin Sullivan (Manchester Metropolitan University)
Dr Leila Walker, BOU COO (from May 2022)

Grants Committee

BOU.ORG.UK/FUNDING/

This Committee advises Council on the selection of research grant and bursary applications that the BOU should support.

The Committee considers applications for:

- small research grants.
- career development bursaries;
  - open to BOU members and from non-members in developing countries.
- John & Pat Warham Studentships;
  - funded by a bequest left to the BOU by the late John and Pat Warham for the study of Sphenisciform (penguins) and Procellariiform (tubenoses) seabirds.
- Brenda and Tony Gibbs Awards;
  - funded by a bequest left to the BOU by the late Brenda and Tony Gibbs for research on tracking and migration studies including the use of new technologies.

The Committee met twice via Zoom in 2022. The meeting to consider research grant and career development bursary applications was held in February, and the meeting to consider applications for the Brenda and Tony Gibbs Award, and the final John and Pat Warham Studentship was held in June. The remainder of the Committee's business was conducted by email.

Committee Membership: Prof Ilya Maclean completed his term as an ordinary member after the June meeting. Dr Davide Dominoni was confirmed as an ordinary member in the July Council meeting. Dr Leila Walker replaced Steve Dudley as the BOU's Chief Operations Officer and as ex-officio member of the Committee from July.

Small Ornithological Research Grant scheme

The Committee received 45 grant applications (54 in 2021, 51 in 2020). One application was rejected due to breaches in submission criteria, leaving 44 to be assessed ahead of the annual meeting held on 2 February 2022. Two qualified for

FUNDING ORNITHOLOGY





Two of the species being researched by projects funded by the BOU in 2022.

From the top:
Common Eider *Somateria mollissima*
Marton Bernsten CC BY SA 3.0 Wikimedia Commons

Toco Toucan *Ramphastos toco*
Bernard Dupont CC BY SA 2.0 Wikimedia Commons

funding consideration under the Brenda and Tony Gibb bequest. Each application was scored by two committee members and, based on these scores, the associated comments and on-the-day discussions, the committee determined which projects to support.

Council approved six awards, totaling £10,068, to be made in 2022:

Michał Jezierski (Polish) | £1,500 (amount requested)
PhD student, University of Oxford, UK
The spectacular diversification of the British wrens.

Verónica Méndez Aragón (Spanish) | £1,500 (amount requested)
Academic Director, University Centre of the Westfjords, Iceland
Within population variation in feeding ecology of Common Eiders in Iceland.

Klara K. Nordén (Swedish) | £1,885 (amount requested)
PhD student, Princeton University, USA
Evolution of iridescent feather structure in Common Cuckoos.

Teresa Pegan (USA) | £1,683 (amount requested)
PhD Student, University of Michigan, USA
The influence of migration distance on molecular evolutionary rates in birds.

Roman Alberto Ruggera (Argentina) | £1,500 (amount requested)
Profesor Adjunto, Instituto de Ecorregiones Andinas, Argentina
Ecology and conservation of the Toco Toucan as a flag for environmental education and urban planning.

Kristen Wacker (US) | £2,000 (amount requested)
PhD student, University of Michigan, USA
Evaluating the effects of relative geographic barrier strength on avian diversification using Neotropical wrens.

Brenda and Tony Gibbs small research award

Separate to the main Gibbs Award (awards up to £20,000 – see page 29) we will use the remainder of the bequest left to us by Brenda and Tony Gibbs to fund smaller awards for applications within the parameters of the Gibbs bequest coming in through our small grant scheme.

One award was made in 2022:

Olufemi Oluboden (Nigeria) | £1,955 (amount requested)
PhD student, Fitzpatrick Institute of African Ornithology, South Africa
Territory size and spatial use patterns of the Pygmy Falcons.

Career Development Bursary scheme

The Committee received six applications (the scheme was not offered in 2020 or 2021, 7 in 2019, 5 in 2018, 10 in 2017) and all were assessed by the committee. Council approved two awards totaling £4,949:

Anap Isphaku Afan (Nigeria) | £2,449 (amount requested)
Research Associate, AP Leventis, Nigeria
Honeyguides, honey-eating and the current state of human-honeyguide mutualism in Nigeria.
Project location: FitzPatrick Insitute, Cape Town University, South Africa
Supervisor: Jessica van der Wal and Claire Spottiswoode

Chima Josiah Nwaoga (Nigeria) | £2,500 (amount requested)
Junior Research Fellow, University of Groningen, The Netherlands
Impacts of long-term changes in rainfall on the breeding season of African birds
Project location: James Cook University, Australia
Supervisor: Martijn van de Pol

John and Pat Warham Studentships

Of the four fully funded studentships available, three have been appointed in previous years. Updates on these projects are provided below. Two applications were received for the final Warham Studentship. The studentship was awarded to:

A/Prof Rohan Clarke | £85,000 (amount requested)
Monash University, Australia
Recovering the critically engendered Beck's Petrel
Project country & student recruitment: Papua New Guinea

WARHAM STUDENT



Our 2018 Warham Student, **Kirsty Franklin**, University of East Anglia, UK.

Kirsty Franklin, University of East Anglia, UK (commenced 2018)
The 'Round Island petrel' conundrum
Principal supervisor: Prof Jennifer Gill

Kirsty told us the following in her end of year communication:

PhD thesis submitted!! I'm very pleased to have submitted my thesis in December 2022 and wanted to take this opportunity to say thank you to everyone who made this journey possible and such a wonderful experience. A special thank you goes to John and Pat Warham, and the BOU, for funding my PhD and providing me with this opportunity, and to my five supervisors, Jenny Gill, Malcolm Nicoll, Norman Ratcliffe, Ken Norris and Simon Butler for their help and support along the way. I have loved every minute of this project!

The last year of my PhD was a busy one. I wrapped up my PhD thesis and finished three more data chapters, with the overarching aim of exploring the factors influencing the within- and between-individual variation in migratory strategies, and their consequences for the conditions experienced, by Round Island petrels. One of these data chapters involved building on my published petrel chapter which revealed individual petrels to consistently undertake very different migratory strategies to

different areas across much of the Indian Ocean (see end for link to paper). In this chapter, I described the range of migratory strategies (parts of the Indian Ocean used by individuals on their migratory journeys) for 198 geolocator-tracked petrels and identified the factors that drive this variation. For example, Round Island petrels breed all year round and consist of a hybrid complex (of at least three species of *Pterodroma* petrel), and so I have explored whether birds following more similar migratory strategies also have more similar genetic composition or timings of departure from Round Island. This has only been possible because of the hard work by the Mauritian Wildlife Foundation (MWF) and National Parks and Conservation Service (NPCS; Mauritian Government) in deploying and retrieving hundreds of geolocators. But to me, perhaps one of the most exciting chapters made use of all the immersion data provided by the geolocators, to investigate how petrel night-time behaviour varies spatially across the Indian Ocean and with the lunar cycle. All petrels showed strongly lunar-structured night-time activity patterns, with petrels spending lots of time on the water during the new moon and progressively less as the moon waxes and wanes. I'm looking forward to getting this, and my other chapters, published post-viva!

The camera traps and stands which I deployed during my fieldwork on Round Island in 2019 to monitor petrel breeding attempts successfully continued capturing images (despite experiencing very strong winds from multiple tropical cyclones!) for the duration of my PhD. In total, these cameras generated over 180,000 images and this work has been an exciting addition to my PhD. The challenges of processing the wealth of photographic information this technique produces has led me to make many new collaborations, and I'm currently still supervising two Masters students and an undergraduate student based in the School of Computing Sciences at University of East Anglia, who are testing several machine learning/computer vision algorithms aimed at automating the detection and counting of petrels in the images. We are hoping to build an online application through which more camera images can be uploaded and processed with the machine learning going on in the background. I'm excited to head back to Mauritius (and Round Island!) to share all the results of my PhD with MWF and NPCS in early 2023, as well as examining the state of the camera stands and catching up with my petrels. Fingers crossed for a few more petrel geolocator recoveries too!



White-throated dipper (*Cinclus cinclus*), the subject of our second Brenda and Tony Gibbs Award (see page 29).

Image | Ron Knight, CC BY 2.0, Wikimedia Commons

As the majority of my PhD was spent during a global pandemic, I was very happy to attend and present a talk at an in-person conference, the 15th International Seabird Conference in Cork in August 2022. It was a great reminder of how important conferences are for networking and was exciting (but also rather terrifying) to present some of my PhD results. I was very pleased for my talk to be 'highly commended' and if you're interested, you can watch it here: https://youtu.be/NxudVleHqAw.

I'm very grateful to the BOU for allowing me to take a short break from my PhD. Last summer, I spent 2.5 months along the Flamborough and Filey coast (in Yorkshire) to undertake a seabird tracking job with the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB). Despite the difficulties with Avian Influenza, we were

very lucky to get some GPS tags deployed on kittiwakes, and I was able to expand and diversify my skillset in seabird tracking and monitoring.

It has been an incredible year, and I'm very grateful to have been provided with a Warham Studentship. Now I am excited for the next step in my career, where I am back working with the same lovely team at the RSPB as I did last summer, as a Conservation Scientist on various seabird tracking projects. Best of luck to Paige, Émile, and the next Warham student with their projects!

Franklin KA et al. (2022). Individual consistency in the migration strategies of a tropical seabird, the Round Island petrel. *Movement Ecology*, 10: 13. https://doi.org/10.1186/s40462-022-00311-y
Franklin KA et al. (2022). Individual repeatability of avian migratory phenology: a systematic review and meta-analysis. *Journal of Animal Ecology*, 91: 1416-1430. https://doi.org/10.1111/1365-2656.13697

WARHAM STUDENT



Our 2019 Warham Student, **Paige Green**, undertaking Little Penguin fieldwork off Tasmania (Photo: Olly Dove).

Paige Greene, University of Tasmania, Australia (commenced 2019)
Quantifying the ecological factors under-pinning population trends in crested penguins
Principal supervisor: Prof Mark Hindell

In her end of year communication with us, Paige wrote:

I am currently in the process of wrapping up as much as I can of my thesis as I start working full time at the beginning of February. I am 90% complete but I will go part-time with PhD to have a little extra time to hand in a quality product.

Last year (2022) was a fantastically productive year: I published two papers (see below). I have drafts for two more which I can hopefully submit this year for publication. I attended two online conferences to present my work (International Seabird Conference and the Biologging Conference). I have been incredibly humbled by the input and support from *Eudyptes* penguin researchers across the world who have given me data and feedback along the way to publishing. I'm now on "email chat" terms with researchers I have admired and looked up to for years! This has been a project of international collaborations and the penguin researchers of the world have welcomed me with open arms. They're just so cool!

We successfully collected data from Antipodes Island and now we finally know where Erect-crested Penguins and Eastern Rockhopper Penguins from Antipodes Island overwinter- which is not only a huge step for the management of New Zealand Island seabirds but for marine predators in the Southern Ocean as a whole. Over my project I may have had some Covid-related setbacks, but I have come out the other side with a thesis I am incredibly proud of and worked with incredible marine ecologists across the world.

My studies have focused on answering questions about theoretical ecology (relating to niche partitioning), movement energetics, and the potential for species redistribution due to climate change. In the rapidly changing marine environment

that these penguins exist in, it is important that we try to understand how they use their environment and how this may change with climate change. In the wrap up of my thesis I am currently writing my Final Discussion chapter and we still have so much left to find out! I think this is the truly magnificent nature of science- to do research that answers questions but that also leads to new questions. There is still a vast amount we need to find out about *Eudyptes* penguins and I hope I have not only added knowledge but that my research will encourage others to explore more about these fascinating penguins.

Only a few months to go! Wish me luck!

Green C-P et al. (2022). The role of allochrony in influencing interspecific differences in foraging distribution during the non-breeding season between two congeneric crested penguin species. *PLoS ONE*, 17(2): e0262901. https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0262901
Green C-P et al. (2022). Potential for redistribution of post-moult habitat for *Eudyptes* penguins in the Southern Ocean under future climate conditions. *Global Change Biology*, 29: 648-667. https://doi.org/10.1111/gcb.16500

WARHAM STUDENT



Our 2020 Warham Student, **Émile Brisson-Curadeau,** re-capturing a penguin equipped with a GPS device, after it had returned from its foraging trip (Photo: Institut Polaire Paul-Émile Victor).

Émile Brisson-Curadeau, McGill University, Canada (commenced 2020)
Foraging behaviour of King Penguins under extreme climatic events
Principal supervisor: Dr Kyle Elliott

In Émile's end of year communication, he wrote:

A year ago, I was writing this same report from a boat, heading towards my field site. It was with a little bit of nostalgia that I travelled to the subantarctic island of Kerguelen, as it was going to be my last of three consecutive field seasons. The fieldwork was successful, as we deployed more GPS devices on King Penguins – my study species – than we ever had since the inauguration of the program 25 years ago. Now back home, this has been my first Christmas in four years that I have not spent surrounded by penguins. While I am happy to see my family for the holidays, I can tell you one thing: I will miss those big awkward birds!

As I spend more time in Canada, where my university is located, my focus will be on analysing the data and writing papers to share the results of our findings. On that note, I've been off to a great start, as my second paper was published recently in none other than Global Change Biology! This paper looked at the long-term dataset of King Penguins, asking if climate change had affected the breeding or foraging success of the population. What we found was quite surprising: penguins there actually do very well, despite the obvious air and ocean warming occurring in that region. This is a huge contrast with the neighbouring island, Crozet, where the same species has definitively suffered from global warming. The different responses of the two populations can be explained by the fact that the oceanic currents used by foraging penguins have very different dynamics in the two places. In Crozet, the currents shift away from the colony with warming climate, out of reach for the breeding penguins. In contrast, the positions of the currents are not affected by

RECORDS COMMITTEE

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Dr James Gilroy (University of East Anglia)

Secretary

Dr Chris McInerny (University of Glasgow)

Members

Mr Chris Batty (Lancashire)
Dr Pierre-Andre Crochet (French National Centre for Scientific Research (CNRS))
Mr Steve Dudley, BOU COO (to July 2022)
Mr Paul French (BBRC Chair)
Mr Mark Golley (Norfolk, UK)
Dr Alex Lees (Manchester Metro University)
Mr Andrew Stoddart (Norfolk, UK) (to July 2022)
Mr Mark Thomas (RSPB (from July 2022)
Dr Leila Walker, BOU COO (from May 2022)

BOURC CATEGORY F SUB-COMMITTEE (BOURC CFSC)

Dr Joanne Cooper
Prof John R. Stewart
Dr Dale Serjeantson

BOURC CONSULTANTS

Steve Dudley (Category C)
Dr Bob McGowan, National Museums of Scotland (museums)
Keith Naylor (historical records)
Andrew Owen, Chester Zoo (captive bird trade)

climate in Kerguelen. That study provided a good example of how even neighboring populations can have very different responses to climate change.

The third paper I am currently working on will look at a large breeding failure that occurred in the King Penguin colony in 2009 and 2010. I am hoping to better understand what happened during those two catastrophic years, where almost all chicks at the colony died. If everything goes well, this paper should be published in the upcoming months!

Of course, spending less time in the field will also mean more time available for conferences! I am hoping to participate in a few next summer. This is particularly of interest now that I start to have more published results from my research. Stay tuned!

Brisson-Curadeau, E, Elliott, K & Bost, C-A (2022). Contrasting bottom-up effects of warming ocean on two king penguin populations. *Global Change Biology*. 29: 998-1008. https://doi.org/10.1111/gcb.16519

Brenda and Tony Gibbs bequest

We received and assessed 20 applications. The combined scores and comments from Committee members were used for the basis of the on-the-day discussions at a meeting on 27 June 2022.

Council approved a single award of £20,000:

> **Stuart Sharp** (Lancaster University)
> *Lecturer, Lancaster Environment Centre, Lancaster University, UK*
> Natal dispersal in a riverine bird: using next generation tracking to transform our understanding of juvenile Dipper movements.

Records Committee

BOU.ORG.UK/BRITISH-LIST/

The Records Committee is responsible for maintaining the British List, the official list of birds recorded in Britain.

The Committee met twice (remotely) during the year with other business conducted by email.

Andrew Stoddart retired as a member of the Committee in July 2022. Andrew has been an enormously valued and hard-working member during his time on the committee, and we extend our gratitude to Andrew for all his hard work over the course of his term, not least in leading or contributing to a number of publications on the Committee's work. We welcomed Mark Thomas as a new member – Mark is an experienced birder and A permit ringer with a particular passion for migration and weather, and we look forward to his contributions to the Committee. Dr Leila Walker replaced Steve Dudley as the BOU's Chief Operations Officer and as *ex-officio*

member of the Committee from July.

NEW PAPERS RELATING TO THE BRITISH LIST

The birds of ancient Britain: first recommendations for Category F of the British List / Joanne H. Cooper, John R. Stewart, Dale Serjeantson / DOI: 10.1111/ibi.13066

Assessing vagrants from translocated populations and defining self-sustaining populations of non-native, naturalized and translocated avian species / Christopher J. McInerny, Pierre-André Crochet, Steve P. Dudley, on behalf of BOURC & AERC / DOI: 10.1111/ibi.13067



Zino's Petrel *Pterodroma madeira*, admitted to the British List in 2022.

Image © Danni & Zac Hinchcliffe

Changes to the British List

The 10th edition of the British List was published in June (IBIS 164: 860–910), shortly before the Committee's 54th Report covering the period from October 2021 to April 2022 (IBIS 164: 929–931). This announced a number of changes to Category A of the British List, including:

- Ross's Goose *Anser rossii* – species added to the List.
- North American Horned Lark (*alpestris* group) *Eremophila alpestris* (*alpestris*/*praticola*/*hoyti*) – subspecies group added to the List.

Subsequent to the publication of the 54th Report, the Committee announced the addition of two further species and one subspecies to Category A of the British List (to be included in the 55th Report):

- Long-legged Buzzard *Buteo rufinus* – species added to the List.
- Zino's Petrel *Pterodroma madeira* – species added to the List.
- East Siberian (White) Wagtail *Motacilla alba ocularis* – subspecies added to the list

In total, these changes to the British List, together with taxonomic changes in line with IOC taxonomy (detailed in IBIS 164: 929–931) bring the total to 630 species as at 31 December 2022.

In June 2022, the BOURC Category F sub-Committee published the first formally and critically reviewed list of bird species in Britain prior to 1800 (IBIS 164: 911–923). This major undertaking reveals an impressive range of 242 taxa for which we have robust evidence of historical presence, and the paper yielded many insights into the considerable changes occurring in the British avifauna through time.

Also in June 2022, members of the Committee together with others from the Association of European Rarities Committees (AERC) published a new set of guidelines for assessing vagrants from translocated populations, including criteria to define self-sustaining populations of non-native, naturalized and translocated avian species (IBIS 164: 924–928). Using recent extralimital records of Bearded Vulture *Gypaetus barbatus* as a case study, the paper promotes consistency in approaches taken to such records, and sets out a clearer framework for future decisions about species admitted to Category C of the British List.

Links with other groups

The Committee maintains close links with the British Birds Rarities Committee (BBRC). The BOURC Secretary continues to work closely with BBRC's Secretariat and other European committees, and close links are maintained with Association of European Records Committees (AERC).

Acknowledgements

The Union would like to extend its thanks and gratitude to the following who have assisted with the many BOU activities throughout the year:

all those members of Council and our committees as listed throughout the report who give up their time willingly to develop, oversee and deliver our wide range of activities;

Raurie Bowie, Richard Fuller, Jenny Gill, Rebecca Kimball, Dominic McCafferty, Ruedi Nager, Jeremy Wilson, Patrick Smith, all Associate Editors (listed in each issue of IBIS) and the hundreds of reviewers (listed annually in IBIS) for their invaluable work for IBIS;

Richard Sale (on behalf of the Alexander Library, Oxford University) for his editing of the IBIS book reviews;

Prof Christopher Perrins and Neil Bucknell for arranging the obituaries published in IBIS;

Farhath Jabeen, Andreas Petersen, Janany Sudarshan, Joanna Borysiak, Graham Allen and colleagues at Wiley, for their help in delivering our high quality journal;

Leica (UK) for their support of our IBIS early career researcher award;

Nigel Crocker, Richard Price and Stephen Rumsey for their excellent management of the Union's investment portfolio;

Dr Ian Hartley (University of Lancaster), Dr José Alves (University of Aveiro, Portugal), Dr Sarah Burthe (UK Centre for Ecology & Hydrology), Dr Becky Laidlaw (University of East Anglia) and Dr Rob Robinson (BTO) for their work preparing the programme for the annual conference (Avian reproduction);

Dr Ellie Owen (RSPB), Dr Arjun Amar (Fitzpatrick Institute, University of Cape Town), Dr Tom Hart (University of Oxford) and Dr Joelene Hughes (RSPB) for the planning and delivery of our 'Citizen Science and Birds' autumn conference;

Dr Ian Hartley (University of Lancaster), Dr José Alves (University of Aveiro, Portugal), Dr Sarah Burthe (UK Centre for Ecology & Hydrology), Dr Becky Laidlaw (University of East Anglia) and Dr Rob Robinson (BTO) for their work preparing the programme for the annual conference (Avian reproduction);

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BOURC online intranet

The Committee operates an online intranet site that is used for the storage of images and documents to assist with its work.

Membership

At the end of the year our total membership stood at 1,017 (946 at 31 Dec 2021) comprising 721 full members (666 at 31 Dec 2021) and 296 reduced rate subscribers (280 at 31 Dec 2022) made up of 273 early career researchers (ECRs) and 23 from developing countries.

26 resignations were received during the year (55 in 2021), and Council noted, with sadness, the following deaths: Dr Einhard Bezzel, Dr Walter Bock, Dr Margaret Carswell, Mr Robert Gillmor, Mr Michael Holdsworth, Mr Wolfgang Rohr and Mr Mike Wilson.

As ever, we remain extremely grateful for the continued support of our members.

Financial review

Graham Appleton, Honorary Treasurer



2022 was another year of frustration for the BOU, with Covid still having major impacts upon the scope of our work. We had to cancel two conferences, making a significant loss when we gave up our deposit for the residential conference in Nottingham.

With no face-to-face events, we spent less on engagement than we had budgeted for, which helped to reduce losses. At the end of the year we received a larger transfer than expected from Wiley, reflecting a good year for IBIS.

The BOU's total funds dropped by £101,345 during 2022. The underlying operating loss during the year was £15,362, when payments made from Restricted Funds (£56,339), the loss made on unrestricted investments (£39,644) and a new restricted donation (£10,000) are excluded.

Income

Membership income increased by £4,830 but this is partly due to a change that we made in the accounts for 2021, reflecting the recent introduction of anniversary renewals. In my 2021 report, I highlighted my concern about the fall in membership numbers during that year and it is pleasing to note that there was an increase in numbers during 2022, nearly taking us back to the level of 31 December 2020. Council has discussed the long-term drop in membership numbers and set up a working group, chaired by Dr Mark Eaton (Honorary Secretary) and involving the

Acknowledgements

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Dr Ellie Owen (RSPB), Dr Arjun Amar (Fitzpatrick Institute, University of Cape Town), Dr Tom Hart (University of Oxford) and Dr Joelene Hughes (RSPB) for the planning and delivery of our 'Citizen Science and Birds' autumn conference;

Dr Thomas Bodey (University of Aberdeen, Chair), Dr José Alves (University of Aveiro, Portugal, Dr Karin Maldonado (Universidad Adolfo Ibáñez, Spain) and Dr Ana Payo Payo (University of Aberdeen) for planning our sadly cancelled 'Birds as individuals' autumn conference;

Sarah Binnie, Ryan Burrell, Camilo Carneiro, Kirsty Franklin, Ros Green, Triin Kassiku, and Natalia Zielonka for their excellent delivery of our two virtual events across Zoom and Twitter;

Yachang Cheng and Zhu Lei for running our Weibo account in China;

Sophie Detchon, Robert Bogdan, Stoycho Stoychov, Brian Edwards and Charlie Douglass at Douglass Digital for maintenance and development of the BOU website;

Maria Rogers and the conference staff at the University of Nottingham Conferences for working with us on the ongoing postponement of our in-person annual conference;

Chas Holt (BBRC Secretary), Louise Bacon (BBRC Secretary), Patric Lorgé (AERC Chairman), Bob McGowan (National Museums Scotland), Keith Naylor, British Birds Rarities Committee (BBRC), and bird records committees across Europe under the auspices of the Association of European Records Committees (AERC) who have assisted BOURC during the year;

Karen Kragesand Thomsen at Kovsted & Skovgård;

and Caroline Gillis, Tracey Richardson and colleagues at Azets (accountants and auditors).

We apologise to anyone we have inadvertently omitted.

outgoing President (Prof Juliet Vickery) and her proposed successor (Dr Graeme Buchanan). All committees have been asked to discuss ways to actively promote membership within their respective areas.

IBIS income exceeded expectations, rising from £96,793 to £108,752, thanks to a high through-put of papers and Transformational Agreements negotiated by Wiley. These country-wide contracts make Open Access freely available to authors in a growing number of institutions, although this does exclude some of our key IBIS contributors, especially those working for NGOs. During 2022, we concluded negotiations with Wiley for a four-year extension of the contract to publish the journal. This will take us through to the end of 2027, on broadly similar terms, and creates a sound basis for medium-term financial planning.

Conference income was low, with no opportunities to meet in person during 2022. The impact on our finances has been reduced by the provision of on-line Zoom and Twitter alternatives and I am grateful to everyone involved in providing these, often at short notice, when plans needed to be changed.

Expenditure

Steve Dudley's work as COO has been pivotal to the financial strength of the BOU for the last 25 years and Council members were keen to ensure that we retained access to his expertise during a two-month hand-over period and via a call-off arrangement, which will operate through to the end of March 2023. This ensured the delivery of the new IBIS contract with Wiley and a very smooth account/audit process at the end of the year. These arrangements are reflected in a larger salary bill for 2022.

There are changes to the presentation of salary costs because Dr Leila Walker is a Danish resident; this somewhat complicated the ways in which we account for national insurance and tax payments. We are grateful to Azets, our accountants/auditors, and to Kovsted & Skovgård in Denmark, who had the expertise to help us with these changes.

Grants, bursaries and travel awards provide vehicles for the BOU to invest in the future of ornithology, with £15,017 being spent on grants and bursaries, using investment income and general funds, £34,384 from the John and Pat Warham Fund and £21,955 from the Brenda and Tony Gibbs Fund. From 2023 onwards, extra grant payments can be made using some of a generous donation of £10,000 that was received in 2022. There were no travel grants in 2022 but Council agreed to make £5,000 available for member conference attendance grants in 2023.

During 2022, signatories of bank accounts were updated, to reflect the change in COO and Officers. We took this opportunity to simplify our banking arrangements by closing our Scottish Widows account.

Investments

The value of investments dropped by 8%, which is less than might have been expected, given the turbulence in world markets, associated with Russia's attack on Ukraine. We are grateful to Nigel Crocker, Richard Price and Stephen Rumsey for their work as Investment Trustees. The BOU relies on a mix of income and capital from investment funds to pay for grants and for the Brenda & Tony Gibbs Awards. Council agreed that, as a temporary measure, Gibbs payments should come out of core funds, with a transfer from the Gibbs investments to take place when investments recover to pre-Covid levels. We sold investments in the John and Pat Warham Fund at the end of 2021, which meant that we had already set aside cash to fund a fourth studentship between 2023 and 2027.

Looking forwards

The BOU's Trustees are committed to reducing the amount of savings we hold, in line with the expectations of the Charity Commissioners. For the last few years, Council has been setting budgets that have been designed to be negative and this will continue into 2023 and beyond. Council has agreed that we should be aiming to reduce Unrestricted Funds to £350k, in the medium term, representing one year of operations (£200k) and a buffer of £150k.

In summary, the loss in 2022 is lower than we expected, largely due to the success of IBIS. We have coped with Covid constraints by being flexible in our planning and budgetary decision making. If we can arrest the medium-term decline in membership and re-establish a successful programme of in-person conferences then the BOU will continue to be in a healthy financial position.

Responsibilities of the Trustees

The Members of Council are responsible for preparing the Trustees' Report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

The law applicable to charities in England and Wales and in Scotland requires the Members of Council to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charity and of the incoming resources and application of resources of the charity for that year.

In preparing these financial statements, the Members of Council are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP;
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable accounting standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements; and
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in operation.

The Members of Council are responsible for keeping sufficient accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Charities Act 2011, the Charity (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008, the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005, the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006 (as amended) and the provisions of the trust deed. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

Staff remuneration is reviewed annually in January by the principal officers (President, Honorary Treasurer and Honorary Secretary). The decision on whether to make a pay award is contingent on affordability and the 12-month average CPIH for the previous calendar year. Benchmarking of pay and pension against comparators within the same sector, including the main avian research charities, is undertaken periodically according to availability and affordability of information.

Approved by the Council on 1 March 2023 and signed on their behalf by:



Prof Juliet Vickery President

Independent auditor's report

to the members of the British Ornithologists' Union for the year ended 31 December 2022

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of British Ornithologists' Union (the 'charity') for the year ended 31 December 2022 which comprise the statement of financial activities, the balance sheet and the notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including Financial Reporting Standard 102 *The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland* (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

In our opinion, the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the charity's affairs as at 31 December 2022 and of its incoming resources and application of resources, for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011, the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005 and regulation 8 of the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006 (as amended).

Basis for opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs (UK)) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the *Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements* section of our report. We are independent of the charity in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the UK, including the FRC's Ethical Standard, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Conclusions relating to going concern

In auditing the financial statements, we have concluded that the Trustees' use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate.

Based on the work we have performed, we have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on the charity's ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve months from when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

Our responsibilities and the responsibilities of the Members of Council with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this report.

Other information

The other information comprises the information included in the annual report other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. The Members of Council are responsible for the other information contained within the annual report. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon. Our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our

knowledge obtained in the course of the audit, or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether this gives rise to a material misstatement in the financial statements themselves. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact.

We have nothing to report in this regard.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters in relation to which the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 and the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006 (as amended) require us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- the information given in the financial statements is inconsistent in any material respect with the Trustees' report; or
- sufficient and proper accounting records have not been kept; or
- the financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records; or
- we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit.

Responsibilities of Members of Council

As explained more fully in the statement of Trustees' responsibilities, the Members of Council are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the Members of Council determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error. In preparing the financial statements, the Members of Council are responsible for assessing the charity's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the Members of Council either intend to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

We have been appointed as auditor under section 144 of the Charities Act 2011 and section 44(1)(c) of the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005 and report in accordance with the Acts and relevant regulations made or having effect thereunder.

A further description of our responsibilities is available on the Financial Reporting Council's website at: https://www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities. This description forms part of our auditor's report.

Extent to which the audit was considered capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud

Irregularities, including fraud, are instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations. We design procedures in line with our responsibilities, outlined above and on the Financial Reporting Council's website, to detect material misstatements in respect of irregularities, including fraud.

We obtain and update our understanding of the entity, its activities, its control environment, and likely future developments, including in relation to the legal and regulatory framework applicable and how the entity is complying with that framework. Based on this understanding, we identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion. This includes consideration of the risk of acts by the entity that were contrary to applicable laws and regulations, including fraud.

In response to the risk of irregularities and non-compliance with laws and regulations, including fraud, we designed procedures which included:

- Enquiry of management and those charged with governance around actual and potential litigation and claims as well as actual, suspected and alleged fraud;
- Reviewing minutes of meetings of those charged with governance;
- Assessing the extent of compliance with the laws and regulations considered to have a direct material effect on the financial statements or the operations of the entity through enquiry and inspection;
- Reviewing financial statement disclosures and testing to supporting documentation to assess compliance with applicable laws and regulations;
- Performing audit work over the risk of management bias and override of controls, including testing of journal entries and other adjustments for appropriateness, evaluating the business rationale of significant transactions outside the normal course of business and reviewing accounting estimates for indicators of potential bias.

Because of the inherent limitations of an audit, there is a risk that we will not detect all irregularities, including those leading to a material misstatement in the financial statements or non-compliance with regulation. This risk increases the more that compliance with a law or regulation is removed from the events and transactions reflected in the financial statements, as we will be less likely to become aware of instances of non-compliance. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.

Other matters

Your attention is drawn to the fact that the charity has prepared financial statements in accordance with "Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102)" (as amended) in preference to the Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice issued on 1 April 2005 which is referred to in the extant regulations but has now been withdrawn.

This has been done in order for the financial statements to provide a true and fair view in accordance with current Generally Accepted Accounting Practice.

Use of this report

This report is made solely to the charity's trustees, as a body, in accordance with part 4 of the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations

2008 and regulation 10 of the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the charity's trustees those matters we are required to state to them in an auditors' report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the charity and the charity's trustees as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.



Tracey Richardson BSc (Hons) FCA (Senior Statutory Auditor) 10 March 2023
Chartered Accountants
Statutory Auditor
Ruthlyn House
90 Lincoln Road
Peterborough
Cambridgeshire
PE1 2SP

Azets Audit Services is eligible for appointment as auditor of the charity by virtue of its eligibility for appointment as auditor of a company under section 1212 of the Companies Act 2006.

BRITISH ORNITHOLOGISTS' UNION

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2022

Current financial year	**Notes**	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Endowment funds £	**Total 2022 £**	Total 2021 £
Income from:						
Donations and legacies	**3**	37,967	10,000	–	**47,967**	33,596
Charitable activities	**4**	129,240	–	–	**129,240**	117,312
Investments	**5**	19,321	4,323	1,472	**25,116**	31,619
Total income and endowments		186,528	14,323	1,472	**202,323**	182,527
Expenditure on:						
Raising funds	**6**	57,738	–	–	**57,738**	55,126
Charitable activities	**7**	139,690	56,339	–	**196,029**	173,651
Total expenditure		197,428	56,339	–	**253,767**	228,777
Net gains/(losses) on investments	**12**	(39,644)	–	(10,257)	**(49,901)**	71,024
Net (outgoing)/incoming resources before transfers		(50,544)	(42,016)	(8,785)	**(101,345)**	24,774
Gross transfers between funds		5,633	(5,633)	–	–	–
Net movement in funds		(44,911)	(47,649)	(8,785)	**(101,345)**	24,774
Fund balances at 1 January 2022		650,736	362,098	162,443	**1,175,277**	1,150,503
Fund balances at 31 December 2022		605,825	314,449	153,658	**1,073,932**	1,175,277

The statement of financial activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year.

All income and expenditure is derived from continuing activities.

BRITISH ORNITHOLOGISTS' UNION

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES (CONTINUED)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2022

Prior financial year (2021)	**Notes**	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Endowment funds £	**Total 2021 £**
Income from:					
Donations and legacies	**3**	33,596	–	–	**33,596**
Charitable activities	**4**	117,312	–	–	**117,312**
Investments	**5**	26,339	3,854	1,426	**31,619**
Total income and endowments		177,247	3,854	1,426	**182,527**
Expenditure on:					
Raising funds	**6**	55,126	–	–	**55,126**
Charitable activities	**7**	96,164	77,487	–	**173,651**
Total expenditure		151,290	77,487	–	**228,777**
Net gains/(losses) on investments	**12**	50,599	–	20,425	**71,024**
Net (outgoing)/incoming resources before transfers		76,556	(73,633)	21,851	24,774
Gross transfers between funds		7,749	(7,749)	–	–
Net movement in funds		84,305	(81,382)	21,851	24,774
Fund balances at 1 January 2021		566,431	443,480	140,592	1,150,503
Fund balances at 31 December 2021		650,736	362,098	162,443	1,175,277

The statement of financial activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year.

All income and expenditure is derived from continuing activities.

BRITISH ORNITHOLOGISTS' UNION

BALANCE SHEET
AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2022

		2022		2021	
Fixed assets	**Notes**	**£**	**£**	£	£
Investments	**13**		519,707		565,806
Current assets					
Debtors	**15**	**47,702**		52,408	
Cash at bank and in hand		**545,662**		617,383	
		593,364		669,791	
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	**16**	**(39,139)**		(60,320)	
Net current assets			**554,225**		609,471
Total assets less current liabilities			**1,073,932**		1,175,277
Capital funds					
Endowment funds - general					
General endowment funds	**20**		**153,658**		162,443
Income funds					
Restricted funds	**19**		**314,449**		362,098
Unrestricted funds			**605,825**		650,736
			1,073,932		1,175,277

The accounts were approved by the Members of Council on 1 March 2023.



Prof Juliet Vickery President

BRITISH ORNITHOLOGISTS' UNION

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2022

1 Accounting policies

Charity information

The British Ornithologists' Union is a registered charity in England and Wales (249877) and Scotland (SC044850) and is unincorporated.

The charity is a public benefit company.

The charity's place of business is:
PO Box 79, Pembroke, SA72 9AX, United Kingdom.

1.1 Accounting convention

The accounts have been prepared in accordance with the charity's trust deed, the Charities Act 2011, the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005, the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006 (as amended) and "Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102)" (as amended for accounting periods commencing from 1 January 2016). The charity is a Public Benefit Entity as defined by FRS 102.

The charity has taken advantage of the provisions in the SORP for charities applying FRS 102 Update Bulletin 1 not to prepare a Statement of Cash Flows.

The financial statements have departed from the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 only to the extent required to provide a true and fair view. This departure has involved following the Statement of Recommended Practice for charities applying FRS 102 rather than the version of the Statement of Recommended Practice which is referred to in the Regulations but which has since been withdrawn.

The financial statements are prepared in sterling, which is the functional currency of the charity. Monetary amounts in these financial statements are rounded to the nearest £.

The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention, [modified to include the revaluation of freehold properties and to include investment properties and certain financial instruments at fair value]. The principal accounting policies adopted are set out below.

1.2 Going concern

At the time of approving the financial statements, the Members of Council have a reasonable expectation that the charity has adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future. Thus the Members of Council continue to adopt the going concern basis of accounting in preparing the financial statements.

1.3 Charitable funds

Unrestricted funds are available for use at the discretion of the Members of Council in furtherance of their charitable objectives unless the funds have been designated for other purposes.

Designated funds are unrestricted funds earmarked by the trustees for particular future project or commitment.

Restricted funds are subjected to restrictions on their expenditure declared by the donor or through the terms of an appeal, and fall into one of two sub-classes: restricted income funds or endowment funds.

Endowment funds are subject to specific conditions by donors that the capital must be maintained by the charity.

BRITISH ORNITHOLOGISTS' UNION

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2022

1 Accounting policies (continued)

1.4 Income

All incoming resources are included in the statement of financial activities when entitlement has passed to the charity; it is probable that the economic benefits associated with the transaction will flow to the charity and the amount can be reliably measured. The following specific policies are applied to particular categories of income:

- income from donations or grants is recognised when there is evidence of entitlement to the gift, receipt is probable and its amount can be measured reliably.
- legacy income is recognised when receipt is probable and entitlement is established.
- income from donated goods is measured at the fair value of the goods unless this is impractical to measure reliably, in which case the value is derived from the cost to the donor or the estimated resale value. Donated facilities and services are recognised in the accounts when received if the value can be reliably measured. No amounts are included for the contribution of general volunteers.
- income from contracts for the supply of services is recognised with the delivery of the contracted service. This is classified as unrestricted funds unless there is a contractual requirement for it to be spent on a particular purpose and returned if unspent, in which case it may be regarded as restricted.

1.5 Expenditure

Expenditure is recognised on an accruals basis as a liability is incurred. Expenditure includes any VAT which cannot be fully recovered, and is classified under headings of the statement of financial activities to which it relates:

- expenditure on raising funds includes the costs of all fundraising activities, events, non-charitable trading activities, and the sale of donated goods.
- expenditure on charitable activities includes all costs incurred by a charity in undertaking activities that further its charitable aims for the benefit of its beneficiaries, including those support costs and costs relating to the governance of the charity apportioned to charitable activities.
- other expenditure includes all expenditure that is neither related to raising funds for the charity nor part of its expenditure on charitable activities.

All costs are allocated to expenditure categories reflecting the use of the resource. Direct costs attributable to a single activity are allocated directly to that activity. Shared costs are apportioned between the activities they contribute to on a reasonable, justifiable and consistent basis.

BRITISH ORNITHOLOGISTS' UNION

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2022

1 Accounting policies (continued)

Overheads

Overhead costs are allocated to the relevant cost centres in the following proportions:

	Office costs	A F Langford remuneration	L Walker remuneration	S P Dudley remuneration
Conference costs	15%	7.5%	22.5%	22.5%
Management and administration	45%	47.5%	60%	60%
IBIS publishing costs	37.5%	45%	15%	15%
Research costs	2.5%	–	2.5%	2.5%
	100%	100%	100%	100%

These proportions were decided upon by the trustees, who believe that they represent a fair reflection of the resources expended by the charity on each activity.

1.6 Fixed asset investments

Unlisted equity investments are initially recorded at cost, and subsequently measured at fair value. If fair value cannot be reliably measured, assets are measured at cost less impairment.

Listed investments are measured at fair value with changes in fair value being recognised in income or expenditure.

1.7 Cash and cash equivalents

Cash and cash equivalents include cash in hand, deposits held at call with banks, other short-term liquid investments with original maturities of three months or less, and bank overdrafts. Bank overdrafts are shown within borrowings in current liabilities.

1.8 Financial instruments

The charity has elected to apply the provisions of Section 11 'Basic Financial Instruments' and Section 12 'Other Financial Instruments Issues' of FRS 102 to all of its financial instruments.

Financial instruments are recognised in the charity's balance sheet when the charity becomes party to the contractual provisions of the instrument.

Financial assets and liabilities are offset, with the net amounts presented in the financial statements, when there is a legally enforceable right to set off the recognised amounts and there is an intention to settle on a net basis or to realise the asset and settle the liability simultaneously.

Basic financial assets

Basic financial assets, which include debtors and cash and bank balances, are initially measured at transaction price including transaction costs and are subsequently carried at amortised cost using the effective interest method unless the arrangement constitutes a financing transaction, where the transaction is measured at the present value of the future receipts discounted at a market rate of interest. Financial assets classified as receivable within one year are not amortised.

BRITISH ORNITHOLOGISTS' UNION

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2022

1 Accounting policies (continued)

Basic financial liabilities

Basic financial liabilities, including creditors and bank loans are initially recognised at transaction price unless the arrangement constitutes a financing transaction, where the debt instrument is measured at the present value of the future payments discounted at a market rate of interest. Financial liabilities classified as payable within one year are not amortised.

Debt instruments are subsequently carried at amortised cost, using the effective interest rate method.

Trade creditors are obligations to pay for goods or services that have been acquired in the ordinary course of operations from suppliers. Amounts payable are classified as current liabilities if payment is due within one year or less. If not, they are presented as non-current liabilities. Trade creditors are recognised initially at transaction price and subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method.

Derecognition of financial liabilities

Financial liabilities are derecognised when the charity's contractual obligations expire or are discharged or cancelled.

1.9 Employee benefits

The cost of any unused holiday entitlement is recognised in the period in which the employee's services are received.

Termination benefits are recognised immediately as an expense when the charity is demonstrably committed to terminate the employment of an employee or to provide termination benefits.

2 Critical accounting estimates and judgements

In the application of the charity's accounting policies, the Members of Council are required to make judgements, estimates and assumptions about the carrying amount of assets and liabilities that are not readily apparent from other sources. The estimates and associated assumptions are based on historical experience and other factors that are considered to be relevant. Actual results may differ from these estimates.

The estimates and underlying assumptions are reviewed on an ongoing basis. Revisions to accounting estimates are recognised in the period in which the estimate is revised where the revision affects only that period, or in the period of the revision and future periods where the revision affects both current and future periods.

3 Donations and legacies	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	**2022**	2021
	£	£	**£**	£
Donations and gifts	738	10,000	**10,738**	1,197
Subscriptions	37,229	-	**37,229**	32,399
	37,967	10,000	**47,967**	33,596

BRITISH ORNITHOLOGISTS' UNION

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2022

4	**Charitable activities**	**2022**	2021
		£	£
	Publication income – IBIS	**108,752**	96,793
	Other publication income	**71**	10
	Conference income	**20,417**	20,509
		129,240	117,312

5	**Investments**	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Endowment funds general	**Total 2022**	Total 2021
		£	£	£	**£**	£
	Income from listed investments	17,099	4,323	1,472	**22,894**	31,595
	Interest receivable	2,222	–	–	**2,222**	24
		19,321	4,323	1,472	**25,116**	31,619
	For the year ended 31 December 2021	26,339	3,854	1,426		31,619

6	**Raising funds**	**2022**	2021
	Fundraising and publicity	**£**	£
	Management costs – purchases	**5,774**	6,718
	Management costs – wages and salaries	**47,070**	41,973
	Management costs – employer's NIC	**1,244**	2,227
	Management costs – pension costs	**3,650**	4,208
	Fundraising and publicity	**57,738**	55,126

7	**Charitable activities**	**2022**	2021
		£	£
	Research – administration costs	**1,861**	1,774
	Publication costs – IBIS	**59,281**	57,498
	Conference costs	**46,723**	19,216
		107,865	78,488
	Grant and bursary funding of activities (see note 8)	**71,356**	82,607
	Share of governance costs (see note 9)	**16,808**	12,556
		196,029	173,651

BRITISH ORNITHOLOGISTS' UNION

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2022

8 Grants and bursaries payable

	2022	2021
	£	£
Awards payable (eight in 2021):		
Michał Jezierski (PhD student, University of Oxford, UK)	**1,500**	-
Verónica Méndez Aragón (Academic Director, University Centre of the Westfjords, Iceland)	**1,500**	-
Kristen Wacker (PhD candidate, University of Michigan, US)	**2,000**	-
Klara K. Nordén (PhD student, Princeton University, US)	**1,885**	-
Teresa Pegan (PhD student, University of Michigan, US)	**1,683**	-
Anap Isphaku Afan (Research Associate, A P Leventis, Nigeria)	**2,449**	-
Roman Alberto Ruggera (Profesor Adjunto, Instituto de Ecorregiones Andinas, Argentina)	**1,500**	-
Chima Josiah Nwaoga (Junior Research Fellow, University of Groningen, Netherlands)	**2,500**	-
Olufemi Olubodun (PhD student, FitzPatrick Institute of African Ornithology, South Africa)	**1,955**	-
Jethro George Gauld (PhD student, University of East Anglia, UK)	-	2,000
Olivia Hicks (Postdoctoral Research Fellow, Centre d'Etudes Biolgiques de Chize, France)	-	1,527
Hannah Moon (PhD student, University of Hawai'i at Manoa, USA)	-	1,450
Benjamin Murphy (PhD student, Fitzpatrick Institute of African Ornithology, South Africa)	-	1,111
Rohit Naniwadekar (Researcher, Nature Conservation Foundation, India)	-	1,499
Çağla Önsal (Masters Student, Koç University, Turkey)	-	1,488
Petra Sumasgutner (Postdoctoral Research Fellow, Konrad Lorenz Research Centre, Austria)	-	1,500
Riva Riley (President's Postdoctoral Fellow, University of Maryland, USA)	-	1,425
Reversal of grants accrued for payment in prior year as projects cancelled:		
Amparo Herrera Dueñas (Freelance scientific researcher, University of Glasgow, UK)	-	(2,400)
Kate Rogerson (Formerly PhD candidate, University of East Anglia, UK)	-	(2,480)
Grants to institutions (four in 2021):		
University of East Anglia, UK (John & Pat Warham Studentship – Kirsty Franklin)	-	10,550
University of Tasmania, Australia (John & Pat Warham Studentship – Paige Green)	**9,289**	23,086
McGill University, Canada (John & Pat Warham Studentship – Émile Brisson-Curadeau)	**25,095**	21,851
University of Tasmania, Australia (Brenda & Tony Gibbs Award – Jennifer Lavers)	-	20,000
Lancaster University (Brenda and Tony Gibbs Award – Stuart Sharp)	**20,000**	-
	71,356	82,607

9 Support and governance costs

	Support costs	Governance costs	2022	2021
	£	£	**£**	£
Audit fees	–	5,220	**5,220**	5,150
Legal and professional	–	2,585	**2,585**	–
Accountancy	–	3,036	**3,036**	2,614
Costs of trustees' and committee meetings	–	1,217	**1,217**	542
Support Officers honoraria	–	4,750	**4,750**	4,250
	–	16,808	**16,808**	12,556
Analysed between				
Charitable activities	–	16,808	**16,808**	12,556

Governance costs includes payments to the auditors of £5,220 (2021 - £5,150) for audit fees and £3,036 (2021 - £2,614) for other services.

BRITISH ORNITHOLOGISTS' UNION

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2022

10 Members of Council

None of the Members of Council (or any persons connected with them) received any remuneration or benefits from the charity during the year.

During the year none of the Members of Council were reimbursed expenses (2021 - 1 member reimbursed £4). These expenses represent travelling costs incurred by the Members of Council in the performance of their duties.

11 Employees

Number of employees	**2022**	2021
The average monthly number employees during the year was:	**2**	2

Employment costs	**2022**	2021
	£	£
Wages and salaries	**84,488**	75,824
Social security costs	**2,222**	3,993
Other pension costs	**6,809**	7,601
	93,519	87,418

No employee received employee benefits of more than £60,000 during the year (2020 – nil).

12 Net gains/(losses) on investments

	2022			2021		
	Unrestricted funds	**Endowment funds**	**Total**	Unrestricted funds	Endowment funds general	Total
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Revaluation of investments	(39,644)	(10,257)	(49,901)	45,005	20,425	65,430
Gain/(loss) on sale of investments	–	–	–	5,594	–	5,594
	(39,644)	(10,257)	(49,901)	50,599	20,425	71,024

13 Fixed asset investments

	Listed investments
Cost or valuation	**£**
At 1 January 2022	565,806
Additions	3,802
Valuation changes	(49,901)
At 31 December 2022	519,707
Carrying amount	
At 31 December 2022	519,707
At 31 December 2021	565,806

BRITISH ORNITHOLOGISTS' UNION

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2022

14	**Financial instruments**	**2022**	2021
	Carrying amount of financial assets	**£**	£
	Trade debtors	**45,676**	31,553
	Other debtors	**766**	8,057
	Bank and cash	**545,662**	617,383
	Measured at cost	**592,104**	656,993
	Listed investments	**519,707**	**565,806**
	Measured at market value	**519,707**	**565,806**
	Carrying amount of financial liabilities		
	Other taxation and social security	**604**	2,152
	Accruals	**14,141**	34,154
	Measured at cost	**14,745**	36,306

15	**Debtors**	**2022**	2021
		£	£
	Amounts falling due within one year:		
	Trade debtors	**45,676**	31,553
	Other debtors	**766**	8,057
	Prepayments and accrued income	**1,260**	12,798
		47,702	52,408

16	**Creditors**	**Notes**	**2022**	2021
			£	£
	Amounts falling due within one year:			
	Other taxation and social security		**604**	2,152
	Deferred income	**17**	**24,394**	24,014
	Accruals		**14,141**	34,154
			39,139	60,320

BRITISH ORNITHOLOGISTS' UNION

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2022

17 Deferred income

	2022	2021
	£	£
Other deferred income	**24,394**	24,014

Deferred income relates to subscriptions received in advance of £19,698 (2021 - £20,189) and income received in advance for conferences in future years of £4,696 (2021 - £3,825).

18 Pensions and other post-retirement benefits

Defined contribution pension plans

Contributions to defined contribution plans are recognised as an expense in the period in which the related service is provided.

The charge to profit or loss in respect of defined contribution plans was £6,809 (2021 - £7,601).

19 Restricted funds

The income funds of the charity include restricted funds comprising the following unexpended balances of donations and grants held on trust for specific purposes:

		Movement in funds (2021)			
	Balance at 1 Jan 2021	Income	Expenditure	Transfers	Balance at 31 Dec 2021
	£	£	£	£	£
Research Fund	75,779	3,854	–	–	79,633
John & Pat Warham Scholarship Fund	233,457	–	(55,487)	(5,549)	172,421
Brenda & Tony Gibbs Bequest	134,244	–	(22,000)	(2,200)	110,044
	443,480	3,854	(77,487)	(7,749)	362,098

		Movement in funds (2022)			
	Balance at 1 Jan 2022	**Income**	**Expenditure**	**Transfers**	**Balance at 31 Dec 2022**
	£	£	£	£	**£**
Research Fund	79,633	4,323	–	–	**83,956**
John & Pat Warham Scholarship Fund	172,421	–	(34,384)	(3,438)	**134,599**
Brenda & Tony Gibbs Bequest	110,044	–	(21,955)	(2,195)	**85,894**
Small grants	–	10,000	–	–	**10,000**
	362,098	14,323	(56,339)	(5,633)	**314,449**

Restricted funds include the Research Fund. This includes the income arising from investments held in the Endowment Fund.

The John & Pat Warham Scholarship Fund is to be used for research on Sphenisciform and Procellariiform seabirds and the income arising from investments.

The Brenda and Tony Gibbs Bequest is to be used for research on tracking and migration studies including the use of new technologies.

The transfer to the unrestricted fund represents an administration fee of 10% of the grants awarded from the John and Pat Warham Scholarship Fund and the Brenda and Tony Gibbs Bequest.

The small grants fund represents a donation that was received in the year that is to be used to award small grants in future years.

BRITISH ORNITHOLOGISTS' UNION

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2022

20 Endowment funds

Endowment funds represent assets which must be held permanently by the charity. Income arising on the endowment funds can be used in accordance with the objects of the charity and is included as restricted income. Any capital gains or losses arising on the assets form part of the fund.

		Movement in funds (2021)				
	Balance at 1 Jan 2021	Income	Expenditure	Transfers	Revaluations gains and losses	Balance at 31 Dec 2021
	£	£	£	£	£	£
L & MT Fund	110,739	1,426	–	–	16,431	128,596
Research Fund	9,910	–	–	–	1,326	11,236
Hutt Legacy	19,943	–	–	–	2,668	22,611
	140,592	1,426	–	–	20,425	162,443

		Movement in funds (2022)				
	Balance at 1 Jan 2022	**Income**	**Expenditure**	**Transfers**	**Revaluations gains and losses**	**Balance at 31 Dec 2022**
	£	£	£	£	£	£
L & MT Fund	128,596	1,472	–	–	(8,372)	121,696
Research Fund	11,236	–	–	–	(626)	10,610
Hutt Legacy	22,611	–	–	–	(1,259)	21,352
	162,443	1,472	–	–	(10,257)	153,658

The Landsborough and Mary Thomson Research Fund and the Hutt Legacy represent funds set up by individual donors. The purpose of the L&MT Research Fund was to fund research. Income arising from the capital held in investments within Endowment Funds is credited to the restricted Research Fund. The Research Fund represents permanent capital, the income from which is transferred to the fund of the same name in Restricted Funds to be spent solely on research activities (e.g. grants and bursaries). The Hutt Legacy is intended for the general purposes of the Union and interest arising from this item is credited to General Unrestricted Funds which itself represents investments and net assets which are held for the daily running and maintenance of the charity.

21 Analysis of net assets between funds

	2022			
	Unrestricted funds	**Restricted funds**	**Endowment funds**	**Total 2022**
Fund balances at 31 December 2022 are represented by:	£	£	£	£
Investments	248,052	117,997	153,658	519,707
Current assets/(liabilities)	357,773	196,452	–	554,225
	605,825	314,449	153,658	1,073,932

BRITISH ORNITHOLOGISTS' UNION

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2022

21 Analysis of net assets between funds (continued)

	2021			
	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Endowment funds	Total 2021
Fund balances at 31 December 2021 are represented by:	£	£	£	**£**
Investments	266,995	136,368	162,443	**565,806**
Current assets/(liabilities)	383,741	225,730	–	**609,471**
	650,736	362,098	162,443	**1,175,277**

22 Financial commitments, guarantees and contingent liabilities

During the year the charity awarded the final John and Pat Warham Studentship grant of £85,000. This Studentship is due to run from 2023 to 2027.

23 Related party transactions

There were no disclosable related party transactions during the year (2020 – none).

Remuneration of key management personnel

The remuneration of key management personnel including employer pension contributions is as follows:

	2022	2021
	£	£
Aggregate compensation	**56,154**	52,148

Transactions with related parties

During the year payments of £1,842 (2021 - £nil) were made to Professor J Gill, wife of G Appleton, a Trustee. This was for IBIS editorial services and the transactions were on an arms length basis.

A donation of £10,000 was received in the year from a Trustee. No benefits were provided to the Trustee in respect of this donation.

THE BRITISH ORNITHOLOGISTS' UNION

England & Wales - Charity number 249877

Accounts

British Ornithologists' Union

advancing ornithithology

Annual Report & Accounts

birds | people | science



2021

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IBISJOURNAL

IBIS_JOURNAL

英国鸟类学会会刊

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Cover image: Researcher radio tracking waders
© Rebecca Laidlaw

President's statement



Prof Juliet Vickery

At the start of 2021, I certainly would have been pushed to name the 15th letter of the Greek Alphabet – now everyone knows Omicron, which has joined the growing list of Covid-related words and phrases such as 'furlough', 'double vaxxed' and 'you're on mute'. Things are supposed to get easier the longer you do a job or fulfil a role, right? I suspect many of you will not feel this is the case right now – I certainly don't despite being three years into my Presidency of a 163-year-old society.

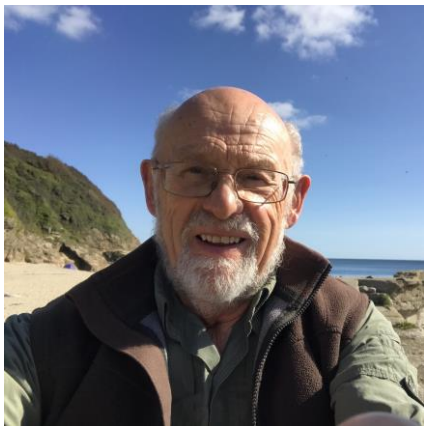
The BOU is having to adapt and be increasingly innovative in order to deliver its mission of promoting the science of ornithology. This annual report is testament of the ability of staff and members to do just this – to rise to the challenge and change with the times. Its pages are packed with facts and figures, activities and events and the names of a dynamic and committed team who have enabled it all to happen. I want to start by thanking all those whose names feature in this report. They have helped BOU 'go virtual' on many platforms, 'go global' and reach wider, more diverse audiences, and 'go up' in regaining the no. 1 slot with our journal, IBIS, and remain firmly no. 1 in ornithological science on social media.

We emerged from this year having built on our reputation as a prominent and respected player in the virtual ornithological world. Our high-profile presence through Twitter (@IBIS_JOURNAL) has grown again, by 11% on 2020, and we now have over 19,500 followers. @IBIS_JOURNAL remains by far the largest ornithology society/journal account on the platform helped by the highly engaged ornithological Twitter community. And for those willing and able to multitask in a virtual sense, we are also on Facebook, Instagram and China's largest social media platform, Weibo.

Much of this social media activity directs people to our website. Compared with 2020, our overall website visitor numbers increased by 22%, with a 24% increase in the number of new visitors and evidence of our global reach in that almost 70% of visitors to the site are from outside the UK. The main arrival point is #theBOUblog – the most-read section of the BOU website – and this has been a bumper year. In 2021, a total of 111 blog posts were published, the highest annual total to date, including our 600th article since the launch in 2012. In January we rolled out our dynamic new member area on the website where, allowing, for the first time, members to manage their own membership details, access IBIS and register at reduced member rates for BOU events.



JANET KEAR UNION MEDAL



Nigel Crocker was presented with the Janet Kear Union Medal at the annual conference in March.

The award recognises Nigel's enormous contribution to the BOU, in particular his financial management, as both a former Honorary Treasurer and current Chair of our Investment Trustees, spanning four decades.

For the full citation see IBIS 163: 1129–1130 doi: 10.111/ibi.12946.

The Janet Kear Union Medal recognises an individual's outstanding contribution to the BOU. Formerly the Union Medal, the award was renamed after former BOU President and IBIS edtior, Prof Janet Kear, when the medal was redesigned in 2019.

Following on from the BOUs first virtual conference in 2020, we successfully delivered three more in 2021. Our annual conference on 'Restoring bird populations' showcased new techniques and approaches in restoration science, research and policy. Through 30 talks with associated Twitter presentations, 15 poster presentations and 17 Twitter-only 'talks', we looked beyond slowing species' declines and avoiding extinction, to actively restoring species, landscapes and indeed whole ecosystems. Added inspiration for this came from a wonderful Alfred Newton Lecture, delivered by Prof Carl Jones (Durrell Wildlife Conservation Trust), who truly convinced us that 'every species can be saved'. This was a message that went far and wide, given that we had 235 registrants from 40 countries and an in-the-room equivalent audience on Twitter of 1,580 over the three days.

A first in 2021 was to run not one, but two, autumn scientific meetings 'Birds and people: from conflict to co-existence' and 'Developments in monitoring science'. The willingness of speakers to pre-record talks, and the fact that we have a behind the scenes volunteer team of technological whizzes, ensured split-second timing, allowing live Q&As and scope for more discussion on session-specific Slack channels.

IBIS, our flagship journal, continues to lead. Half of our editorial team is now outside the UK with two editors in the US and one in Australia and Zoom meetings enabling active participation even, for some, at slightly antisocial hours. The 'going global' theme is also evident in the introduction of dual language abstracts to improve accessibility of the science we publish. IBIS is a team effort, and the hard work of authors (of published papers as well as blog and social media content promoting the journal), reviewers, the IBIS Management Committee and its team of Editors and Associate Editors supported by Angela Langford and Wiley, succeeded in securing IBIS the top slot in ornithology – in June 2021, IBIS achieved an Impact Factor of 2.517 (from 2.076), ahead of all other 27 journals ranked in the ornithology category.

In our support of the ornithological community, we continue to actively help overcome barriers preventing equality for ornithologists. The work of the Engagement Committee champions many elements of our equality and diversity work. This year, the committee launched the #BOUdiversityBlog, following on from our successful Rainbow Blogs series, highlighting a wider range of diversity issues within the ornithological community and beyond. We continue to progress towards a 50:50 gender balance across BOU Council and committees, seeing a 53:47 (male:female) split (compared to 64:36 in 2019) and women now outnumbering men on Council (by one!) for the first time in our history. The Awards Nominations Committee, set up in 2020, produced more detailed criteria for our awards, with the key aim of increasing the diversity of nominations through clarifying the broad range of contributions for which they can be awarded. The science supported through research grants, career development bursaries and studentships also goes far and wide. For example, the eight small research grants awarded in 2021 were to in-country ornithologists working in Hawaii, South Africa, France, India, Turkey and USA. These activities complement other recent new practices and procedures, such as blind refereeing of IBIS papers and open recruitment for new editors that are designed to help ensure openness and inclusivity.

ADMINISTRATION DETAILS

BRITISH ORNITHOLOGISTS' UNION

Founded 1858

Registered as a Charity:

England and Wales, no. 249877

Scotland, no. SC044850

Address

PO Box 417, Peterborough PE7 3FX, UK

Tel: +44 (0) 1 733 844 820

Email: bou@bou.org.uk

Web: bou.org.uk / ibis.ac.uk

As at 31 December 2021

BOU Staff

Chief Operations Officer
Mr Steve P. Dudley

Journal & Office Manager
Mrs Angela F. Langford

Council Officers

President	Prof Juliet Vickery
Vice Presidents	Prof Tony Fox
	Dr Richard Bradbury
Honorary Secretary	Dr Helen Baker
Honorary Treasurer	Mr Graham F. Appleton

Ordinary Members of Council

Dr Sonya Clegg (Chair, Grants Committee), Dr Emma Cunningham, Dr Francis Daunt (Chair, Meetings Committee), Dr Mark Eaton, Dr Tom Finch (Chair, Engagement Committee) Dr James Gilroy (Chair, Records Committee), Dr Rosemarie Kentie (Chair, IBIS Management Committee), Dr Julie Miller, Dr Rosemary Trevelyan and Dr Lucy Wright (Chair, Awards Nominations Committee).

It is sad but, perhaps, unsurprising that BOU membership dropped during 2021. Recruitment is often associated with conferences, and it is harder to persuade people to join when their experiences are only virtual. Sadly, several long-standing members died, and others found themselves under unexpected financial pressures. The report from the Treasurer, Graham Appleton highlights other important points – both positive and negative – and reminds us of the unpredictability of the revenue stream from IBIS. Investments did well in 2021, thanks to our wise and expert Investment Trustees (Nigel Crocker, Richard Price and Stephen Rumsey) and this income helps to provide funds that support ornithology and ornithologists, in line with our strategic aims.

So, what about the year ahead? Regardless of how far we do, or do not, progress along the Greek alphabet, I am confident the BOU will still be finding new ways to share the joy, inspiration and insights of the avian world. I also know we have one certain, big, change ahead, and that is to find a successor for the BOU's Chief Operations Officer, Steve Dudley. Under his extraordinary 25-year-watch, and thanks to his drive and enthusiasm, the BOU has been transformed. His role has been pivotal in almost everything reported here in this report and the same has been true every year for a quarter of a century! In the year ahead we will reflect and celebrate Steve's lasting legacy and he will, without doubt, be a hard act to follow. But 2021 shows us just what a remarkable, innovative and engaged community we are. I am confident that it is one from which, or to which, we will draw a talented new COO, to help steward the next phase of the BOU's history.

Structure, Governance & Management

The British Ornithologists' Union is an unincorporated charity, no. 249877 (England & Wales) and SC044850 (Scotland).

The object of the BOU is the promotion of the science of ornithology. Its governing document is the Rules adopted at the Annual General Meeting in 2010, and last updated by Council in July 2020. Under the rules, the governing body, the Council of the Union, is responsible for the running of the Union's business, supported by its staff. Council may delegate functions to standing or ad hoc committees that report to Council. The Union's Council retains overall responsibility for matters so delegated.

The BOU has six standing committees: the Awards Nominations Committee, the Engagement Committee, the Grants Committee, the IBIS Management Committee, the Meetings Committee and the Records Committee.

Elected members of Council are Trustees of the charity. Members of Council are recruited from within the ornithological community. Where possible, Council

ADMINISTRATION DETAILS

CONT/.

Trustees

The following individuals served as Trustees of the charity at the time of Council approving this annual report and accounts:
Mr Graham F. Appleton, Dr Helen Baker, Dr Richard Bradbury, Dr Sonya Clegg, Dr Emma Cunningham, Dr Francis Daunt, Dr Mark Eaton, Prof Tony Fox, Dr James Gilroy, Dr Rosemarie Kentie, Dr Julie Miller, Prof Juliet Vickery, Dr Rosie Trevelyan and Dr Lucy Wright.

The following individuals also served as Trustees of the charity for part of the year covered by these annual report and accounts:
Mr Neil J. Bucknell, Prof Will Cresswell, Dr Jennifer Smart and Dr Hugh Wright.

Editorial positions

At 31 December 2021 the following editorial positions were held:

IBIS Editor in Chief	Dr Dominic McCafferty
IBIS Editors	Dr Rauri Bowie
	Dr Richard Fuller
	Prof Rebecca Kimball
	Dr Ruedi Nager
	Prof Jeremy Wilson
Blog Editor	Mr Connor Panter

Investment Trustees

The following individuals served as Investment Trustees for the Union during the period of this report and accounts:
Mr Nigel J. Crocker, Mr Richard Price and Mr Stephen J. Rumsey.

members will have served on one or more of the BOU's standing committees prior to nomination for election to Council. Those standing for election to BOU Council as an incoming chair of a standing committee will have served for at least two years on the respective committee. On election, new Council members are provided with relevant Union documents to help familiarise them with current Union activities and to provide information on the duties and responsibilities of being a Trustee of the Union.

Council continually reviews the risks to which the Union is exposed and is satisfied that, as far as is practicable, it has taken appropriate steps to mitigate any risk.

The Union employs full-time staff who work from their respective home offices. Staff salaries are reviewed annually, as part of our staff appraisal process, conducted by the President and Honorary Secretary. Pay is normally adjusted in line with inflation (CPIH) and there is an option to award an unconsolidated performance-based bonus, in exceptional circumstances.

Objectives & Activities

Mission statement

The British Ornithologists' Union will promote understanding and conservation of the world's birds, advance ornithology within the scientific community and promote scientific ornithology to the wider birdwatching public. The BOU mission will be achieved by the following means:

- Publishing IBIS as a leading international journal of ornithological science.
- Organising a programme of meetings and conferences.
- Awarding grants and bursaries for ornithological research.
- Encouraging liaison between those actively engaged in ornithological research.
- Providing a representative body of the scientific community, able to provide ornithological information and advice to government and other policy makers.
- Maintaining and publishing the official list of birds recorded in Britain- The British List.

Council activities

At our AGM in April, held for the second year running on Zoom, Dr Richard Bradbury was elected as Vice President to replace Neil Bucknell, Dr Mark Eaton was elected as an Ordinary member of Council to replace Prof Will Cresswell, Dr Tom Finch was elected as an Ordinary Member of Council, to replace Dr High Wright as Chair of the Engagement Committee and Dr Lucy Wright was elected as an Ordinary Member of Council to Chair of the Engagement Committee (previously a co-opted member).

Elected members of Council, as Trustees of the charity, confirm that they have referred to the guidance contained in the Charity Commission's general guidance on public benefit when reviewing objectives and activities.

ADMINISTRATION DETAILS

CONT/.

Bankers

The Union holds accounts with the following banks:

CAF Bank Ltd
25 Kings Hill, West Malling, Kent ME19 4JQ

Natwest Bank plc
PO Box 6037, Brompton Road, London SW13 1XJ

Scottish Widows
67 Morrison Street, Edinburgh EH3 8YJ

Solicitor

The Union's solicitors are:
Laytons
Ranger House, Walnut Tree Close, Guildford, Surrey GU1 4UL

Accountant & Auditor

The Union's accountant and auditor are:
Azets Audit Services
Ruthlyn House, 90 Lincoln Road, Peterborough PE1 2SP

We were delighted that long-standing member, Nigel Crocker, accepted our award of the Janet Kear Union Medal for his outstanding contribution to BOU during his decades of service as both Treasurer and Chair of our Investment Trustees (page 3).

Activities in Scotland

The BOU is an unincorporated charity registered in Scotland (SC044850). As well as having members in Scotland, at the time of this report, four of our Trustees, Dr Helen Baker, Dr Emma Cunningham, Dr Francis Daunt and Dr Julie Miller, three of our journal editors, Dr Dominic McCafferty, Dr Rudolf Nager and Prof Jeremy Wilson, and our Chief Operations Officer, Steve Dudley, also resided there.

Achievements & Performance

Reports on our activities from the BOU Office and Standing Committees

The BOU Office

Staff

During the year, the BOU employed two full-time, home-based staff members within the BOU Office: Steve Dudley (Chief Operations Officer) and Angela Langford (Journal & Office Manager).

Office duties

The BOU Office is responsible for the effective running of the BOU, managed by the Chief Operations Officer and overseen by Council and the Union's standing committees.

The BOU Office's key responsibilities are:

- undertake the day to day running of the BOU;
- to support BOU Council and its committees, implementing much of the work arising from them, specifically;
  - working with the IBIS Management Committee, manage non-editorial, business and marketing of the Union's journal, IBIS;
  - working with the Meetings Committee, organise BOU conferences and meetings;
  - working with the Engagement Committee, develop and deliver engagement initiatives including equality and diversity items;
  - working with the Grants Committee, manage the Union's Small Grants and Career Development Bursary schemes, the John & Pat Warham Studentships and the Brenda & Tony Gibbs awards;
  - working with the Records Committee, manage the British List and associated areas;
  - working with the Awards Nominations Committee to develop and deliver changes to our nominations processes and awards criteria;

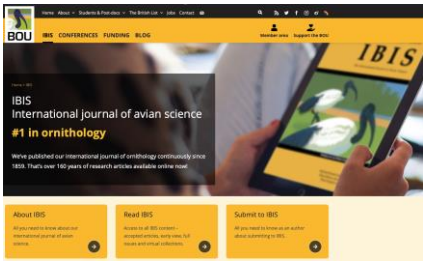
BOU.ORG.UK

The Union's primary website promotes the BOU to a wide audience and is important for recruiting new members, disseminating information about the work of the BOU, taking online bookings for conferences and for selling BOU publications.



IBIS.AC.UK

The primary gateway to IBIS – the BOU's international journal of avian science.



- working with the Honorary Treasurer, maintain accounts and budgets and the preparation of annual accounts and prepare annual forecasts;
- working with the IBIS Editorial Team
  - oversee and manage the manuscript process and flow for IBIS;
  - oversee marketing of the journal;
- to oversee the business and contractual sides of IBIS;
- to service the BOU membership;
- to develop and manage the BOU's web content;
- to develop and manage the BOU's social media activity;
- to undertake routine administration;
- to manage BOU sales, stock and storage facility;
- to handle general enquiries, press and publicity.

In addition to working with the Union's various committees (see individual committee reports below) the BOU Office undertook the activities outlined below.

Website

BOU.ORG.UK

At the end of 2020 we delivered our new-look website and in January of this year we rolled out our new member area (using MemberPress) which allowed, for the first time, members to manage their own membership, access IBIS and register at reduced member rates for BOU events. The new dynamic site has been very well received and widely praised by members and visitors alike.

Recognising the importance of maintaining a modern, up-to-date, and dynamic website, Council sanctioned the latest incarnation of the site which represents the largest infrastructure investment we have made to date. With a dynamic social media presence delivering thousands of visitors to our website annually, the website remains a key component of our wider communication and promotion strategy, providing the static content for IBIS, membership, conferences and grants and awards that we link to from social media and other online promotion.

We continued to develop the site during the year with work being undertaken to improve the MemberPress side (for internal BOU use) and some work to improve the appearance of the historical blog content. We also published our 600th blog post since we launched #theBOUblog in 2012.

When compared with 2020, our overall website visitor numbers increased by 22%, with the number of new visitors up by 24%, and the total number of page views up by 16%. Looking at visits to the main website sections (reflecting our core activities) of the site, all sections bar the British List (-1%) saw an increase in page views including funding (67%), conferences (23%), blog (7%) and IBIS (5%). Whilst this is all very encouraging, the strength of such increases probably better reflects successful marketing driving people from other online sources to the site. Equally encouraging is that visitors to the site from outside the UK in 2021 represent 66% of all users, showing the global reach of the BOU.

OUR SOCIAL YEAR

@IBIS_JOURNAL

Tweets	5,568	-9%
Engagements	139,968	-21%
Organic impressions	10.4m	-12%
Followers at 31 Dec 21	19,477	+11%

Twitter (@IBIS_JOURNAL) remains our primary platform and at the end of the year we had just short of 19,500 followers. @IBIS_JOURNAL remains by far the largest ornithology society/journal account on the platform and we continue to provide an active news service for ornithologists around the world, on which we promote newly published papers from a wide selection of ornithology and ecology journals, conferences, meetings, news items, job opportunities and more. The ornithological Twitter community is highly engaged and remains the envy of many other taxa-based groups within ecology, and helps us to spread BOU, IBIS and other ornithological news far wider than previously.

IBISJOURNAL

Posts	4,219	+2%
Engagements	82,270	-40%
Impressions/reach	2.71m	-19%
Fans at 31 Dec 21	10,414	+6%

Our follower-base on Facebook (FACEBOOK.COM/IBISJOURNAL) continues to grow, but despite a slight increase in content posted, we saw a decrease in engagements, mirroring that of Twitter, and we expect the same dynamics are in play.

Conferences

BOU.ORG.UK/BOU-CONFERENCES/

See also Meetings Committee (page 19).

Like other societies, for the second year running our conferences were massively impacted by the pandemic, with both our in-person events switched to online delivery. Meaning that we delivered three virtual conferences on Zoom with parallel Twitter events during the year.

One of the cancelled in-person events was, for the second year running, our annual conference due to be held at the University of Nottingham. We are again grateful for the University's continued support and understanding enabling us to carry over our deposits already paid (originally for 2020) for our 2022 event with them.

The switch to online delivery means increased demands on the BOU Office. Thankfully, the success of our first virtual conference in 2020 meant we were in good shape to run three during 2021. With detailed documents already prepared for presenters (separate items for presenting on Zoom and Twitter), for those chairing the virtual sessions, and for attendees, each required only minor tweaking to incorporate lessons learned in 2020. In addition, we retained most of those individuals who helped us deliver our 2020 conferences which enabled seamless delivery of the three 2021 events.

Whilst the cost of attending a BOU virtual event is massively reduced from the cost of attending an in-person event, even these lower prices are beyond the reach of many researchers in developing countries. So, our commitment to run parallel Twitter events alongside all three of our 2021 conferences was not just widely lauded but also delivered free, representing online conferencing for thousands of researchers around the world.

Sponsorship

We are very grateful to Leica Camera (UK) who continued their support in providing prizes for the best paper in IBIS with an early career researcher as lead author and for our science communication awards.

Social media

BOU.ORG.UK/SOCIAL-MEDIA/

See also Engagement Committee (page 12).

Our overall online presence is critical to everything we do as a society. Social media remain our primary marketing tool, enabling us to inform the wider ornithological community about all our activities, including IBIS, conferences, funding and awards, and of course membership.

Key to this is the use of social media to direct people to the BOU and IBIS websites and, after search engine searches and direct-to-site visits, social media remains the most important source of visitors to both of these sites – and importantly, it is the

OUR SOCIAL YEAR

IBIS_JOURNAL

Posts	171	+24%
Engagements	5,801	+28%
Followers at 31 Dec 21	1,469	+12%

Our growth on Instagram (IBIS_JOURNAL) saw a significant step up since last year. We saw this with both Twitter and Facebook in our early years, with it taking time to gain traction on any individual platform.

WEIBO

英国鸟类学会会刊

Posts	16	-20%
Reads	1,222,000	-40%
Followers at 31 Dec 2020	12,123	+13%

Our fourth year on Weibo, China's largest social media platform, saw reduced output and engagement due to our two volunteers having increased work commitments and the continued impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic. This did not however slow down our growth in followers.

ALTMERICS

Despite reduced engagements across our two primary altmetric contributing social platforms, we continue to see significant growth in the number of online mentions of IBIS articles overall (Table 1).

source we have some control over. For 2021, 30% (3% up on 2020) of all referrals to our website originated from social media sources, accounting for 37% of all our referred viewing sessions (+ 10%). So, despite reduced engagement on our two primary platforms, Twitter and Facebook, the overall benefit to the BOU of engagement is clearly increasingly positive.

Our growth on Twitter continues to be notable, with our follower growth increasing by 11% (on 2020). Our own output was again down year-on-year and this no doubt contributed to fewer engagements. But this reduction may also be partly driven by an overall decrease in activity within our community during the pandemic, and the 2021 reduction mirrors that seen in 2020. For those with increased personal pressures, like increased care responsibilities and home schooling during the pandemic, stepping back from social platforms and other work-related activities was very evident over the last two years.

Twitter accounted for 15% of referred traffic to the BOU website (up 3% on 2020).

IBIS continues to attract more online attention than any other ornithology journal. More articles receive more mentions, and importantly more mentions for the major altmetric contributing sources of news media, blogs and social media, and we continue to see significant growth in all these areas (table 1).

The high online attention of IBIS articles means we also have some of the highest altmetric-scoring papers published in ornithology, six of the top 10 including the two highest-scoring papers ever published in our sector. Our highest scoring article is five times that of the highest scoring article in any other ornithological journal.

Table 1: Online mentions of the top 5 altmetric-scoring ornithology journals (in 2021)

			Mentions					
	# Articles	Total AAS*	News	Blog	Twitter	Facebook	Wiki	Policy
IBIS	541	17,954	543	461	28,852	1,045	633	55
change 2020 v 2021	+1.5%	+25%	+54%	+9%	+26%	-8%	+71%	-49%
The Auk	477	6,239	312	184	3,192	132	934	8
change 2020 v 2021	+30%	+7.5%	-8.5%	+7.5%	+8%	-15.5%	+105%	-14%
J Avian Biology (21)	206	4,529	104	82	6,260	400	175	8
change 2020 v 2021	+1.5%	-10%	-48%	+32%	+5%	+5%	+212%	-20%
J Ornithology (21)	265	3,330	104	59	3,276	116	298	5
change 2020 v 2021	+7.5%	+5%	-7%	-3%	+1.5%	-27%	+213%	-62%
Bird Study (21)	188	3,144	27	51	4,765	103	66	15
change 2020 v 2021	+7.5%	+2%	-29%	-50%	+2%	-13%	+127%	-50%

* AAS = Altmetric Attention Score (here combined for # Articles)

Data from Altmetric Explorer (almertic.com/explorer) downloaded 6 January 2022.

Articles attain their respective Altmetric Attention Score (AAS) by different means (table 2) – Twitter remains key to most articles' attention, but some, such as the foraging gulls article, was driven by attention from the main news media. News media take-up is very unpredictable and even thought we work with our publisher, Wiley, ahead of publication for what we deem to be news-worthy articles, providing news media with advance copy and access to a paper, everything we prepare can be lost on the day if something bigger happens and diverts media attention.

Social media attention occurs more levelly, with ourselves the primary originator of most social content shared for IBIS articles. However, an individual author can drive the attention of their own paper with an ongoing Twitter campaign, as has been the case with the article on dogs disturbing nesting plovers.

Table 2: Altmetric breakdown for the top altmetric-scoring articles in IBIS

	Mentions					
	AAS	News	Blog	Twitter	Facebk	Wiki
Dogs disturbing nesting plovers * doi: 10.1111/ibi.12879	2,713	18	4	6,708	4	2
Urban gulls foraging ** doi: 10.1111/ibi.12892	1,089	125	8	222	7	0
Geophagy in Amazonian parrots doi: 10.1111/ibi.12515	389	45	1	44	1	2
Decline of Common Cuckoo doi: 10.1111/ibi.12612	354	1	5	612	6	1
Hill Myna extinction-in-progress *** doi: 10.1111/ibi.12839	348	70	1	77	0	2

* Highest altmetric-scoring paper in ornithology ** Second highest altmetric-scoring paper in ornithology

*** Voted best paper by an early-career researcher in IBIS in 2020

AAS = Altmetric Attention Score

Data from Altmetric Explorer (almertic.com/explorer) downloaded 22 January 2021.

#theBOUblog

BOU.ORG.UK/BLOG/

Our blog remains the main arrival point for visitors and the most-read section of the BOU website, accounting for around a third of overall page views. During the year we published 111 blog posts (79 in 2020) – our highest annual total to date – of which 50 were on IBIS papers (41 in 2020) (see Engagement Committee on page 12 for more detail).

Blogs are increasingly popular in our sector, with more and more journals and societies setting up their own, and as a result they continue to contribute more year on year to our sector's altmetrics. In 2021, 953 blog posts relating to articles published in ornithology journals were recorded by Altmetric – cf. to the 853 in 2020, 756 in 2019 and from a starting point of 61 in 2013) (source: Altmetric Explorer accessed 6 January 2022).

2020 saw a welcome increase in the number of articles from third-party journals being covered on #theBOUblog (21) and we were pleased that we reached this

#THEBOUBLOG

Our most-read blog posts in 2021:

Chasing the ghost bird
Can citizen science data provide evidence that Common Potoos migrate?
Lucas DeGroote
Powdermill Avian Research Center, US

Nest building in a changing climate
Predicting the effects of climate change on the nesting behaviour of birds and other animals
Mark Mainwaring
University of Lancaster, UK

Got an old smartphone? Turn it into a bird-monitoring app
The use of a smartphone app for motion detection to monitor birds remotely
Ronny Steen
Norwegian University of Life Sciences, Norway

E-NEWSLETTERS

Our regular e-newsletters are sent to over 8,000 researchers, and others interested in ornithology, all around the world.

number again in 2021. We'd like to grow this further so please consider promoting your paper, wherever published, on #theBOUblog.

E-newsletters

BOU.ORG.UK/E-NEWSLETTERS /

We published a total of 29 e-newsletters during the year, with a focus on IBIS (monthly new articles and quarterly new issues), conferences (three held during the year) and BOU news.

Press and media

We saw a further increase in the coverage of IBIS articles in the wider media and press, as reflected in the number of altmetric mentions (see table 2 on page 10), which is testament to the work that our journal partner, Wiley, and ourselves put in to try and get our articles covered as widely as possible.

We continue to receive coverage of BOU Records Committee announcements in the UK birding press and online birding services, as well as in regional bird reports and e-groups.

General administrative items

General correspondence (largely emails and contact forms received via the website) continues to increase and take up significant Office time. We continue to maintain a storage facility in Peterborough.

AWARDS NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE

Chair

Dr Lucy Wright (RSPB)

Members

Dr Niall Burton (BTO)
Ms Aurora Gonzalo-Tarodo (University of West England)
Prof Rhys Green (retired, formerly RSPB & University of Cambridge)
Prof Keith Hamer (University of Leeds)
Dr Grant Humphries (HiDef Aerial Surveying)
Dr Rebecca Laidlaw (Natural Resources Wales)
Dr Elizabeth Masden (University of Highlands & Islands)
Mr David Stroud (retired, formerly JNCC)
Dr Alice Trevail (University of Exeter)

Awards Nominations Committee

The Awards Nominations Committee was set up during 2020 to oversee the criteria and nominations process for each of the BOU's awards, currently the Godman-Salvin Prize, Janet Kear Union Medal and the Alfred Newton Lecture. Two meetings were held during 2021 with further business conducted by email.

The Committee's first task was to produce more detailed criteria for the three existing awards, with the key aim of increasing the diversity of nominations, and these were agreed by Council at their November meeting. These new criteria do not change the scope of the awards but simply add detail to clarify the broad range of contributions for which they can be awarded and the nominations and selection process.

During the year a subgroup of early- and mid-career members of the Committee, led by Dr Rebecca Laidlaw, began developing a new award for early to mid-career researchers. Their proposals were considered by the full Committee at the end of the year and the finalised proposal will now go to Council at their first meeting in 2022.

Nominations were sought for the 2023 Alfred Newton Lecture on the theme of evolutionary responses. There were five nominations (four women and one man).

ENGAGEMENT COMMITTEE

Chair

Dr Tom Finch (RSPB)

Members

Dr Ailidh Barnes (BTO)
Dr Lynda Donaldson (Wildfowl & Wetlands Trust)
Mr Steve Dudley, BOU COO
Dr Aonghais Cook (BTO)
Dr Jenny Dunn (University of Lincoln)
Dr Daniel Hayhow (Earthwatch Europe)
Dr Veronica Mendez (The University Centre of the Westfjords, Iceland)
Dr Julie Miller (University of Glasgow)
Mr Connor Panter, Blog Editor (University of Nottingham)
Dr Ashley Sendell-Price (Uppsala University, Sweden)
Dr Saskia Wischnewski (RSPB)
Ms Natalia Zielonka, Social Media Support Officer (University of East Anglia)

EQUALITY & DIVERSITY WORKING GROUP (EDWG)

Chair

Prof Juliet Vickery, BOU President (BTO)

Members

Dr Ailidh Barnes (BTO) *
Dr Emma Cunningham (University of Edinburgh)
Mr Steve Dudley, BOU COO
Dr Jenny Dunn (University of Lincoln)
Dr Tom Finch (RSPB)
Dr Daniel Hayhow (Earthwatch Europe)
Dr Rosie Trevelyan (Cambridge University)
Dr Ashley Sendell-Price (Uppsala University, Sweden) *

* EDWG Secretariat

A panel comprising members of the 2023 Annual Conference Scientific Programme Committee and members of the Awards Nominations Committee independently ranked the five nominees. The top three ranked nominees (two women and one man) were put forward to Council, who approved the selection. The top-ranked nominee, Prof Jane Reid, has accepted Council's invitation to deliver the Alfred Newton Lecture in 2023.

Engagement Committee

The Committee oversees engagement between all parts of the Union, its members and the wider ornithological community, in order to increase awareness of the BOU's activities, champion equality and diversity in the BOU's work, and strive towards a stable membership base. It also aims to advance ornithology, by facilitating communication and collaboration within the community.

The Committee delivers these aims by developing and improving opportunities to engage with more people, primarily through our conferences and social media activities. The Committee also reviews the benefits that the Union provides to its members.

The Committee met twice during 2021, with both meetings held online due to Covid-19 restrictions. Dr Tom Finch joined the Committee as Chair at the BOU's AGM in March. He takes over from Dr Hugh Wright, who played a huge role in growing the Committee and driving its work on Equality and Diversity. Thank you, Hugh.
Reflecting its increasing workload, the Committee welcomed five new members in 2021, a net gain of four. Our new members are: Dr Veronica Mendez (The University Centre of the Westfjords); Dr Aonghais Cook (BTO); Dr Julie Miller (Marine Scotland Science), who joins us from Council; our new Social Media Support Officer Natalia Zielonka (University of East Anglia) and our new Blog Editor Connor Panter (University of Nottingham). Dr Nina O'Hanlon (Social Media Support Officer) retired from the Committee.

Equality and diversity

BOU.ORG.UK/ABOUT-THE-BOU/EQUALITY-DIVERSITY/

Equality and diversity remain a major part of the Committee's remit, and through the Equality and Diversity Working Group (EDWG), the BOU continues to explore ways in which to improve inclusivity and reduce barriers across its activities.
Perhaps the most visible component of this work is the #BOUdiversityBlog, which has built upon the hugely successful Rainbow Blogs series. The aim of the #BOUdiversityBlog series is to highlight and promote a wider range of diversity issues within the ornithological community and beyond. Since the series was launched by BOU President Juliet Vickery in April 2021 (BOU.ORG.UK/BLOG-DIVERSITY-VICKERY-INTRODUCING-THE-BOU-DIVERSITY-BLOG/), we have published nine eye-opening, thought-provoking and often moving articles. The series includes some perspectives from other organisations with which the BOU often liaises including the British Ecological Society and the Seabird Group. The #BOUdiversityBlog has raised awareness amongst ornithologists who may not have direct experience of these

The BOU is committed to diversity in ornithology. We aim to help overcome barriers preventing equality for ornithologists. All our activities are open to anyone interested in ornithology, regardless of, but not limited to, nationality, gender, ethnicity, disability, sexuality and socio-economic status.

Gender ratio of different BOU groups and social media accounts (2021)

	male	female	not known
Council & committees	53%	47%	
BOU membership	63%	26%	11%
Twitter	63%	37%	
Instagram	54%	37%	9%
Facebook	61%	37%	2%

issues, and provides an important signal to members and non-members alike that the BOU is progressive, open and supportive.

As part of our drive to make our journal, IBIS, more accessible and inclusive, we introduced additional language abstracts at the end of 2021. On submission, authors will be able to include a second abstract in either their native language or a language relevant to the country in which the research took place.

Ensuring that BOU activities are open and supportive to everyone, regardless of their gender identity, remains a priority. In 2021, we continued recent progress towards the BOU's target of a 50:50 gender balance across BOU Council and committees, seeing a 53:47 (male:female) split (compared to 59:41 in 2020 and 64:36 in 2019). Among members of Council there is a roughly even gender balance, with women outnumbering men by one for the first time in our history.

Whilst we aim for 50:50 gender balance across our core activities, such as Council and committees, it is encouraging that our membership reflects our wider ornithological community, as can be seen when comparing it to our followers on our social platforms (see left). We can only see this improving further in coming years as, when we look at the make-up of early-career members (c.30% of our membership), women currently make up 47% of that cohort.

We have also updated our approach to award nominations to improve representation. – see Awards and Nominations Committee (page 11) for more information. Finally, 2021 saw a refresh to the Unconscious Bias Training which is compulsory for BOU Council members, committee members, staff, IBIS editors, support officers and conference organisers, to ensure that we all remain aware of the impacts of implicit bias and subconscious stereotyping on our decision-making.

Honorary positions

The Committee's Support Officers assist the BOU office with journal publicity, social media activities and the BOU blog. In 2021 we welcomed two enthusiastic new Support Officers to cover #theBOUblog and social media.

Blog (#theBOUblog) – edited by Dr Leila Walker and Connor Panter

Dr Christina Ieronymidou went on maternity leave at the start of the year and understandably decided not to return to the position of Blog Editor in order to prioritise family time. Christina has been with us since 2014 and we thank her warmly for developing #theBOUblog into the force it is today. Leila provided cover for Christina up to July, when Connor Panter was appointed as editor on a Support Officer Honorarium. We thank Leila for keeping the show on the road and enabling a smooth handover with Connor. In addition, our Journal Publicity Support Officer, Dr Jente Ottenburghs, continued to write fortnightly articles on IBIS papers.

SCIENCE COMMUNICATION AWARDS



Mery Nomsa was voted the best social media scicommer of 2020.





Roselby Juárez (top) and **Luis Sandoval's** blog post was voted the best article on #theBOUblog in 2020.

Cont/.

During the year, Leila and Connor oversaw the following:

- 111 new posts were published on the #theBOUblog in 2021 (our highest annual total) and continued to deliver a high diversity of content and highlight the popularity of our blog.
- The 26 articles authored by the Journal Publicity Support Officer were complemented by a further 34 written by the authors of IBIS papers.
- 11 posts gave personal perspectives on equality, diversity, inclusion and accessibility issues in ornithology.
- Blogs with a BOU focus included one post written by BOU Warham student Émile Brisson-Curadeau on the Ratmanoff King Penguin colony, and a further seven articles from a BOU research grant recipients.
- The BOU also endorsed *Birds of Conservation Concern* for the first time, which was supported by a blog post from our Chief Operations Officer.
- The BOU blog continues to reach a global audience and remains the most visited section of the BOU website, accounting for 28% of all page views for the site.

Journal publicity – supported by Dr Jente Ottenburghs

Jente continued in his role supporting the promotion of IBIS articles, in particular writing blog posts on recently published papers.

- 26 articles were written for the BOU blog, summarising a broad variety of IBIS papers published in 2020.
- These posts have contributed 11% of overall post 'reads' of #theBOUblog (across all posts 2012–21).
- Promoted all IBIS paper blog posts across our social media platforms.
- Referenced IBIS papers on Wikipedia; these references contribute to each paper's Altmetric Attention Score, as well as helping to improve the overall coverage of ornithology on Wikipedia.
- Promoted IBIS papers on other websites internationally.

Social media – supported by Natalia Zielonka

In July, Natalia took over from Dr Nina O'Hanlon who has helped grow the BOU's social media presence enormously during her four years in the role.

- Following the success of #BOUsci20, 2021 saw the rise of the dual-platform online conference, with Zoom and Twitter events run simultaneously for our spring conference (#BOU2022) and two autumn meetings (#BOUasm21, #BOUsci21).
- The BOU's Twitter account (@IBIS_journal) had over 19,477 followers at the year-end (up 11% on 31 Dec 2020).
- The BOU's Facebook account (@Ibisjournal) had over 10,414 followers at the year-end (up 6% on 31 Dec 2020).
- The BOU Instagram account (@IBIS_journal) continues to grow, with over 1,450 followers (up 12% on 31 Dec 2020), posting content focused on IBIS papers, BOU blogs, BOU events and the British List.

SCIENCE COMMUNICATION AWARDS

CONT/.



Amy Hall was voted the best sound and vision scicommer in 2020.

We are grateful to Leica Camera (UK) Ltd for supporting our Science Communication Awards.

SUPPORTING MEMBERS



During the year we continued to trial a member mentoring scheme.

Recognising excellence in science communication

The BOU remains at the front of promoting science communication within ornithology. We champion the use of social media for promoting and discussing research; #theBOUblog is one of the most-read avian science blogs; and parallel Twitter conferences are now a mainstay of our online and in-person events.

Supported by Leica Camera (UK), in March we announced the winners of the second #BOUscicommAwards. The 2020 awards saw the introduction of a new category, for best sound and vision scicommer. The 2020 winners were:

- **Best social media scicommer**: Mery Nomsa (South Africa)
- **Best of #theBOUblog**: Roselvy Juárez and Luis Sandoval (Costa Rica)
- **Best sound and vision scicommer**: Amy Hall (UK)

You can read more about the awards and enjoy a Q&A with the winners in this blog post: BOU.ORG.UK/BOUSCICOMMAWARDS-2020-THE-WINNERS/.

We thank our awards panel of Jody Allair, Dr Tatsuya Amano, Steve Dudley, Gill Holmes, Tykee James, Dr Virat Jolli, Sorrel Lyall, Dr Nina O'Hanlon, Emily Williams and Nicole Wood who drew up a short-list of nominees from the wider pool nominated by the public. The short-list was then put to a public vote to derive the winners of each of the three categories. We also thank all those who voted.

Member mentoring scheme

Access to a community of like-minded individuals is really effective in helping people manage and navigate a way through their careers. Covid-19 restrictions have made it much harder for conventional, face-to-face interactions, leaving many feeling isolated. To extend the BOU's support to its members, the Committee launched a pilot mentoring scheme in spring 2021, to provide peer-to-peer support for BOU members at all career stages.

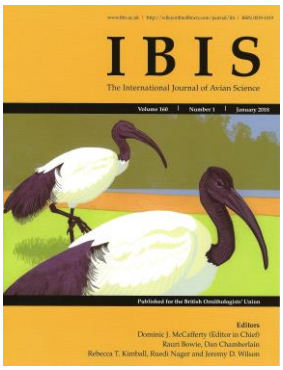
Mentees were recruited through an online form, and then divided into five small groups with a shared common focus (e.g. career progression, work/life balance, women in ornithology). Groups were facilitated by BOU committee members (Dr Ailidh Barnes, Dr Grant Humphries, Dr Cat Morrison, Dr Saskia Wischnewski and Dr Tom Finch). The aim was for groups to meet virtually on a monthly basis, with a different mentor invited each month to discuss topics of the mentees' choice.

Feedback has been generally positive, with mentees, facilitators and mentors all enjoying and benefiting from the scheme. However, fieldwork and other competing commitments meant that some groups have struggled to meet every month, so the trial will be extended until all groups have met six times.

We thank mentees, facilitators and mentors involved in the pilot so far; schemes such as this wouldn't happen without such enthusiasm, good will and volunteered time.

Conferences

See BOU Office (page 6) and Meetings Committee (page 19).



IBIS MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

Chair

Dr Rosemarie Kentie (NIOZ Netherlands Institute for Sea Research)

Members

Mr Graham Appleton, BOU Honorary Treasurer

Dr Beatriz Arroyo Lopez (Instituto de Investigacion en Recursos Cinegeticos (IREC) (CSIC-UCLM-JCCM), Spain)

Dr Richard Broughton (UK Centre for Ecology & Hydrology)

Dr Rauri Bowie, Editor (University of California – Berkeley)

Dr Dan Chamberlain, Editor (University of Turin) – to 30 September 2021

Mr Steve Dudley, BOU COO

Dr Richard Fuller (University of Queensland) – from 1 October 2021

Dr Rebecca Kimball, Editor (University of Florida)

Mrs Angela Langford, Journal Manager

Dr Dominic McCafferty, Editor in Chief (University of Glasgow)

Dr Ruedi Nager, Editor (University of Glasgow)

Dr Staffan Roos (Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences)

Prof Jeremy Wilson, Editor (RSPB)

Looking ahead

Covid-19 continues to impact many aspects of our lives, and it's difficult to predict when, if ever, our ways of working will ever return to our previous normal. In the continued absence of in-person events, providing quality engagement with our membership is a challenge. Nonetheless, online meetings bring opportunities to engage with a much wider audience, including ornithologists who might not ordinarily attend in-person events (including parents and carers). Our parallel Twitter events, which in future will accompany all conferences (whether online or in-person), reach an even greater (and potentially more diverse) audience at a fraction of the environmental and financial cost.

The Engagement Committee will play a key role in ensuring that the Union continues to engage with and deliver benefits to its membership and the wider community through whatever combination of online and in-person events take place in 2022 and beyond. Striving for greater accessibility for under-represented groups will remain high on our agenda, as will consideration of our environmental footprint.

IBIS Management Committee

IBIS.AC.UK

Committee membership and business

The IBIS Management Committee provides strategic direction, support and advice to editors and staff on the management of the journal including with our publisher, Wiley. The IBIS Management Committee consists of the Editor in Chief, all editors, the Chief Operations Officer, the Honorary Treasurer, the Journal Manager and three regular members operating at associate editor level for IBIS or similar journals.

At the AGM, existing Committee member Dr Rosemarie Kentie, was elected to follow Dr Jennifer Smart as Chair of the Committee. We are grateful for Jen's diligent care of the Committee in recent years and would like to thank her once again. Dr Beatriz Arroyo Lopez joined our IBIS Management Committee team during the year.

IBIS is published on behalf of the BOU by Wiley Publishing from whom we continue to receive excellent service, support and advice. The efforts of Wiley staff during 2021 are greatly appreciated, especially from Andreas Petersen, our Journal Publishing Manager. We have an excellent relationship with Wiley and maintain constant communication throughout the year, with both parties striving to improve IBIS, to ensure the journal remains at the forefront of ornithology.

Our annual meeting with Wiley was held on Zoom in February, with Dr Jen Smart as Chair for the last time. At the meeting, annual reports covering editorial, production, marketing and finance were presented and discussed. Our close working relationship comes to the fore during these meetings with both sides able to talk openly about our joint management of the journal.

TOP CITED PAPERS

From most recent Impact Factor period (2020)

Urban exploiters have broader dietary niches than urban avoiders / Facundo Xavier Palacio / DOI: 10.1111/ibi.12732

Implications of bacterial, viral and mycotic microorganisms in vultures for wildlife conservation, ecosystem services and public health / Pablo I. Plaza, Guillermo Blanco, Sergio A. Lambertucci / DOI: 10.1111/ibi.12865

Individual condition but not fledging phenology carries over to affect post-fledging survival in a Neotropical migratory songbird Dean R. Evans, Keith A. Hobson, Jackson W. Kusack, Michael D. Cadman, C. Myles Falconer, Greg W. Mitchell. / DOI:10.1111/ibi.12727

MOST DOWNLOADED IBIS PAPERS

Papers downloaded in 2021

Killing of raptors on grouse moors: evidence and effects / Ian Newton / DOI: 10.1111/ibi.12886

Towards redressing inaccurate, offensive and inappropriate common bird names / Robert J. Driver, Alexander L. Bond / DOI: 10.1111/ibi.12984

Urban gulls adapt foraging schedule to human-activity patterns / Anouk Spelt, Oliver Soutar, Cara Williamson, Jane Memmott, Judy Shamoun-Baranes, Peter Rock, Shane Windsor / DOI: 10.1111/ibi.12892

Editorial team

After 15 years, and handling over 875 manuscripts, Dr Dan Chamberlain decided it was time to step down as an editor of IBIS. We were very sad to see Dan leave us and thank him warmly for the outstanding service he has provide to IBIS and the BOU during his time as editor.

Dan's replacement is Prof Richard Fuller who was selected following an open advertisement and thorough interview and selection process, to which a good number of high-quality applicants applied. Richard's scientific work includes conservation planning, conservation psychology, migration ecology, urban ecology, and the interaction of humans and wildlife, with a special focus on the East-Asian Australasian flyway. We believe Richard will bring great experience to the IBIS team and will extend our coverage of the Asia-Pacific region, thereby further expanding our international reach.

We held an editorial meeting, again on Zoom, in November. With our editorial team now spanning the globe, with two editors in the US and one in Australia, having our meetings on Zoom means everyone was able to participate, although it was quite early or late for some. Editorial meetings are important at many levels, as they allow us to discuss topics such as the impact of Covid-19 on IBIS, and to review our manuscript criteria and submission guidelines, ensuring that the journal remains in tune with our author and reviewer community.

Our Associate Editor Board plays a vital role in the management of the journal and we thank each and every one of them for their time and dedication to the journal. In 2021, we welcomed David Canal to the Board. Luc Lens and Jesus Martínez-Padilla retired from the Board this year and we thank them for their support and commitment during their time as Associate Editors.

IBIS – #1 in ornithology

In Clarivate's latest journal impact factors (June 2021), IBIS moved back to the top spot in ornithology, with a new Impact Factor of 2.517 (from 2.076) and leading the now 28 journals ranked in the category. This is excellent news for authors, whose papers are being more widely read and cited, for IBIS and for the BOU.

As the IBIS Management Committee, chaired by Jen Smart (2017-2021), we have been working hard to continue to improve BOU's high-quality scientific journal. One way of measuring the success of these actions is to look at the Impact Factor, which measures the yearly average number of citations of articles published in the last two years. We have been delighted to receive a strong flow of good submissions, especially review articles, and to take a record number through to publication. This is a real team success, involving our authors, reviewers, and the editorial team of Dominic McCafferty (Editor in Chief), Rauri Bowie, Dan Chamberlain, Rebecca Kimball, Ruedi Nager and Jeremy Wilson, supported by Angela Langford and our Associate Editors from around the world. And not forgetting all the many people who reviewed articles as part of our selection process.

TOP ALTMETRIC PAPERS

Papers published in 2021

Towards redressing inaccurate, offensive and inappropriate common bird names / Robert J. Driver, Alexander L. Bond / DOI: 10.1111/ibi.12984

Geolocators reveal variation and sex-specific differences in the migratory strategies of a long-distance migrant / Fraser Bell, Stuart Bearhop, Martins Briedis, Myriam El Harouchi, Sophie C. Bell, Joan Castello, Malcolm Burgess / DOI: 10.1111/ibi.123017

Sex and age differences in the diet of the Eurasian Sparrowhawk (Accipiter nisus) using web-sourced photographs: exploring the feasibility of a new citizen science approach / Connor T. Panter, Arjun Amar / DOI: 10.1111/ibi.12918

Nomadic breeders Snowy Owls (Bubo scandiacus) do not use stopovers to sample the summer environment / Andrea Brown, Rebecca A. McCabe, Jean-François Therrien, Karen L. Wiebe, Scott Weidensaul, David Brinker, Gilles Gauthier, Kyle H. Elliott / DOI: 10.1111/ibi.12950



Dominic Ng's paper was voted the best ECR paper published in IBIS in 2020.

Genomic and morphological data help uncover extinction-in-progress of an unsustainably traded Hill Myna radiation Dean R. Evans, Keith A. Hobson, Jackson W. Dominic Y. J. Ng, Tereza Švejcarová, Keren R. Sadanandan, Teuku Reza Ferasyi, Jessica G.H. Lee, Dewi M. Prawiradilaga, Tomáš Ouhel, Elize Y.X. Ng, Frank E. Rheindt / DOI:10.1111/ibi.12839

Getting the paper to publication is only part of the story. The number one spot is also a reflection of the excellent partnership with the production team at Wiley and the strong emphasis that the BOU itself places on promoting the work of our authors, through blogs, in e-newsletters and via social media. Thanks go to Christina Ieronymidou, Jente Ottenburghs, Nina O'Hanlon, Leila Walker and Steve Dudley, as well as all those authors who write articles about their own papers for #theBOUblog.

Our marketing and promotion of our own papers also make IBIS the highest scoring ornithology journal measured by Altmetric and we have the two papers with the highest Altmetric Attention Scores in ornithology (see table 2 on page 10).

Dual language abstracts

Towards the end of the year, we introduced dual language abstracts. In addition to the usual English abstract, we now encourage authors to write a second abstract in their own language or in a language appropriate to their study location. We hope that this will make articles more accessible and widely read. We were very pleased with the warm response this was met with from the ornithological community.

The future

2022 is going to be busier than usual, with some significant changes. Sadly, after five years at the helm, our Editor-in-Chief, Dr Dominic McCafferty, will leave us in August, upon completion of volume 164. A hard act to follow, taking us to the highest ranked ornithology spot for only the second time in 25 years, we will advertise for Dom's replacement in early 2022.

The year will also see the retirement (in July) of Steve Dudley, the BOU's Chief Operations Officer for the past 25 years. This is not only a significant change for the BOU but also for IBIS, since the COO plays an integral role in managing the business and marketing aspects of the journal. It is planned that the incoming COO will have a two-month overlap with Steve, who himself will remain in a consultancy capacity with us into 2023, and we are confident that we have sound systems in place to facilitate this major change (expected in June) and that the new COO will find IBIS in excellent health.

2022 also sees us enter our third year of our four-year contract with Wiley. During the year we will work on a new contract to run from January 2024 which must be in place by the end of 2022 if we are to remain with Wiley. With his experience of negotiating our last three journal publishing contracts, outgoing COO, Steve Dudley, will be responsible for overseeing this important task, which will also enable the incoming COO to focus on the more routine side of managing the journal.

Best ECR paper

Our now annual award of the best early-career researcher paper (from the preceding volume) saw five papers nominated from the IBIS Associate Editor board, from which Dominic Ng et al's paper on the 'extinction-in-progress' of the Hill Myna came top in the public vote held in early 2021 (see left and BOU.ORG.UK/IBIS/BEST-ECR-PAPER-OF-2020/).

MEETINGS COMMITTEE

Chair

Dr Francis Daunt (UK Centre for Ecology & Hydrology)

Members

Dr José Alves (University of Aveiro, Portugal and University of Iceland)
Dr Maria Bogdanova (UK Centre for Ecology & Hydrology)
Dr Katherine Booth Jones (BTO Northern Ireland)
Mr Steve Dudley, BOU COO
Dr Christine Howard (Durham University)
Dr Joelene Hughes (RSPB)
Mrs Angela Langford, Journal & Office Manager
Dr Cat Morrison (University of East Anglia)
Dr Ana Payo-Payo (University of Aberdeen)
Dr Rob Robinson (BTO)
Dr Amanda Trask (Institute of Zoology)
Dr Kevin Wood (Wildfowl & Wetlands Trust)

Meetings Committee

BOU.ORG.UK/CONFERENCES-AND-MEETINGS/

The Meetings Committee is responsible for maintaining the ongoing programme of BOU conferences and meetings and providing advice and support to the BOU Office and others responsible for organising and running BOU events.

The Committee met remotely via Zoom three times during the year and also conducted business by email and telephone. Dr Rob Robinson completed his term in 2021 and we are grateful to him for his strong contributions to the Committee and commitment to BOU events over many years. The Committee welcomed three new members as part of an expansion in the size of the Committee in order to accommodate the increasing workload: Dr Katherine Booth Jones (BTO Northern Ireland), Dr Christine Howard (University of Durham) and Dr Kevin Wood (Wildfowl & Wetlands Trust).

2021 events and the global pandemic

Conferences remain a major focal point for many small societies, a key way to engage with members and their wider research communities.

With the pandemic and associated restrictions on face-to-face events continuing throughout 2021, all three BOU conferences were conducted online using the platform Zoom, with a Twitter conference running in parallel with each event. The BOU built on the success of the Zoom conference 'Climate change and birds: solutions to the crisis' in November 2020, detailed in the last year's Annual Report. All three 2021 conferences were extremely successful, with excellent scientific programmes delivered as recorded talks arranged in advance of each conference and with few technical problems on event days.

Virtual events deliver a considerably larger attendance with a much wider international reach than equivalent in-person events of the past (please see the individual accounts that follow for details). This positive outcome of online events, coupled with a continued appreciation of the advantages of in-person events, has led the BOU to adopt the policy of delivering both online and in-person conferences in our future annual programme, subject to Covid restrictions.

The Committee would particularly like to thank our expanding conference delivery team of Ryan Burrell, Triin Kassiku, Camilo Carneiro, Monika Reiss, Sarah Binnie, Nina O'Hanlon, Natalia Zielonka, Angela Langford and Steve Dudley for all their hard work, with an ever-increasing workload across multiple platforms.

2021 annual conference

Restoring bird populations (#BOU2021)

Our 2021 annual conference took place in late March/early April. The Scientific Programme Committee comprised Dr David Douglas (RSPB: Chair), Dr Geoff Hilton (Wildfowl & Wetlands Trust), Dr Nancy Ockendon (Endangered Landscapes Programme) and Dr Amanda Trask (Institute of Zoology).

TWITTER CONFERENCES

We are committed to deliver our conferences across dual platforms, with paid-for in-person and virtual conferences each having a free to access parallel Twitter event. There is a misconception that 'cheap' virtual events are accessible to everyone, but even low-cost (by Western standards) can still be prohibitively expensive for those in developing countries. And whilst we recognise that the cost of accessing free platforms, such as Twitter, is not entirely equitable as the cost of Internet access is disproportionately high for many in developing countries, by providing conference content on a free-to-access platform our events are more accessible and we do reach far more researchers around the world than we would otherwise do.

As can be seen from the reports within the Meetings Committee section (pages 19–26) the 'in-the-room' audience of a Twitter event greatly outnumbers that of even a low-cost virtual conference on Zoom, e.g., BOUsci21 was 1,924 on Twitter vs 217 on Zoom.

It is also estimated that the emissions associated with travelling to an in-person conference are several million times greater than those resulting from tweeting about the same research (Caravaggi et al 2021).

FURTHER READING

Twitter conferences as a low-carbon, far-reaching and inclusive way of communicating research in ornithology and ecology.

Anthony Caravaggi, Agnes B. Olin, Kirsty A. Franklin, Steve P. Dudley. 2021. IBIS. 163: 1481– 1491. doi: 10.1111/ibi.12959

The focus was on new techniques in restoration science and research/policy, relating to the 2020 biodiversity targets. The natural world is under huge pressure from human activity, placing bird populations and their habitats at risk. At the same time, there is growing recognition that avian conservation should look beyond slowing species' declines and avoiding extinction, to actively restoring avian abundance and diversity in landscapes and working to restore whole ecosystems. Despite the challenges facing nature, our understanding of how to restore species and ecosystems has never been greater, and the momentum for ecological restoration is building globally. Restoring bird populations requires working at a range of scales, from individual animals to whole ecosystems, and from local sites to whole flyways. Birds can be indicators of recovery trajectories for entire ecosystems and can be integral to the success of habitat restoration, for example through their functional roles as predators, scavengers and dispersal agents. The conference brought together the latest science underpinning the restoration of bird species and their ecosystems, focusing on successes, challenges and future directions.

The conference was originally scheduled for March 2020 but was postponed because of the Covid-19 pandemic (see 2020 Annual Report for full details). The original aspiration was for the conference to take place in person at the University of Nottingham, and we are extremely grateful to the university for supporting this move by ensuring the deposits paid towards BOU2020 would be transferred in full to 2021. However, a number of restrictions remained in place during the planning period in late 2020 and early 2021 so the conference was moved to an online format, and the deposit with the University of Nottingham transferred once more to 2022. The conference organisers kindly agreed to continue in their roles following the postponement and the vast majority of presenters indicated that they would be willing to move their talks back 12 months and deliver them online. The Committee is thankful that organisers and presenters were able to deliver such an excellent programme in the circumstances. In order to attract a wider audience, including attendants from the Americas, and to minimise screen fatigue, the conference ran over three days from early afternoon to early evening UK time. It included a range of activities for Early Career Researchers on the previous afternoon and during the main conference. The BOU Annual General Meeting was held on the Wednesday evening.

The Alfred Newton Lecture was delivered by Prof Carl Jones (Durrell Wildlife Conservation Trust) and other keynote speakers included Mary Colwell (Freelance producer and writer), Nicola Crockford (RSPB), Dr John Ewen (Institute of Zoology), Dr Joe Tobias (Imperial College) and Dr Karen Varnham (RSPB) – all with associated Twitter presentations. There were a further 24 talks with associated Twitter presentations, 15 poster presentations (with each speaker giving a 30-second speed introduction in a dedicated Zoom session) and 17 Twitter-only talks.

The conference attracted 235 registrants from 40 countries, 35% of whom were from outside the UK. Twitter saw an in-the-room equivalent audience of 1,580 over the three days with 450 active participants (presenters, those asking and replying to comments to tweets, etc) and a real-time reach of 600,000.

As with the November 2020 Zoom conference, we again utilised Slack for wider conference engagement, with each session having its own 'channel' allowing for attendees to post additional questions of speakers, and with each poster presenter having their own dedicated channel. The platform also serves as a helpdesk for attendees to raise conference issues with the organisers. Feedback was again very positive, and we will continue to tweak this platform's use in order to maximise engagement.

2021 autumn scientific meetings

In 2019, we decided to increase the number of autumn meetings from one to two from 2021, so this was the first year in which two took place.

Birds and people: from conflicts to resolution (#BOUasm21)

In response to the marked increase in research and wider interests of birds and conflicts, BOU held a conference on this theme on 9 November, entitled 'Birds and people: from conflict to co-existence' (#BOUasm21 on Twitter). The Scientific Programme Committee was led by Dr Barry MacMahon (University College Dublin, Ireland) and supported by Dr Juliette Young (National Research Institute for Agriculture, Food and the Environment, France), Dr Isla Hodgson (University of Stirling), Dr Bea Arroyo (Instituto de Investigación en Recursos Cinegéticos/Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, Spain) and Dr Francis Daunt (UK Centre for Ecology & Hydrology).

Interactions between humans and animals are becoming increasingly frequent, as wild habitats shrink and human presence expands throughout the world. Conflicts are one of the outcomes of this increased interaction, with severe consequences for both wildlife and people. Globally, conflicts can arise across a diversity of ecosystems, species and circumstances. Further, they are more complex than a first glance might suggest, involving not just ecological arguments, but also economic, cultural, social and political disputes. Avian species are often at the centre of such conflicts. Examples include conflicts over birds and agricultural interests, forestry, and public health. Such situations severely threaten not just the conservation of birdlife, but also human lives, livelihoods, and well-being. The first step to overcoming these problems is to recognise and understand the full diversity of drivers that cause conflicts to emerge, persist and escalate. Only then may we move towards fostering mutually beneficial relationships between birds and people. This conference facilitated a platform to explore the potential of a) science to provide data-driven solutions to this complex topic and b) the collaboration between multiple disciplines (e.g. natural scientists, social scientists and ecologists) and other stakeholders to develop fresh, interesting and effective approaches to conflicts between birds and people.

The original intention was that this would be an in-person event in Peterborough in order to make use of the deposit with the venue that had been moved forward by 12 months from November 2020, and because it was felt that this topic leant itself well to an in-person format. In the end, continuing restrictions led to the decision to move

FUTURE CONFERENCING



The last two years have seen most conferences switch to a virtual format. We've now delivered four such events on Zoom with parallel Twitter conferences for increased accessibility and reach.

We've attempted to move back to in-person events but on each occasion have been foiled by increases in Covid transmissions at critical points (e.g. during registration periods) and to safeguard participants, including our own volunteers and staff. Whilst virtual events have worked very well during pandemic conditions, we will however return to in-person conferences when we feel it is safe for all concerned to do so.

the conference online. Keynote talks (with associated Twitter presentations) were delivered by Prof Nils Bunnefeld (University of Stirling), Dr Martina Carrete (Universidad Pablo de Olavide), Dr Isla Hodgson (University of Stirling) and Dr Richard Sherley (University of Exeter). There were a further 17 Zoom talks with associated Twitter presentations, 15 Twitter-only talks and a conference summary (Zoom only) given by independent rural commentator, Rob Yorke.

Of the 150 people who were registered for the event, 94 attended live at some point during the day. Twitter reached a real (in the room equivalent) audience of 1,420 people of which 355 actively engaged (retweeting content, commenting and asking questions).

Developments in monitoring science (#BOUsci21)
The second planned autumn meeting was on the theme of new monitoring technologies, chosen to showcase the many new data collection and analysis methods that have been developed in recent years. It was entitled 'Developments in monitoring science' (#BOUsci21 on Twitter) and took place on Zoom over two full days (24–25 November). Dr Mark Eaton (Rare Breeding Birds Panel & RSPB) led the Scientific Programme Committee, supported by Dr José Alves (University of Aveiro, Portugal and University of Iceland and BOU Meetings Committee), Dr Fiona Burns (RSPB) and Ms Dawn Balmer (BTO).

The monitoring of bird populations provides the bedrock for informing conservation priorities and the research and conservation action that arises from these priorities. Whilst traditional field methods underpin the standardised monitoring programmes that have operated in the UK and many other countries, sometimes for decades, rapid recent developments in technology, online communication and statistics are offering many new possibilities that may enable us to improve existing monitoring programmes, and also to extend monitoring efforts to new species, regions and habitats. The conference brought together ornithologists and ecologists from academic and conservation organisations, to share findings and explore the opportunities provided by recent advances and breakthroughs, covering a wide range of themes including technological developments such as drones, bioacoustics, radar and eDNA; new analyses of monitoring and recording data; online and mobile data collection; demography and monitoring; engagement of volunteers and the role of citizen science; and using monitoring data in conservation and policy.

Keynote talks (with associated Twitter presentations) were delivered by Prof Caren Cooper (North Carolina State University), Dr Gabriel Gargallo (Catalan Ornithological Institute), Dr Simon Gillings (BTO), Dr Cat Horswill (Zoological Society of London/University College London), Dr Kate Jennings (RSPB) and Dr Kate Jones (University College London). There were a further 24 talks with associated Twitter presentations and seven Twitter-only talks.

The conference was attended by 217 registrants from 28 countries, 47% of whom were outside the UK – our largest overseas audience of any event, showing the

2022 ANNUAL CONFERENCE



AVIAN REPRODUCTION

12 – 14 Apr 2022 | on Zoom & Twitter

With increased Covid-19 transmissions during the critical pre-conference registration period, which resulted in virtually no-one committing to the event, we have reluctantly moved our annual conference over to Zoom (and Twitter) and it will now run over three half-days, Tue, 12 April through to Thu, 14 April.

Within bird life histories, breeding events represent an opportunity to measure some of the fundamental drivers of population and evolutionary processes. It is a crucially important life stage that has heavy energetic demands on parents and offspring, and its consequences can be felt throughout the lifetime of the individuals involved. For offspring, the maternal and environmental effects of their rearing conditions influence their phenotype which determines their competitive and reproductive success later in life. For adults, the investment in offspring brings great rewards but also incurs costs that might carry-over for years.

SCIENTIFIC PROGRAMME COMMITTEE:

Dr Ian Hartley: Chair (University of Lancaster, UK)
Dr José Alves (University of Aveiro, Portugal & BOU Meetings Committee)
Dr Sarah Burthe (UK Centre for Ecology & Hydrology)
Dr Rebecca Laidlaw (Natural Resources Wales, UK)
Dr Rob Robinson (BTO & BOU Meetings Committee, UK)

Image: Common Moorhen feeding chick Francis C. Franklin CC BY SA 4.0 Wikimedia Commons

wider interest in the topic. Of the 217 registrants, 163 (77%) attended live at some point across the two days. This is high, with our three previous Zoom conferences coming out around 63%. The rest will have registered for the recordings. On Twitter, across the two days we had a real audience of 1,924. Of these 813 either tweeted (2,019 times) or commented on the tweets posted (the remaining 1,111 shared or liked content).

Slack was used for both events for wider conference engagement with each session having its own 'channel', allowing attendees to post additional questions of speakers.

Third party conferences

Due to increased workloads across other activities we didn't take part or support any other conferences during 2021.

Future events

2022 Annual conference – 'Avian reproduction' (#BOU2022)

The 2022 annual conference, originally planned for 2021 but postponed because of the pandemic, will be on the topic of avian reproduction (#BOU2022 on Twitter). Within bird life histories, breeding events represent an opportunity to measure some of the fundamental drivers of population and evolutionary processes. It is a crucially important life stage that has heavy energetic demands on parents and offspring, and its consequences can be felt throughout the lifetime of the individuals involved. For offspring, the maternal and environmental effects of their rearing conditions influence their phenotype which determines their competitive and reproductive success later in life. For adults, the investment in offspring brings great rewards but also incurs costs that might carry-over for years. An understanding of the key components of reproductive success can provide important insights into the mechanisms of change and any potential associated limitations. Whether we are interested in practical conservation or the more theoretical concepts within behaviour and evolution, the breeding stages of bird life histories provide an important focus for many studies. Ranging from nest architecture to egg colouration, clutch sizes to nestling growth patterns, and parental care to chick survival, our understanding of drivers of reproductive success have developed exponentially over the past few decades. The conference will aim to cover a range of topics relating to the nesting period in the life history of birds, including interactions between breeders, offspring and siblings; individual breeding decisions; evolution and function of egg morphology and nest structure; development and ecophysiology of eggs and young; costs of reproduction; links between individual nest outcomes and population dynamics; and conservation implications.

The conference is being organised by Dr Ian Hartley (University of Lancaster, Chair), supported by Dr José Alves (University of Aveiro, Portugal & BOU Meetings Committee), Dr Sarah Burthe (UK Centre for Ecology & Hydrology), Dr Becky Laidlaw (University of East Anglia) and Dr Rob Robinson (BTO & formerly BOU

2022 AUTUMN CONFERENCES



CITIZEN SCIENCE & BIRDS

10–11 October 2022 | on Zoom & Twitter
#BOUasm22

The first of two autumn meetings in 2022 will look how people drive many aspects of our understanding of birds.

The Scientific Programme Committee is Chaired by Dr Ellie Owen (RSPB).

Further details in due course at BOU.ORG.UK.



BIRDS AS INDIVIDUALS

23 November 2022 | in-person & Twitter
#BOUsci22

The second autumn 2022 meeting will be a one-day, in-person meeting in Peterborough and will look how individual birds respond to changes at different levels, e.g. morphologically, physiologically, behaviour or life-history strategies.

The Scientific Programme Committee is Chaired by Dr Thomas Bodey (Aberdeen University).

Further details in due course at BOU.ORG.UK.

Images:
top – birders, U.S. National Archives and Records Administration / (NAID) 7722789 Wikimedia Commons;
bottom – Sparrowhawk, Imran Shah CC BY SA 2.0 Wikimedia Commons

Meetings Committee). The Alfred Newton Lecture will be delivered by Prof Nick Davies (University of Cambridge) and other keynote speakers include Dr Martin Bulla (Max Planck Institute for Ornithology), Dr Emma Cunningham (University of Edinburgh), Dr Lynda Donaldson (Wildlife & Wetlands Trust), Dr Nicola Hemmings (University of Sheffield), Prof Pat Monaghan (University of Glasgow) and Dr Ally Phillimore (University of Edinburgh).

As this report was being produced, the decision to switch this event to a virtual one was taken, based on their being very few people committed to the in-person event so. This early decision to switch to online delivery elicited an overwhelmingly positive response.

2022 autumn scientific meetings

The first autumn conference in 2022 will take place on 10–11 October 2022, on the topic of 'Citizen science and birds: people powering ornithology' (#BOUasm22 on Twitter). Ornithology has a long history of participation by volunteers, who undertake bird surveys and other research, and much of our knowledge of birds would not exist without 'citizen scientists'. This approach has enabled studies to take place across wider areas and over longer time scales than would otherwise be possible. Linking citizen science with technological and analytical advances may further increase our capacity to study birds at scale and to meet more of the challenges posed by modern ornithology. Innovative citizen science programmes have unlocked new ornithological data, for example in population ecology, phenology, tracking environmental change and migration. At the same time new and diverse audiences are engaging in research and conservation. This has led to novel research on who citizen scientists are, how to motivate and support involvement and how to measure the impact of participation. Meanwhile, robust data collection and validation within citizen science programmes remain key areas for learning, particularly as new technologies start to automate much of what citizen scientists record. This two-day meeting aims to communicate what succeeds and fails in citizen science programmes, what technological advances are available to ornithology, the prominence of rigour and evaluation, and the social science of community participation in ornithology. Citizen science will likely continue to be a key method for ornithology, long into the future, and this meeting will be of interest to a wide range of ornithologists.

The conference is being organised by Dr Ellie Owen (RSPB), supported by Dr Arjun Amar (Fitzpatrick Institute, University of Cape Town), Dr Tom Hart (University of Oxford) and Dr Joelene Hughes (RSPB).

The second autumn conference in 2022 will take place on 23 November 2022, on the topic of 'Birds as individuals' (#BOUsci22 on Twitter). Birds have a wide range of predictable and unpredictable challenges, including climatic changes, food availability, habitat quality, social interactions and more. How individuals respond to these changes, through variation in morphology, physiology, behaviour or life-history strategies between (and within) individuals, can impact on the ecological and evolutionary success of populations and species, regardless of the source (i.e. genetic or phenotypic plasticity) of this variation. For example, among-individual

CODE OF CONDUCT

We welcome everyone to BOU events, be these in person at our conferences, meetings and workshops, or online events such as Twitter conferences.

We work hard to engender and promote a welcoming environment that is collaborative, supportive and engaging for everyone involved. Our events provide opportunities to share, develop and broaden viewpoints in a safe and inclusive environment.

We celebrate diversity in all its forms and expect that all our participants are respectful and considerate of each other, that they provide supportive critique, and embrace the multitude of opinions that are on offer.

If you have any concerns, feel that any participant of an event has breached this code, or have suggestions for how we can make our events more inclusive and productive, please contact any member of the BOU staff, BOU's Meetings Committee or event organisers (named contacts are listed in all event programmes). During an event, please report any incident as soon as you feel able, to allow us to act upon your concerns.

variation in avian 'personalities' can be related to differences in physiological and behavioural responses, survival and reproductive success. The increased resolution provided by examining questions at the individual-level provides a mechanistic understanding of how and why responses to external and internal challenges vary. It also enables exploration of the extent to which individuals are able to adjust their phenotype (or not), and the consequences of such plasticity. This scales up to explain patterns at population and community levels. For instance, variation in individual traits within populations may generate individuals that consistently consume a small subset of the whole population's resource base (individual diet specialisation). This strategy can allow for fitness-enhancing changes in individual foraging efforts that respond to variation in resource availability, which is a key stabilizing mechanism of complex food webs. Enhancing our knowledge of the consequences of individual-level variation touches on almost all aspects of avian ecology. It increases our ability to understand the dynamics of natural populations, and ultimately to develop more informed management for protection and restoration objectives. This conference will cover a range of topics including physiology, movement ecology, behaviour, foraging ecology, conservation biology and population modelling.

The conference is being organised by Dr Thomas Bodey (University of Aberdeen, Chair), supported by Dr José Alves (University of Aveiro, Portugal and BOU Meetings Committee), Dr Karin Maldonado (Universidad Adolfo Ibáñez, Spain) and Dr Ana Payo Payo (University of Aberdeen).

Improving BOU conferences

Our focus during 2021 was to further improve our delivery of online conferences following the success of our first Zoom conference in November 2020. We have been very pleased with the success of our four dual platform (Zoom and Twitter) conferences to date, so much so that we now have a policy in place to organise Zoom/Twitter conferences where we wish to maximise international reach and are willing to forego the advantages of in-person events. This also allows for greater inclusion by potential speakers, especially on truly globally ornithological topics, allowing for an even broader range of speakers and research areas to be delivered to a larger, wider audience.

Further, at the 2021 annual conference, we trialed a new idea that was originally planned for the postponed in-person 2020 conference: following feedback that conferences could be a good opportunity to facilitate postdocs in building a peer community, the Committee agreed to trial a workshop for postdocs to run in parallel to the ECR workshops. The postdocs themselves drove and delivered the event, and although attendance was modest the feedback was good and the proposal is for this to be maintained at future annual conferences.

The use of blind review of submissions continues to work well for BOU conferences. We have published a conference Code of Conduct (see BOU.ORG.UK/BOU-CONFERENCES/CODE-OF-CONDUCT/) and continue to implement equality, diversity and inclusiveness initiatives (BOU.ORG.UK/ABOUT-THE-BOU/EQUALITY-AND-DIVERSITY/) into

GRANTS COMMITTEE

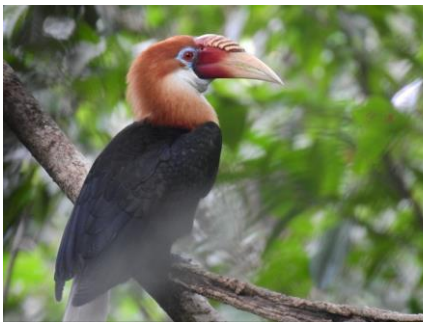
Chair

Dr Sonya Clegg (University of Oxford)

Members

Dr Tom Bradfer-Lawrence (RSPB)
Mr Steve Dudley, BOU COO
Dr Ilya Maclean (University of Exeter)
Dr Sam Patrick (University of Liverpool)
Dr Martin Sullivan (Manchester Metropolitan University)

FUNDING ORNITHOLOGY





Two of the species being researched by projects funded by the BOU in 2021.

From the top:
Narcondam Hornbill *Rhyticeros narcondami*
Rohitjahnavi CC BY SA 4.0 Wikimedia Commons

Palmchat *Dulus dominicus*
Jorge checo CC BY SA 3.0 Wikimedia Commons

all of our activities, working with the Engagement Committee's Equality and Diversity Working Group. Online events offer significant opportunities for enhancing diversity at our conferences, and we are encouraging all scientific committees to make maximum use of this.

Grants Committee

BOU.ORG.UK/FUNDING/

This Committee advises Council on the selection of research grant and bursary applications that the BOU should support.

The Committee considers applications for:

- small research grants.
- career development bursaries;
  - open to BOU members and from non-members in developing countries.
- John & Pat Warham Studentships;
  - funded by a bequest left to the BOU by the late John and Pat Warham for the study of Sphenisciform (penguins) and Procellariiform (tubenoses) seabirds.
- Brenda and Tony Gibbs Awards;
  - funded by a bequest left to the BOU by the late Brenda and Tony Gibbs for research on tracking and migration studies including the use of new technologies.

The Committee met twice via Zoom in 2021. The meeting to consider research grant and career development bursary applications was held in February, and the meeting to consider applications for our first Brenda and Tony Gibbs Award was held in August. Due to the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on our investments, the John and Pat Warham Studentship was not offered this year. The remainder of the Committee's business was conducted by email.

The membership of the Committee grew by one, with Dr Martin Sullivan joining as an ordinary member.

Small Ornithological Research Grant scheme

The Committee received 54 grant applications (51 in 2020, 55 in 2019). Six applications were rejected due to breaches in submission criteria, or the amount requested was for a very small proportion of overall project funding, leaving 48 to be assessed (50 in 2020, 46 in 2019). Fourteen applications were removed during an initial sift by the Committee Chair, on the basis of scientific quality. Committee members were able to view all of these rejected applications and request any individual application be considered in full. A total of 34 applications were initially scored by the Committee ahead of their annual meeting held on 2 February 2021. Three qualified for funding under the Brenda and Tony Gibb bequest. The combined scores and comments from Committee members were used for the basis of the on-the-day discussions to determine which projects to support.

2020 PROJECTS UPDATE

Due to the impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic on projects we have funded in recent years, we provide here an update to those awards made in 2020.

The following projects were carried out during 2020 and will be reported on in due course:

Josh Arbon (UK) | £1,750
PhD candidate, University of Exeter, UK
Does pair-bond strength affect parental care strategies?

Amanda Bourne (South Africa) | £1,020
PhD candidate, Fitzpatrick Institute of African Ornithology, University of Cape Town, South Africa
Do seasonal changes in food resources predict breeding phenology and reproductive success in Southern Pied Babblers *Turdoides bicolor*?

Initially awarded £1,440, a slightly revised, lower cost (£1,020) project successfully ran as scheduled. A report can be seen on the BOU-funded project page on the BOU website at BOU.ORG.UK/CATEGORY/BOU-FUNDED/.

Crinan Jarrett (UK) | £1,600
PhD candidate, University of Glasgow, UK
Putting a price on the menu: Quantifying bird ecosystem services in African cocoa plantations.

Jenna McCullough (US) | £1,600
PhD student, University of New Mexico, US
Island kingfishers as an emerging model system to study the genomics of speciation.

Council approved eight awards, totaling £12,000, to be made in 2021:

Olivia Hicks (UK) | £1,527 (amount requested)
Postdoctoral Research Fellow, Centre d'Etudes Biologiques de Chize, France
The energetic trade-off between immunity and foraging complexity.

Hannah Moon (US) | £1,450 (requested £1,524)
PhD student, University of Hawaii at Manoa, USA
Molecular drivers of spectral perception in endangered Hawaiian seabirds.

Benjamin Murphy (Germany) | £1,111 (amount requested)
PhD student, Fitzpatrick Institute of African Ornithology, South Africa
Taking the heat: are Drongo's *Dicrurus adsimilis* efforts to cool nestlings in hot weather constrained by the necessity of maintaining safe body temperatures?

Not yet paid out with project now to be undertaken in 2022, due to impacts of Covid-19 pandemic in 2021.

Rohit Naniwadekar (India) | £1,499 (amount requested)
Researcher, Nature Conservation Foundation, India
Population genetics of the island endemic Narcondam Hornbill *Rhyticeros narcondami*.

Çağla Önsal (Turkey) | £1,488 (amount requested)
Masters Student, Koç University, Turkey
Multi-modal signalling in noise in the European Robin *Erithacus rubecula*.

Riva Riley (US) | £1,425 (requested £1,500)
President's Postdoctoral Fellow, University of Maryland, USA
Patterns of cooperation in a communally nesting bird, the Palmchat *Dulus dominicus*.

Not yet paid out with the project now to be undertaken in 2022 due to impacts of Covid-19 pandemic in 2021.

Petra Sumasgutner (Austria) | £1,500 (amount requested)
Postdoctoral Research Fellow, Konrad Lorenz Research Centre, Austria
Honest signals and circulating carotenoids in an urban top predator (Common Kestrel).

Brenda and Tony Gibbs small research award

Separate to the main Gibbs Award (awards up to £20,000 – see page 32) we will use the remainder of the bequest left to us by Brenda and Tony Gibbs to fund smaller awards for applications within the parameters of the Gibbs bequest coming in through our small grant scheme.

2020 PROJECTS UPDATE

CONT/.

The following projects were carried over to 2021 and will be reported on in due course:

Fraser Bell (UK) | £1,989
PhD candidate, University of Exeter, UK
Patterns and consequences of parasite infection in a declining long-distance migratory passerine.

Darren O'Connell (Ireland) | £1,650
Postdoctoral Research Associate, University, UK
Birds as monitors of ecosystem restoration: using avian soundscapes for assessing biodiversity and functioning of restored mangrove forests.

The original project was unable to run due to fieldwork and travel restrictions during the Covid-19 pandemic in both 2020 and 2021. With the award paid out and equipment purchased, a revised proposal for this project to be moved from studying Indonesian mangrove communities to study Scottish upland communities on similar lines was accepted by the Committee, and the project will run in 2022.

WARHAM STUDENT



Our 2018 Warham Student, **Kirsty Franklin**, University of East Anglia, UK.

One award was made in 2021:

Jethro George Gauld (UK) | £2,000 (amount requested)
PhD student, University of East Anglia, UK
Real world trial of new LORA GPS tracking technology, to understand vulture movement behaviour at wind farms, in three dimensions.

The project successfully ran as scheduled. A report can be seen on the BOU-funded project page on the BOU website at BOU.ORG.UK/CATEGORY/BOU-FUNDED/.

Career Development Bursary scheme

No new awards were offered in 2021.

Due to the impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic, the two bursaries awarded in 2020 were not taken up, with the funding held over until 2021. Unfortunately, neither project was able to go ahead in 2021 and the awards have now been withdrawn.

John and Pat Warham Studentships

Of the four fully funded studentships available, three have been appointed in previous years. Updates on these projects are provided below.

Kirsty Franklin, University of East Anglia, UK (commenced 2018)
The 'Round Island petrel' conundrum
Principal supervisor: Prof Jennifer Gill

Kirsty told us the following in her end of year communication:

Somehow, I am in the final year of my PhD and I have no idea where the time has gone! I am therefore in full data analysis and thesis-writing mode with the aim of finishing my PhD this spring.

So far, I'm happy to have two of my PhD data chapters completed; they've both been submitted for publication and are undergoing their second round of revisions. One of these uses geolocator tracking data from the 62 Round Island petrels *Pterodroma sp* for which we have multiple complete migrations, to investigate how repeatable the petrels are in their migratory strategies. The second paper is a meta-analysis of the repeatability of avian migration phenology (timings of arrival to and departure from breeding grounds). This paper evolved from a literature review into a meta-analysis, following reviewer comments and after I contacted meta-analysis expert, Shinichi Nakagawa, from the University of New South Wales (Sydney). He guided me through the meta-analysis process and so, in addition to learning a new skill, I'm pleased to have made a new collaboration. Thanks, Shinichi! Once these papers are published, I am sure I will offer to write a BOU blog post about each of them, so please keep an eye out.

I'm also pleased to say that the camera traps and stands, which I deployed during my fieldwork on Round Island in 2019, to monitor petrel breeding attempts, are still standing. These cameras have generated over 160,000 images so I think I have

enough images for my analysis now! Of these images, ~32,000 have been classified through the citizen science project, Seabird Watch, in which around 1,600 volunteers have taken part and (virtually) visited Round Island.

I'm also currently supervising an undergraduate student based in the School of Computing Sciences here at University of East Anglia (UEA) who is testing several machine learning and computer vision algorithms aimed at automating the detection and counting of petrels in the images. If you're interested in hearing more about our camera work and what they have revealed, then make sure to catch my presentation at the BOU 2022 conference on avian reproduction.

Despite the global pandemic and lots of conferences being cancelled, postponed, or moved online, I've managed to present some of my PhD work virtually. From the start of my PhD, I knew that my confidence in public speaking was something I wanted to work on, and I think four conference/seminar presentations, an interview with David Lindo (aka the Urban Birder), and an appearance on a Facebook Live show within a year has been pretty good going. I've also gained some teaching and supervisory experience, by supervising an MSc student based at Imperial College London, who was looking at Herald Petrel *Pterodroma heraldica* tracking data from Raine Island (as part of an Institute of Zoology and Queensland government (Australia) collaboration), assisted with some of the R statistics teaching for PhD students at UEA and (fingers crossed) I will be going to eSwatini in March/April to demonstrate on an undergraduate field course!

But for now, I've got a busy few months ahead as I wrap up my remaining PhD chapters. I'm excited to see the results of the remaining analyses, and how it all comes together. Overall, I've thoroughly enjoyed my PhD, I've learnt A LOT, and have worked and met some fantastic people. Most importantly, I couldn't have asked for a better supervisory team and support from the BOU.

WARHAM STUDENT



Our 2019 Warham Student, **Paige Green**, University of Tasmania, Australia.

Paige Greene, University of Tasmania, Australia (commenced 2019)
Quantifying the ecological factors under-pinning population trends in crested penguins
Principal supervisor: Prof Mark Hindell

In her end of year communication with us, Paige wrote:

According to my progress bar on my student account I am 920 days into my PhD project – which sounds so much longer than 2.5 years! I've had my second-year review which went swimmingly. I have had my first thesis chapter accepted for publication which should be published in the first half of 2022. My first lead author paper! Woop woop!

The past year has had its ups and downs, due to Covid-related setbacks, but all in all I am really happy with what we have achieved. Last year two scientists from New Zealand's Department of Conservation (amidst changing plans numerous times and funding and permit issues) managed to take a voyage to the Antipodes Islands, south of New Zealand, and very excitingly deployed geolocation trackers on Eastern

Rockhopper *Eudyptes chrysocome filholi* and Erect-crested Penguins *Eudyptes sclateri*. These trackers have been collecting data on where these penguins forage in the ocean over the last year. The Department of Conservation have again gone to retrieve these devices back from the penguins allowing us for the first time to find out where these birds search for food in the marine environment. We are very excited about the results so far. This new tracking data will form part of a study focusing on the population of tracked crested penguins *Eudyptes sp* in the New Zealand area. This is important as many of these populations are in decline, and by finding out where they go to find food we can try to understand what's happening in these environments and why the penguins may not be finding enough food to sustain stable or increasing population numbers.

I am currently refining my next data chapter which is a large meta-analysis of all known winter migration tracks from four species of crested penguins and the effects that climate change could have on these animals. This has been a challenging and large chapter to assimilate but I am very happy with how it is coming together. Particularly, it has been exciting to lead this large-scale effort that will include most of the current crested penguin researchers across the world (around 20 authors!). This study is the product of a collaboration of international scientists and an example of the multispecies and broad scale studies needed in a world where environments are changing rapidly. While we have modelled the climate redistributions of four widespread and charismatic penguin species, this study serves as an example of the risks faced by millions of marine predators that breed in the Southern Ocean.

During my project I have had the opportunity to help supervise a third-year student on GLS tracking work in the non-breeding season of albatrosses (Diomedeidae). I have also been fortunate in collaborating with GLS tracking work in the non-breeding season of Grey Petrels *Procellaria cinerea* from Macquarie University (Australia) as well as GLS tracking work in the non-breeding season of Snow Petrels *Pagodroma nivea* from Antarctica.

I presented my work at the World Seabird Twitter Conference, World Seabird Conference and the Biologging Conference. I gave a lecture for an Honours' module on 'Seabirds as Southern Ocean Sentinels'; and have also done a bit of science communication in the form of a radio interview on Sub-Antarctic life and my first data chapter, and co-wrote an article for the Ecological Society of Australia's newsletter on the challenges of Sub-Antarctic field work.

Completely outside of my PhD (but because of it!) I was incredibly lucky to be asked to visit France's Antarctic Base Durmont D'Urville. It has been my life dream to see Antarctica and this last year it actually happened! It was awe-inspiring and gave me a profound sense of why we are do research and why we need to preserve this fragile ecosystem.

It's been an incredible year filled with amazing opportunities. I literally get to live my dreams because of my Warham Studentship

WARHAM STUDENT



Our 2020 Warham Student, **Émile Brisson-Curadeau**, McGill University, Canada.

Émile Brisson-Curadeau, McGill University, Canada (commenced 2020)
Foraging behaviour of King Penguins under extreme climatic events
Principal supervisor: Dr Kyle Elliott

In Émile's end of year communication, sent from Kerguelen Islands, he wrote:

Back in the field again! After thirty hours in the air, and almost two weeks of sailing, I have reached the Kerguelen Islands, one of the most remote island groups on the planet. Once more, I have spent Christmas and New Year's Eve with the King Penguins *Aptenodytes patagonicus* here: not a bad way to spend the holidays!

For this second field season we will equip the deep-diving penguins with GPS, GLS, accelerometers and temperature-depth recorders to understand their foraging behavior year-round, and how it is affected by climate and oceanography.

But what have I been up to this last year? We published our first paper in Marine Biology! In this paper we looked at how we could use accelerometers to remotely determine the number of prey captures in a penguin dive, hence having an estimate of their foraging success. This method will in fact be used this year with those penguins equipped with accelerometers.

Other than that, we advanced work on other papers, mainly one looking at how large-scale climatic trends affect the survival of penguin chicks. So far, it seems that the constant warming of the air temperature at Kerguelen has helped the penguin chicks survive in the winter, mostly reducing their thermoregulation costs. However, the warming of the sea might also have a (negative?) influence on the foraging success of the parents, and therefore on chick provisioning. More results on that project will come out soon, and hopefully we will publish our results by next year.

I'm really looking forward to 2022. Conferences are starting to get organised, and I have registered for the BOU annual meeting, as well as the International Ornithological Conference occurring in Durban. It will be exciting to share my results with the scientific community! Hopefully Covid will not change these plans… In any case, I will register for virtual presentations if it does!

Since all conferences were cancelled this year, our entire budget went into covering fieldwork costs. We are lucky enough that we can still conduct fieldwork out here, so we might as well take the opportunity to collect as much data as we can! Most of the budget was spent on the purchase of loggers that we are currently deploying.

Luckily my work on the Kerguelen Islands hasn't really been impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic. The NGO responsible for the logistics of all scientific projects on Kerguelen is very active and they are taking extreme measures to ensure scientific projects can continue on the island without contamination. I had to quarantine before taking the boat here and I was tested twice. Thankfully, Covid-19 still hasn't reached the island, so those measures are working so far! The only real change for me has been outside the field season, when I work at home (in Canada)



Flesh-footed Shearwater *Ardenna carneipes* is the subject of the first of our Brenda and Tony Gibbs Awards aimed at investigating the migration and movements of birds.

Image | patrickkavanagh CC BY 2.0 Wikimedia Commons

on my data rather than in the lab. I also might have wanted to go to a conference or two, but like everyone else, I'll have to wait a little longer for those kinds of events to come back. Other than that, Covid-19 hasn't really slowed down my project!

Fourth Warham studentship

Due to the continuing Covid-19 pandemic, we delayed awarding the final studentship but expect to advertise for the fourth and final award during 2022.

Brenda and Tony Gibbs bequest

We had an excellent response to call for applications for this new award and the Committee assessed 37 applications. The combined scores and comments from Committee members were used for the basis of the on-the-day discussions at a meeting on 17 August 2021.

Council approved a single award of £20,000:

Jennifer Lavers (University of Tasmania)
Lecturer in Marine Science, Institute for Marine & Antarctic Studies (IMAS), University of Tasmania, Australia
Investigating carry-over effects of plastic pollution on post-fledging movement and survival of a pelagic seabird.

Records Committee

BOU.ORG.UK/BRITISH-LIST/

The Records Committee is responsible for maintaining the British List, the official list of birds recorded in Britain.

The Committee met once (remotely) during the year with other business conducted by email.

Dawn Balmer retired as a member of the Committee in July 2021. Dawn has been a diligent and enormously valued member during her time with us, and we extend our gratitude to Dawn for all her hard work over the course of her term. We welcomed Mark Golley as a new member – Mark is a very active Norfolk-based birder and naturalist, and we look forward to his contributions to the Committee's work.

Changes to the British List

The Committee's 53rd Report, covering the period from October 2020 to September 2021, was published in December (IBIS 164: 363-368), announcing the following changes to Category A of the British List:

- South Polar Skua *Stercorarius maccormicki* – species added to the List.
- White-chinned Petrel *Procellaria aequinoctialis* – species added to the List.
- Brown Booby *Sula leucogaster* – species added to the List.

RECORDS COMMITTEE

Chair

Dr James Gilroy (University of East Anglia)

Secretary

Dr Chris McInerny (University of Glasgow)

Members

Mr Chris Batty (Lancashire)
Mr Steve Dudley, BOU COO
Mr Paul French (BBRC Chairman)
Mr Mark Golley (Norfolk, UK)
Dr Alex Lees (Manchester Metro University)
Dr Pierre-Andre Crochet (French National Centre for Scientific Research (CNRS))
Mr Andrew Stoddart (Norfolk, UK)



White-chinned Petrel (Orkney, May 2020) was a remarkable sighting for a birdwatcher out on his lockdown walk in spring 2020. One of seven species admitted to the British List in 2021.

Image © Robert Foubister

- Yellow-bellied Flycatcher *Empidonax flaviventris* – species added to the List.
- Ruby-crowned Kinglet *Corthylio calendula* – species added to the List.
- Eastern Yellow Wagtail Motacilla tschutschensis – nominate subspecies *tschutschensis* added to the List.

The 53rd Report also included the addition of the species pair Southern Giant Petrel/Northern Giant Petrel *Macronectes giganteus/Macronectes halli* to Appendix 3 (species groups not included in the systematic list) on the basis of an individual seen in Co. Durham and Northumberland in 2019 that could not be identified to species level.

Subsequent to the publication of the 53rd Report the Committee announced the addition of one further species to Category A of the British List (which will be included in the 54th Report):

- Ross's Goose *Anser rossii.*

In total, these changes to the British List, together with taxonomic changes in line with IOC taxonomy (detailed in IBIS 164: 363–368) bring the total to 628 species as at 31 December 2021.

Links with other groups

The Committee maintains close links with the British Birds Rarities Committee (BBRC). The BOURC Secretary continues to work closely with BBRC's Secretariat and other European committees, and informal links are maintained with Association of European Records Committees (AERC).

BOURC online intranet

The Committee operates an online intranet site that is used for the storage of images and documents to assist with its work.

Membership

At the end of the year our total membership stood at 946 (1,041 at 31 Dec 2020) comprising 666 full members (751 at 31 Dec 2020) and 280 reduced rate subscribers (290 at 31 Dec 2020) made up of 262 early career researchers (ECRs) and 18 from developing countries.

55 resignations were received during the year (27 in 2020), and Council noted, with sadness, the following deaths: Dr William Bourne, Dr Stephen Davies, Mr Keith Herber, Mr Robin Prytherch, Dr M Ridpath, Mr Julian Taylor and Dr Jean Marc Thiollay

Subscription rates increased in late 2020 from £40.00 to £45.00 for Ordinary membership and from £15.00 to £20.00 for ECR membership.

Acknowledgements

The Union would like to extend its thanks and gratitude to the following who have assisted with the many BOU activities throughout the year: all those members of Council and our committees as listed throughout the report who give up their time willingly to develop, oversee and deliver our wide range of activities; Raurie Bowie, Dan Chamberlain, Richard Fuller, Rebecca Kimball, Dominic McCafferty, Ruedi Nager, Jeremy Wilson, Patrick Smith, all Associate Editors (listed in each issue of IBIS) and the hundreds of reviewers (listed annually in IBIS) for their invaluable work for IBIS; Richard Sale (on behalf of the Alexander Library, Oxford University) for his editing of the IBIS book reviews; Prof Christopher Perrins and Neil Bucknell for arranging the obituaries published in IBIS; Farhath Jabeen, Andreas Petersen, Janany Sudarshan, Joanna Borysiak, Graham Allen and colleagues at Wiley, for their help in delivering our high quality journal; Leica (UK) for their support of our IBIS early career researcher and science communication awards; Nigel Crocker, Richard Price and Stephen Rumsey for their excellent management of the Union's investment portfolio; Dr David Douglas (RSPB; Chair), Dr Nancy Ockendon (Endangered Landscapes Programme), Dr Geoff Hilton (Wildfowl & Wetlands Trust) and Dr Amanda Trask (Institute of Zoology) for their work preparing the programme for the virtual annual conference (Restoring bird populations); Dr Barry MacMahon (University College Dublin, Ireland), Dr Juliette Young (National Research Institute for Agriculture, Food and the Environment, France), Dr Isla Hodgson (University of Stirling), Dr Bea Arroyo (Instituto de Investigación en Recursos Cinegéticos/Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, Spain) and Dr Francis Daunt (UK Centre for Ecology & Hydrology) for the planning and delivery of our 'Birds and People' virtual conference; Dr Mark Eaton (Rare Breeding Birds Panel & RSPB), Dr José Alves (University of Aveiro, Portugal & University of Iceland and BOU Meetings Committee), Dr Fiona Burns (RSPB) and Ms Dawn Balmer (BTO) for the planning and delivery of our 'Development in monitoring science' virtual conference; Ryan Burrell, Triin Kassiku, Camilo Carneiro, Monika Reiss, Sarah Binnie, Nina O'Hanlon and Natalia Zielonka for their excellent delivery of our three virtual events across Zoom and Twitter; Yachang Cheng and Zhu Lei for running our Weibo account in China; our science communication awards panel of Jody Allair, Dr Tatsuya Amano, Gill Holmes, Tykee James, Dr Virat Jolli, Sorrel Lyall, Dr Nina O'Hanlon, Emily Williams and Nicole Wood;

Cont/.

Whilst it was encouraging to see our membership hold up in 2020 during the first year of the pandemic, we feel the combination of the continuation of the pandemic with an increase in membership fees contributed to the drop in membership in 2021.

We remain very grateful for the continued support of our members and hope we can count on your continued commitment to the BOU and ornithology during what will almost certainly be a very challenging 2022.

Financial review

Graham Appleton, Honorary Treasurer



The continuation of the Covid-19 pandemic created a difficult backdrop to 2021 and it was sad not to meet anyone at conferences or committee meetings. Despite these issues, the BOU has been able to meet its strategic goals, without too big an impact on operations. A recovery in the value of investment funds restored the Union's balance sheet, and that makes it appear as if there was a small surplus in the year (£24,774), after the large apparent losses in 2020 (£139,936). Averaging out the two figures, suggests that the Union is reducing assets by about £58,000 per year, including expenditure from recent legacies, which is in line with the strategy agreed by Council. Looking at the accounts in detail reveals a mixture of encouraging news and two issues that are a cause for concern – membership numbers and IBIS revenue.

I should like to express my gratitude to everyone involved in three very successful online conferences – BOU staff, Support Officers and volunteers who helped deliver online components, the Meetings Committee, the three Scientific Programme Committees and the many conference presenters. Income not only met expenses; it also helped to fund the charitable work of the Union, especially through grants and bursaries. The negative side of not meeting face-to-face is that we saw a fall in membership numbers, although this was more than defrayed by the increase in subscriptions. In the medium term, Council will want to try to address recruitment and retention issues.

IBIS income is of huge importance to the BOU and we are delighted with the support that we receive from Wiley, who continue to develop new marketing opportunities. Thanks to our combined efforts, we saw only a 0.2% decline in income, when compared to 2020. This is pleasing, given the way that the publications landscape is changing and the wider downturn associated with Covid-19. The latter has created difficulties for universities and academic institutes, making it harder for publishers to sell new publication packages. There is also the underlying issue of 'Open Access' which has been affecting the income of specialist journals for some years and which will create challenges in the medium and longer terms.

Acknowledgements

CONT/.

Sophie Detchon, Robert Bogdan, Stoycho Stoychov, Brian Edwards and Charlie Douglass at Douglass Digital for maintenance and development of the BOU website; Maria Rogers and the conference staff at the University of Nottingham Conferences for working with us on the ongoing postponement of our in-person annual conference; Chas Holt (BBRC Secretary), Patric Lorgé (AERC Chairman), Bob McGowan (National Museums Scotland), Keith Naylor, British Birds Rarities Committee (BBRC), and bird records committees across Europe under the auspices of the Association of European Records Committees (AERC) who have assisted BOURC during the year; and Caroline Gillis, Tracey Richardson and colleagues at Azets (accountants and auditors).

We apologise to anyone we have inadvertently omitted.

During 2021, we received a legacy of £500 from the Estate of Robin Woods. We are always grateful for such gifts, which give us that little bit more flexibility to support ornithology in the UK and around the world. It is not possible to say 'thank you' when such gifts are received but I hope that members who have made these sorts of provisions realise how much their generosity will be appreciated.

On the expenditure side of the accounts, we significantly reduced the costs of Council and committee meetings, by not meeting in person, and reduced the amount of promotional work, as this is usually linked to our own conferences and to others at which the BOU is represented. These cost-trimming measures were sensible in the short-term but we will need to invest in these areas if we are to grow membership.

Investments

Twelve months ago, I reported a significant drop in the value of BOU investments. In 2021, we benefited from a recovery in the global economy, to such an extent that endowment funds were higher than they had been at the end of 2019. Income from these funds is used to help with grants and bursaries.

During 2021, the first payments were made from the Brenda and Tony Gibbs Fund, money from which we shall hope to spend over the next five or six years. Towards the end of 2021, we sold the investments held in the John and Pat Warham Scholarship Fund, thereby realising gains made. There is enough money in the Fund to fulfill our commitments to the first three Warham students and we shall be advertising a fourth (and final) opportunity in 2022. I am grateful for the sage advice we receive from our Investment Trustees: Nigel Crocker, Richard Price and Stephen Rumsey.

Council policies

The Union will continue to reduce the amount of cash savings we hold, in line with the expectations of the Charity Commissioners. Council has agreed that we should reduce Unrestricted Funds to £350,000, in the medium term, representing one year of operations (£250,000) and a buffer of £100,000. The size of this reserve takes account of uncertainty over medium-term income from journal publishing, which is currently a significant part of the Union's turnover.

Responsibilities of the Trustees

The Members of Council are responsible for preparing the Trustees' Report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

The law applicable to charities in England and Wales and in Scotland requires the Members of Council to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charity and of the incoming resources and application of resources of the charity for that year.

In preparing these financial statements, the Members of Council are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP;
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable accounting standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements; and
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in operation.

The Members of Council are responsible for keeping sufficient accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Charities Act 2011, the Charity (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008, the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005, the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006 (as amended) and the provisions of the trust deed. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

Staff remuneration is reviewed annually in January by the principal officers (President, Honorary Treasurer and Honorary Secretary). The decision on whether to make a pay award is contingent on affordability and the 12-month average CPIH for the previous calendar year. Benchmarking of pay and pension against comparators within the same sector, including the main avian research charities, is undertaken periodically according to availability and affordability of information.

Approved by the Council on 9 March 2022 and signed on their behalf by:



Prof Juliet Vickery President

Independent auditor's report

to the members of the British Ornithologists' Union for the year ended 31 December 2021

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of British Ornithologists' Union (the 'charity') for the year ended 31 December 2021 which comprise the statement of financial activities, the balance sheet and the notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including Financial Reporting Standard 102 *The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland* (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

In our opinion, the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the charity's affairs as at 31 December 2020 and of its incoming resources and application of resources, for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011, the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005 and regulation 8 of the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006 (as amended).

Basis for opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs (UK)) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of our report. We are independent of the charity in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the UK, including the FRC's Ethical Standard, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Conclusions relating to going concern

In auditing the financial statements, we have concluded that the Trustees' use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate.

Based on the work we have performed, we have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on the charity's ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve months from when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

Our responsibilities and the responsibilities of the Members of Council with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this report.

Other information

The other information comprises the information included in the annual report other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. The Members of Council are responsible for the other information contained within the annual report. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon. Our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the course of the audit, or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or

apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether this gives rise to a material misstatement in the financial statements themselves. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact.

We have nothing to report in this regard.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters in relation to which the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 and the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006 (as amended) require us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- the information given in the financial statements is inconsistent in any material respect with the Trustees' report; or
- sufficient and proper accounting records have not been kept; or
- the financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records; or
- we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit.

Responsibilities of Members of Council

As explained more fully in the statement of Trustees' responsibilities, the Members of Council are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the Members of Council determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error. In preparing the financial statements, the Members of Council are responsible for assessing the charity's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the Members of Council either intend to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

We have been appointed as auditor under section 144 of the Charities Act 2011 and section 44(1)(c) of the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005 and report in accordance with the Acts and relevant regulations made or having effect thereunder.

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

A further description of our responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements is located on the Financial Reporting Council's website at: http://www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities. This description forms part of our auditor's report.

Extent to which the audit was considered capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud

Irregularities, including fraud, are instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations. We design procedures in line with our responsibilities, outlined above and on the Financial Reporting Council's website, to detect material misstatements in respect of irregularities, including fraud.

We obtain and update our understanding of the entity, its activities, its control environment, and likely future developments, including in relation to the legal and regulatory framework applicable and how the entity is complying with that framework. Based on this understanding, we identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion. This includes consideration of the risk of acts by the entity that were contrary to applicable laws and regulations, including fraud.

In response to the risk of irregularities and non-compliance with laws and regulations, including fraud, we designed procedures which included:

- Enquiry of management and those charged with governance around actual and potential litigation and claims as well as actual, suspected and alleged fraud;
- Reviewing minutes of meetings of those charged with governance;
- Assessing the extent of compliance with the laws and regulations considered to have a direct material effect on the financial statements or the operations of the entity through enquiry and inspection;
- Reviewing financial statement disclosures and testing to supporting documentation to assess compliance with applicable laws and regulations;
- Performing audit work over the risk of management bias and override of controls, including testing of journal entries and other adjustments for appropriateness, evaluating the business rationale of significant transactions outside the normal course of business and reviewing accounting estimates for indicators of potential bias.

Because of the inherent limitations of an audit, there is a risk that we will not detect all irregularities, including those leading to a material misstatement in the financial statements or non-compliance with regulation. This risk increases the more that compliance with a law or regulation is removed from the events and transactions reflected in the financial statements, as we will be less likely to become aware of instances of non-compliance. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.

Other matters

Your attention is drawn to the fact that the charity has prepared financial statements in accordance with "Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102)" (as amended) in preference to the Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice issued on 1 April 2005 which is referred to in the extant regulations but has now been withdrawn.

This has been done in order for the financial statements to provide a true and fair view in accordance with current Generally Accepted Accounting Practice.

Use of this report

This report is made solely to the charity's trustees, as a body, in accordance with part 4 of the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 and regulation 10 of the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the charity's trustees those matters we are required to state to them in an auditors' report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the charity and the charity's trustees as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.



Tracey Richardson BSc (Hons) FCA (Senior Statutory Auditor) 11 March 2022
For and on behalf of Azets Audit Services
Chartered Accountants
Statutory Auditor
Ruthlyn House
90 Lincoln Road
Peterborough
Cambridgeshire
PE1 2SP

Azets Audit Services is eligible for appointment as auditor of the charity by virtue of its eligibility for appointment as auditor of a company under of section 1212 of the Companies Act 2006.

BRITISH ORNITHOLOGISTS' UNION

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2021

Current financial year	**Notes**	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Endowment funds £	**Total 2021 £**	Total 2020 £
Income from:						
Donations and legacies	**3**	33,596	–	–	**33,596**	35,523
Charitable activities	**4**	117,312	–	–	**117,312**	103,308
Investments	**5**	26,339	3,854	1,426	**31,619**	28,358
Total income and endowments		177,247	3,854	1,426	**182,527**	167,189
Expenditure on:						
Raising funds	**6**	55,126	–	–	**55,126**	59,105
Charitable activities	**7**	96,164	77,487	–	**173,651**	185,130
Total expenditure		151,290	77,487	–	**228,777**	244,235
Net gains/(losses) on investments	**12**	50,599	–	20,425	**71,024**	(62,890)
Net (outgoing)/incoming resources before transfers		76,556	(73,633)	21,851	**24,774**	(139,936)
Gross transfers between funds		7,749	(7,749)	–	–	–
Net movement in funds		84,305	(81,382)	21,851	**24,774**	(139,936)
Fund balances at 1 January 2021		566,431	443,480	140,592	**1,150,503**	1,290,439
Fund balances at 31 December 2021		650,736	362,098	162,443	**1,175,277**	1,150,503

The statement of financial activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year.

All income and expenditure is derived from continuing activities.

BRITISH ORNITHOLOGISTS' UNION

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES (CONTINUED)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2021

Prior financial year (2020)	**Notes**	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Endowment funds £	**Total 2020 £**
Income from:					
Donations and legacies	**3**	35,523	–	–	**35,523**
Charitable activities	**4**	103,308	–	–	**103,308**
Investments	**5**	23,721	3,489	1,148	**28,358**
Total income and endowments		162,552	3,489	1, 148	**167,189**
Expenditure on:					
Raising funds	**6**	59,105	–	–	**59,105**
Charitable activities	**7**	109,968	75,162	–	**185,130**
Total expenditure		169,073	75,162	–	**244,235**
Net gains/(losses) on investments	**12**	(45,561)	–	(17,329)	**(62,890)**
Net (outgoing)/incoming resources before transfers		(52,082)	(71,673)	(16,181)	(139,936)
Gross transfers between funds		7,516	(7,516)	–	–
Net movement in funds		(44,566)	(79,189)	(16,181)	(139,936)
Fund balances at 1 January 2020		610,997	522,669	156,773	1,290,439
Fund balances at 31 December 2020		566,431	443,480	140,592	1,150,503

The statement of financial activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year.

All income and expenditure is derived from continuing activities.

BRITISH ORNITHOLOGISTS' UNION

BALANCE SHEET
AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2021

		2021		2020	
Fixed assets	**Notes**	**£**	**£**	£	£
Investments	**13**		565,806		716,692
Current assets					
Debtors	**15**	**52,408**		48,294	
Cash at bank and in hand		**617,383**		427,680	
		669,791		475,974	
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	**16**	**(60,320)**		(42,163)	
Net current assets			**609,471**		433,811
Total assets less current liabilities			**1,175,277**		1,150,503
Capital funds					
Endowment funds - general					
General endowment funds	**20**		**162,443**		140,592
Income funds					
Restricted funds	**19**		**362,098**		443,480
Unrestricted funds			**650,736**		566,431
			1,175,277		1,150,503

The accounts were approved by the Members of Council on 9 March 2022.



Prof Juliet Vickery President

BRITISH ORNITHOLOGISTS' UNION

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2021

1 Accounting policies

Charity information

The British Ornithologists' Union is a registered charity in England and Wales (249877) and Scotland (SC044850) and is unincorporated.

The charity is a public benefit company.

The charity's place of business is:
PO Box 417, Peterborough, PE7 3FX, United Kingdom.

1.1 Accounting convention

The accounts have been prepared in accordance with the charity's trust deed, the Charities Act 2011, the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005, the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006 (as amended) and "Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102)" (as amended for accounting periods commencing from 1 January 2016). The charity is a Public Benefit Entity as defined by FRS 102.

The charity has taken advantage of the provisions in the SORP for charities applying FRS 102 Update Bulletin 1 not to prepare a Statement of Cash Flows.

The financial statements have departed from the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 only to the extent required to provide a true and fair view. This departure has involved following the Statement of Recommended Practice for charities applying FRS 102 rather than the version of the Statement of Recommended Practice which is referred to in the Regulations but which has since been withdrawn.

The financial statements are prepared in sterling, which is the functional currency of the charity. Monetary amounts in these financial statements are rounded to the nearest £.

The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention, modified to include the revaluation of freehold properties and to include investment properties and certain financial instruments at fair value. The principal accounting policies adopted are set out below.

1.2 Going concern

At the time of approving the financial statements, the Members of Council have a reasonable expectation that the charity has adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future. Thus the Members of Council continue to adopt the going concern basis of accounting in preparing the financial statements.

1.3 Charitable funds

Unrestricted funds are available for use at the discretion of the Members of Council in furtherance of their charitable objectives unless the funds have been designated for other purposes.

Designated funds are unrestricted funds earmarked by the trustees for particular future project or commitment.

Restricted funds are subjected to restrictions on their expenditure declared by the donor or through the terms of an appeal, and fall into one of two sub-classes: restricted income funds or endowment funds.

Endowment funds are subject to specific conditions by donors that the capital must be maintained by the charity.

BRITISH ORNITHOLOGISTS' UNION

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2021

1 Accounting policies (continued)

1.4 Income

All incoming resources are included in the statement of financial activities when entitlement has passed to the charity; it is probable that the economic benefits associated with the transaction will flow to the charity and the amount can be reliably measured. The following specific policies are applied to particular categories of income:

- income from donations or grants is recognised when there is evidence of entitlement to the gift, receipt is probable and its amount can be measured reliably.
- legacy income is recognised when receipt is probable and entitlement is established.
- income from donated goods is measured at the fair value of the goods unless this is impractical to measure reliably, in which case the value is derived from the cost to the donor or the estimated resale value. Donated facilities and services are recognised in the accounts when received if the value can be reliably measured. No amounts are included for the contribution of general volunteers.
- income from contracts for the supply of services is recognised with the delivery of the contracted service. This is classified as unrestricted funds unless there is a contractual requirement for it to be spent on a particular purpose and returned if unspent, in which case it may be regarded as restricted.

1.5 Expenditure

Expenditure is recognised on an accruals basis as a liability is incurred. Expenditure includes any VAT which cannot be fully recovered, and is classified under headings of the statement of financial activities to which it relates:

- expenditure on raising funds includes the costs of all fundraising activities, events, non-charitable trading activities, and the sale of donated goods.
- expenditure on charitable activities includes all costs incurred by a charity in undertaking activities that further its charitable aims for the benefit of its beneficiaries, including those support costs and costs relating to the governance of the charity apportioned to charitable activities.
- other expenditure includes all expenditure that is neither related to raising funds for the charity nor part of its expenditure on charitable activities.

All costs are allocated to expenditure categories reflecting the use of the resource. Direct costs attributable to a single activity are allocated directly to that activity. Shared costs are apportioned between the activities they contribute to on a reasonable, justifiable and consistent basis.

BRITISH ORNITHOLOGISTS' UNION

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2021

1 Accounting policies (continued)

Overheads

Overhead costs are allocated to the relevant cost centres in the following proportions:

	Office costs	A F Langford remuneration	S P Dudley remuneration
Conference costs	15%	7.5%	22.5%
Management and administration	45%	47.5%	60%
IBIS publishing costs	37.5%	45%	15%
Research costs	2.5%	–	2.5%
	100%	100%	100%

These proportions were decided upon by the trustees, who believe that they represent a fair reflection of the resources expended by the charity on each activity.

1.6 Fixed asset investments

Unlisted equity investments are initially recorded at cost, and subsequently measured at fair value. If fair value cannot be reliably measured, assets are measured at cost less impairment.

Listed investments are measured at fair value with changes in fair value being recognised in income or expenditure.

1.7 Cash and cash equivalents

Cash and cash equivalents include cash in hand, deposits held at call with banks, other short-term liquid investments with original maturities of three months or less, and bank overdrafts. Bank overdrafts are shown within borrowings in current liabilities.

1.8 Financial instruments

The charity has elected to apply the provisions of Section 11 'Basic Financial Instruments' and Section 12 'Other Financial Instruments Issues' of FRS 102 to all of its financial instruments.

Financial instruments are recognised in the charity's balance sheet when the charity becomes party to the contractual provisions of the instrument.

Financial assets and liabilities are offset, with the net amounts presented in the financial statements, when there is a legally enforceable right to set off the recognised amounts and there is an intention to settle on a net basis or to realise the asset and settle the liability simultaneously.

Basic financial assets

Basic financial assets, which include debtors and cash and bank balances, are initially measured at transaction price including transaction costs and are subsequently carried at amortised cost using the effective interest method unless the arrangement constitutes a financing transaction, where the transaction is measured at the present value of the future receipts discounted at a market rate of interest. Financial assets classified as receivable within one year are not amortised.

BRITISH ORNITHOLOGISTS' UNION

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2021

1 Accounting policies (continued)

Basic financial liabilities

Basic financial liabilities, including creditors and bank loans are initially recognised at transaction price unless the arrangement constitutes a financing transaction, where the debt instrument is measured at the present value of the future payments discounted at a market rate of interest. Financial liabilities classified as payable within one year are not amortised.

Debt instruments are subsequently carried at amortised cost, using the effective interest rate method.

Trade creditors are obligations to pay for goods or services that have been acquired in the ordinary course of operations from suppliers. Amounts payable are classified as current liabilities if payment is due within one year or less. If not, they are presented as non-current liabilities. Trade creditors are recognised initially at transaction price and subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method.

Derecognition of financial liabilities

Financial liabilities are derecognised when the charity's contractual obligations expire or are discharged or cancelled.

1.9 Employee benefits

The cost of any unused holiday entitlement is recognised in the period in which the employee's services are received.

Termination benefits are recognised immediately as an expense when the charity is demonstrably committed to terminate the employment of an employee or to provide termination benefits.

2 Critical accounting estimates and judgements

In the application of the charity's accounting policies, the Members of Council are required to make judgements, estimates and assumptions about the carrying amount of assets and liabilities that are not readily apparent from other sources. The estimates and associated assumptions are based on historical experience and other factors that are considered to be relevant. Actual results may differ from these estimates.

The estimates and underlying assumptions are reviewed on an ongoing basis. Revisions to accounting estimates are recognised in the period in which the estimate is revised where the revision affects only that period, or in the period of the revision and future periods where the revision affects both current and future periods.

3 Donations and legacies

	2021	2020
	£	£
Donations and gifts	**1,197**	820
Subscriptions	**32,399**	33,478
Sponsorship	**-**	1,225
	33,596	103,308

BRITISH ORNITHOLOGISTS' UNION

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2021

4 Charitable activities

	2021	2020
	£	£
Publication income – IBIS	**96,793**	97,003
Other publication income	**10**	79
Conference income	**20,509**	6,226
BOU2020 conference income	**–**	32,965
BOU2020 conference income refunded	**–**	(32,965)
	117,312	103,308

5 Investments

	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Endowment funds general	**Total 2021**	Total 2020
	£	£	£	**£**	£
Income from listed investments	26,315	3,854	1,426	**31,595**	27,577
Interest receivable	24	–	–	**24**	781
	26,339	3,584	1,426	**31,619**	28,358
For the year ended 31 December 2020	23,721	3,489	1,148		28,358

6 Raising funds

	2021	2020
Fundraising and publicity	**£**	£
Management costs – purchases	**6,718**	11,276
Management costs – wages and salaries	**41,973**	41,494
Management costs – employer's NIC	**2,227**	2,197
Management costs – pension costs	**4,208**	4,138
Fundraising and publicity	**55,126**	59,105

7 Charitable activities

	2021	2020
	£	£
Research – administration costs	**1,774**	1,955
Publication costs – IBIS	**57,498**	60,493
Conference costs	**19,216**	18,401
	78,488	80,849
Grant and bursary funding of activities (see note 8)	**82,607**	89,651
Share of governance costs (see note 9)	**12,556**	14,630
	173,651	185,130

BRITISH ORNITHOLOGISTS' UNION

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2021

8 Grants and bursaries payable

	2021	2020
	£	£
Awards payable (eight in 2021):		
Jethro George Gauld (PhD student, University of East Anglia, UK)	**2,000**	-
Olivia Hicks (Postdoctoral Research Fellow, Centre d'Etudes Biolgiques de Chize, France)	**1,527**	-
Hannah Moon (PhD student, University of Hawai'i at Manoa, USA)	**1,450**	-
Benjamin Murphy (PhD student, Fitzpatrick Institute of African Ornithology, South Africa)	**1,111**	-
Rohit Naniwadekar (Researcher, Nature Conservation Foundation, India)	**1,499**	-
Çağla Önsal (Masters Student, Koç University, Turkey)	**1,488**	-
Petra Sumasgutner (Postdoctoral Research Fellow, Konrad Lorenz Research Centre, Austria)	**1,500**	-
Riva Riley (President's Postdoctoral Fellow, University of Maryland, USA))	**1,425**	-
Josh Arbon (PhD candidate, University of Exeter, UK)	-	1,750
Fraser Bell (PhD candidate, University of Exeter, UK)	-	1,989
Amanda Bourne (PhD Candidate, University of Cape Town, South Africa)	-	1,020
Crinan Jarrett (PhD candidate, University of Glasgow, UK)	-	1,600
Jenna McCullough (PhD student, University of New Mexico, US)	-	1,600
Darren O'Connell (Postdoctoral Research Associate, University, UK)	-	1,650
Amparo Herrera Dueñas (Freelance scientific researcher, University of Glasgow, UK)	-	2,400
Kate Rogerson (Formerly PhD candidate, University of East Anglia, UK)	-	2,480
Reversal of grants accrued for payment in prior year as projects cancelled:		
Amparo Herrera Dueñas (Freelance scientific researcher, University of Glasgow, UK)	(2,400)	-
Kate Rogerson (Formerly PhD candidate, University of East Anglia, UK)	(2,480)	-
Grants to institutions (four in 2021):		
University of East Anglia, UK (John & Pat Warham Studentship – Kirsty Franklin)	**10,550**	22,986
University of Tasmania, Australia (John & Pat Warham Studentship – Paige Green)	**23,086**	24,007
McGill University, Canada (John & Pat Warham Studentship – Émile Brisson-Curadeau)	**21,851**	28,169
University of Tasmania, Australia (Brenda & Tony Gibbs Award – Jennifer Lavers)	**20,000**	-
	82,607	89,651

9 Support and governance costs

	Support costs	Governance costs	2021	2020
	£	£	**£**	£
Audit fees	–	5,150	**5,150**	5,050
Accountancy	–	2,614	**2,614**	2,564
Costs of trustees' and committee meetings	–	4,792	**4,792**	4,900
Other governance costs	–	–	**–**	2,116
	–	12,556	**12,556**	14,630
Analysed between				
Charitable activities	–	12,556	**12,556**	14,630

Governance costs includes payments to the auditors of £5,150 (2020 – £5,050) for audit fees and £2,614 (2020 – £2,564) for other services.

BRITISH ORNITHOLOGISTS' UNION

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2021

10 Members of Council

None of the Members of Council (or any persons connected with them) received any remuneration or benefits from the charity during the year.

During the year a total of one Member of Council was reimbursed expenses totaling £4 (2020 – four members reimbursed £158). These expenses represent travelling costs incurred by the Members of Council in the performance of their duties.

11 Employees

Number of employees	**2021**	2020
The average monthly number employees during the year was:	**2**	2

Employment costs	**2021**	2020
	£	£
Wages and salaries	**75,824**	74,980
Social security costs	**3,993**	3,940
Other pension costs	**7,601**	7,478
	87,418	86,398

No employee received employee benefits of more than £60,000 during the year (2020 – nil).

12 Net gains/(losses) on investments

	2021			2020		
	Unrestricted funds	**Endowment funds**	**Total**	Unrestricted funds	Endowment funds general	Total
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Revaluation of investments	45,005	20,425	65,430	(45,561)	(17,329)	(62,890)
Gain/(loss) on sale of investments	5,594	–	5,594	–	–	–
	50,599	20,425	71,024	(45,561)	(17,329)	(62,890)

13 Fixed asset investments

	Listed investments
Cost or valuation	**£**
At 1 January 2021	716,692
Additions	3,684
Valuation changes	65,430
Disposals	(220,000)
At 31 December 2021	565,806
Carrying amount	
At 31 December 2021	565,806
At 31 December 2020	716,692

BRITISH ORNITHOLOGISTS' UNION

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2021

13 Fixed asset investments (continued)

Investments in the John and Pat Warham Scholarship Fund were sold and the income was transferred to a bank account. This money will cover commitments to the three ongoing studentships and to pay for a fourth that will be advertised during 2022.

14 Financial instruments	**2021**	2020
Carrying amount of financial assets	**£**	£
Trade debtors	**31,553**	31,168
Other debtors	**8,057**	4,160
Bank and cash	**617,383**	427,680
Measured at cost	**656,993**	463,008
Listed investments	**565,806**	**716,692**
Measured at market value	**565,806**	**716,692**
Carrying amount of financial liabilities		
Other taxation and social security	**2,152**	-
Accruals	**34,154**	27,158
Measured at cost	**36,306**	27,158

15 Debtors	**2021**	2020
	£	£
Amounts falling due within one year:		
Trade debtors	**31,553**	31,168
Other debtors	**8,057**	4,160
Prepayments and accrued income	**12,798**	12,966
	52,408	48,294

16 Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	**Notes**	**2021**	2020
		£	£
Other taxation and social security		**2,152**	-
Deferred income	**17**	**24,014**	15,005
Accruals		**34,154**	27,158
		60,320	42,163

BRITISH ORNITHOLOGISTS' UNION

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2021

17	**Deferred income**	**2021**	2020
		£	£
	Other deferred income	**24,014**	15,005

Deferred income relates to subscriptions received in advance of £20,189 (2020 – £15,005), income received in advance for conferences in future years of £3,825 (2020 – £ nil).

18 Pensions and other post-retirement benefits

Defined contribution pension plans

Contributions to defined contribution plans are recognised as an expense in the period in which the related service is provided.

The charge to profit or loss in respect of defined contribution plans was £7,601 (2020 – £7,478).

19 Restricted funds

The income funds of the charity include restricted funds comprising the following unexpended balances of donations and grants held on trust for specific purposes:

		Movement in funds (2020)			
	Balance at 1 Jan 2020	Income	Expenditure	Transfers	Balance at 31 Dec 2020
	£	£	£	£	£
Research Fund	72,290	3,489	–	–	75,779
John & Pat Warham Scholarship Fund	316,135	–	(75,162)	(7,516)	233,457
Brenda & Tony Gibbs Bequest	134,244	–	–	–	134,244
	522,669	3,489	(75,162)	(7,516)	443,480

		Movement in funds (2021)			
	Balance at 1 Jan 2021	**Income**	**Expenditure**	**Transfers**	**Balance at 31 Dec 2021**
	£	£	£	£	**£**
Research Fund	75,779	3,854	–	–	**79,633**
John & Pat Warham Scholarship Fund	233,457	–	(55,487)	(5,549)	**172,421**
Brenda & Tony Gibbs Bequest	134,244	–	(22,000)	(2,200)	**110,044**
	443,480	3,854	(77,487)	(7,749)	**362,098**

Restricted funds include the Research Fund. This includes the income arising from investments held in the Endowment Fund.

The John & Pat Warham Scholarship Fund is to be used for research on Sphenisciform and Procellariiform seabirds and the income arising from investments.

The Brenda and Tony Gibbs Bequest is to be used for research on tracking and migration studies including the use of new technologies.

The transfer to the unrestricted fund represents an administration fee of 10% of the grants awarded from the John and Pat Warham Scholarship Fund and the Brenda and Tony Gibbs Bequest.

BRITISH ORNITHOLOGISTS' UNION

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2021

20 Endowment funds

Endowment funds represent assets which must be held permanently by the charity. Income arising on the endowment funds can be used in accordance with the objects of the charity and is included as restricted income. Any capital gains or losses arising on the assets form part of the fund.

		Movement in funds (2020)				
	Balance at 1 Jan 2020	Income	Expenditure	Transfers	Revaluations gains and losses	Balance at 31 Dec 2020
	£	£	£	£	£	£
L & MT Fund	120,653	1,148	–	–	(11,062)	110,739
Research Fund	11,990	–	–	–	(2,080)	9,910
Hutt Legacy	24,130	–	–	–	(4,187)	19,943
	156,773	1,148	–	–	(17,329)	140,592

		Movement in funds (2021)				
	Balance at 1 Jan 2021	**Income**	**Expenditure**	**Transfers**	**Revaluations gains and losses**	**Balance at 31 Dec 2021**
	£	£	£	£	£	£
L & MT Fund	110,739	1,426	–	–	16,431	128,596
Research Fund	9,910	–	–	–	1,326	11,236
Hutt Legacy	19,943	–	–	–	2,668	22,611
	140,592	1,426	–	–	20,425	162,443

The Landsborough and Mary Thomson Research Fund and the Hutt Legacy represent funds set up by individual donors. The purpose of the L&MT Research Fund was to fund research. Income arising from the capital held in investments within Endowment Funds is credited to the restricted Research Fund. The Research Fund represents permanent capital, the income from which is transferred to the fund of the same name in Restricted Funds to be spent solely on research activities (e.g. grants and bursaries). The Hutt Legacy is intended for the general purposes of the Union and interest arising from this item is credited to General Funds which itself represents investments and net assets which are held for the daily running and maintenance of the charity.

21 Analysis of net assets between funds

	2021			
	Unrestricted funds	**Restricted funds**	**Endowment funds**	**Total 2021**
Fund balances at 31 December 2021 are represented by:	£	£	£	£
Investments	266,995	136,368	162,443	565,806
Current assets/(liabilities)	383,741	225,730	–	609,471
	650,736	362,098	162,443	1,175,277

BRITISH ORNITHOLOGISTS' UNION

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2021

21 Analysis of net assets between funds (continued)

	2020			
	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Endowment funds	Total 2020
Fund balances at 31 December 2020 are represented by:	£	£	£	**£**
Investments	230,321	345,779	140,592	**716,692**
Current assets/(liabilities)	336,110	97,701	–	**433,811**
	566,431	443,480	140,592	**1,150,503**

22 Related party transactions

There were no disclosable related party transactions during the year (2020 – none).

Remuneration of key management personnel

The remuneration of key management personnel including employer pension contributions is as follows:

	2921	2020
	£	£
Aggregate compensation	**52,148**	51,734

THE BRITISH ORNITHOLOGISTS' UNION

England & Wales - Charity number 249877

Accounts

British Ornithologists' Union

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Cover image: Researcher undertaking habitat survey
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President's statement

Prof Juliet Vickery



This time last year, reflecting on my first year as BOU President, I wrote that 2019 "was a tumultuous year for the UK and brought challenges for the BOU". Given that that was my view, looking back on a pre-Covid 2019, how on earth do I sum up 2020!? I suppose 'tumultuous and challenging for absolutely everyone, absolutely everywhere' might do it? In that context I want to start by saying how much I hope that the majority of you reading this have escaped illness, anxiety and, above all, loss. To any of you who have, I can do very little but offer my deepest sympathy and the sincere wish that 2021 will bring you hope and healing.

I want to start by recognising that, despite being 162 years old, the BOU has absolutely proved it is still spritely, can react to change, make rapid and timely decisions, and adopt new ways of working and to support our community. This has been most evident around conferences, which have either been postponed, in the case of the 2020 annual conference, or switched to virtual, as in the case of our autumn 2020 meeting. I want to record a huge thanks to the BOU Office, Steve Dudley and Angela Langford, our innovative Meetings Committee, chaired by Dr Francis Daunt (UKCEH), and the two brilliant Scientific Organising Committees, chaired by Dr David Douglas (RSPB) and Prof James Pearce-Higgins (BTO) respectively, for all their hard work in so successfully implementing these changes. I'd also like to thank my fellow Trustees on Council for their timely and effective decision-making which enabled these changes to be made swiftly and efficiently.

Whilst our 2020 annual conference was switched in its entirety to 2021, the 2020 autumn scientific meeting 'Climate change and birds: solutions to the crisis' was a real success story for us and certainly one of my personal highlights. Thanks to a brilliant team, a standout international line-up of speakers and great 'technical multitasking' on the day, our first virtual conference was exceptional in so many ways. It brought together scientists, conservationists and policy experts from around the globe, extending late into the UK evening to attract an audience across the Americas. Delegates could attend via Zoom, ask questions and discuss with speakers and one another via Slack and enjoy a parallel Twitter event during the break. The entire 14 hours (!) from 9am to 11pm UK time ran with barely a technical glitch, thanks to careful advance preparation and frenetic behind the scenes activity during the event by Steve Dudley and our expert and knowledgeable Support Officer, Ryan Burrell (Bournemouth University). The format, scheduling and affordable registration rate of the autumn meeting also led to a much bigger and more diverse audience for a BOU conference. The numbers speak for themselves; 375 people registered for the event, of which nearly

GODMAN SALVIN PRIZE



Prof Theunis Piersma was presented with the BOU's most prestigious scientific award at the International Wader Study Group's (IWSG) 50th Anniversary conference in October.

The award recognises Theunis' outstanding contribution to ornithology, in particular to our understanding and conservation of migratory shorebirds around the world, as well as the immense role he has played within our community, and the IWSG in particular, over several decades.

On accepting the award, Theunis said "Thanks for this incredible honour, and thanks for the super nice words [citation in IBIS], which I hope will encourage us all to do a better job. We are scratching the surface of our understanding of the living world, with this enormous sense of urgency that we are losing just that. If the medal helps in raising intention, attention and creative voices, that would be fantastic."

The Godman Salvin Prize is the Union's highest scientific award and recognises an individual's outstanding contribution to ornithology.

For the full citation see IBIS 163: 309-311.

60% were from outside the UK compared with the norm of only 15%, and over 1,500 people followed the event on Twitter, with over 500 active participants. The lessons learned will be put to good use for an even bigger and better virtual annual conference 'Restoring Bird Populations' in 2021 which will again run on Zoom and Twitter simultaneously.

This year also saw the BOU join forces with the International Wader Study Group (IWSG) to co-host the first ever International Shorebird Twitter Conference as part of the IWSG's 50th anniversary celebrations. A two-day Twitter conference preceded the IWSG's virtual conference, providing the perfect occasion for the BOU to present Prof Theunis Piersma with the Union's Godman-Salvin Prize in front of his 'home crowd'. Quite simply, Theunis is an utterly brilliant and passionate scientist, with a relentless drive to understand and conserve waders all across the globe.

In a year when equality and diversity issues really came to the fore, the BOUs' Engagement Committee and our Equality and Diversity Working Group's (EDWG) stepped up to the challenge. I am extremely grateful to all of those who give their time to help the BOU in its aim to be more inclusive and accessible in all we do. Particular thanks to the Chair of our Engagement Committee, Dr Hugh Wright, who steers us determinedly but carefully and thoughtfully in important but often sensitive areas. A key direction this year has been to move 'beyond gender' to better engage with other underrepresented groups within our community. Our series of Rainbow blogs have captured the honest and often moving personal perspectives and experiences of the LGBTQIA+ community in science. I am personally deeply grateful to those who felt able to share in a way that has deepened my own understanding of the challenges faced and provided encouragement to so many, in many different ways. Gender has not been forgotten though and, for the first time in the Union's 162-year history, women now outnumber men (albeit by just one person) on BOU Council. We also took a significant step towards achieving our target of a 50:50 male-to-female ratios in short lists for awards: a newly established Awards Nominations Committee, chaired by Dr Lucy Wright (RSPB), has been tasked with implementing a more open and accountable nominations procedure from 2021 onwards.

In terms of communicating science, our journal IBIS remains the BOU's flagship and it too stepped up to help our community. Over 20% more manuscripts were submitted between April and September compared to the same period in 2019. Despite the pressures of working from home, which may have affected individuals' 'turn around times', the IBIS team worked hard to meet this extra demand. This year, their continued hard work saw IBIS's 2019 2-year Impact Factor increase from 1.944 to 2.076 and the journal moving from fifth to fourth out of the 28 Ornithology journals listed by Thompson Reuters ISI. I would like to record my thanks to our outstanding team of IBIS editors, headed by Editor in Chief Dr Dominic McCafferty, our wider Associate Editor board and the many reviewers, who give so much time to IBIS. A personal highlight was the 'Avian Migration and Movement' special issue published in

April - an inspirational collection of 25 articles and a bright light at the start of the first lockdown for many of us!

Many IBIS authors also contribute to #theBOUblog, working with our blog editor Dr Christina Ieronymidou to produce insightful articles alongside those produced by our Journal publicity Support Officer, Dr Jente Ottenburghs. A testament to the skillful writing of our authors is that the blog remains the most visited section of the BOU website, accounting for 30% of all page views for the site. Huge thanks go to Jente and Christina for all their hard work in helping the science we publish reach a much wider audience.

As was the case for almost all field projects in 2020, the majority of those awarded BOU research grants or bursaries were not taken up during 2020 but will hopefully run 2021. In relation to grants, I would like to thank Prof Phil Atkinson (BTO) who retired as Chair of the Grants Committee for his valued input and leadership as Chair and ordinary member for eight years.

So, looking forward to 2021, I hope many of you will join us for our 'Restoring Bird Populations' virtual annual conference. It promises to be unmissable and highly relevant to later discussions at the Convention on Biological Diversity UN Climate Change Conference. I hope others of you will attend one of our two autumn meetings on 'Birds and People' and 'New Monitoring Techniques', whilst others continue to publish in IBIS and follow us on social media. If you are interested in helping the BOU's work, please do seriously think about getting involved as a committee or Council member, for which we welcome nominations (see member newsletters, social media and our website for calls for nominations).

Here is to all of us being able to enjoy more freedom and a sense of getting back to normal in a 'less tumultuous and less challenging' 2021.

Structure, Governance & Management

ADMINISTRATION DETAILS

BRITISH ORNITHOLOGISTS' UNION

Founded 1858

Registered as a Charity:

England and Wales, no. 249877

Scotland, no. SC044850

Address

PO Box 417, Peterborough PE7 3FX, UK

Tel: +44 (0) 1 733 844 820

Email: bou@bou.org.uk

Web: www.bou.org.uk

As at 31 December 2020

BOU Staff

Chief Operations Officer
Mr Steve P. Dudley

Journal & Office Manager
Mrs Angela F. Langford

Council Officers

President	Prof Juliet Vickery
Vice Presidents	Mr Neil J. Bucknell
	Prof Tony Fox
Honorary Secretary	Dr Helen Baker
Honorary Treasurer	Mr Graham F. Appleton

Ordinary Members of Council

Dr Sonya Clegg (Chair, Grants Committee), Prof Will Cresswell, Dr Emma Cunningham, Dr Francis Daunt (Chair, Meetings Committee), Dr James Gilroy (Chair, Records Committee), Dr Julie Miller, Dr Jennifer Smart (Chair, IBIS Management Committee), Dr Rosemary Trevelyan, Dr Hugh Wright (Chair, Engagement Committee) and Dr Lucy Wright (Chair, Awards Nominations Committee).

The British Ornithologists' Union is an unincorporated charity, no. 249877 (England & Wales) and SC044850 (Scotland).

The object of the BOU is the promotion of the science of ornithology. Its governing document is the Rules adopted at the Annual General Meeting in 2010, and last updated by Council in July 2020. Under the rules, the governing body, the Council of the Union, is responsible for the running of the Union's business, supported by its staff. Council may delegate functions to standing or ad hoc committees that report to Council. The Union's Council retains overall responsibility for matters so delegated.

The BOU has six standing committees: the Awards Nominations Committee, the Engagement Committee, the Grants Committee, the IBIS Management Committee, the Meetings Committee and the Records Committee.

Elected members of Council are Trustees of the charity. Members of Council are recruited from within the ornithological community. Where possible, Council members will have served on one or more of the BOU's standing committees prior to nomination for election to Council. Those standing for election to BOU Council as an incoming chair of a standing committee will have served for at least two years on the respective committee. On election, new Council members are provided with relevant Union documents to help familiarise them with current Union activities and to provide information on the duties and responsibilities of being a Trustee of the Union.

Council continually reviews the risks to which the Union is exposed and is satisfied that, as far as is practicable, it has taken appropriate steps to mitigate any risk.

Staff salaries are discussed annually, as part of the staff review process, conducted by the President and Honorary Secretary. Pay is normally adjusted in line with inflation (CPIH) and there is an option to award an unconsolidated performance-based bonus, in exceptional circumstances. The role of Chief Operating Officer was redefined in 2018 and the salary was adjusted, taking into account remuneration for similar positions in other learned societies and charities.

Objectives & Activities

ADMINISTRATION DETAILS

(continued)

Trustees

The following individuals served as Trustees of the charity at the time of Council approving this annual report and accounts:
Mr Graham F. Appleton, Dr Helen Baker, Mr Neil J. Bucknell, Dr Sonya Clegg, Dr Will Cresswell, Dr Emma Cunningham, Dr Francis Daunt, Prof Tony Fox, Dr James Gilroy, Dr Julie Miller, Dr Jennifer Smart, Prof Juliet Vickery, Dr Rosemary Trevelyan and Dr Hugh Wright.

The following individuals also served as Trustees of the charity for part of the year covered by these annual report and accounts:
Prof Phil Atkinson, Dr Tom Finch and Dr Rowena Langston.

Editorial positions

At 31 December 2020 the following editorial positions were held:

IBIS Editor in Chief	Dr Dominic McCafferty
IBIS Editors	Dr Rauri Bowie
	Dr Dan Chamberlain
	Prof Rebecca Kimball
	Dr Ruedi Nager
	Prof Jeremy Wilson
Blog Editor	Dr Christina Ieronymidou

Investment Trustees

The following individuals served as Investment Trustees for the Union during the period of this report and accounts:
Mr Nigel J. Crocker, Mr Richard Price and Mr Stephen J. Rumsey.

Mission statement

The British Ornithologists' Union will promote understanding and conservation of the world's birds, advance ornithology within the scientific community and promote scientific ornithology to the wider birdwatching public. The BOU mission will be achieved by the following means:

- Publishing IBIS as a leading international journal of ornithological science.
- Organising a programme of meetings and conferences.
- Awarding grants and bursaries for ornithological research.
- Encouraging liaison between those actively engaged in ornithological research.
- Providing a representative body of the scientific community, able to provide ornithological information and advice to government and other policy makers.
- Maintaining and publishing the official list of birds recorded in Britain - The British List.

Council activities

At our re-scheduled AGM in June, Dr Sonya Clegg was elected as an Ordinary Member of Council, to replace Prof Phil Atkinson as Chair of the Grants Committee and Dr Julie Miller was elected as an Ordinary Member of Council to replace Dr Tom Finch.

During the year, Dr Lucy Wright was co-opted on to Council to help establish and to Chair the new Awards Nominations Committee. Dr Rowena Langston reluctantly informed us that she would not be completing her term on Council and resigned as a Trustee.

We were delighted that Prof Theunis Piersma (University of Groningen and the NIOZ, Royal Netherlands Institute for Sea Research) accepted our award of the Godman Salvin Prize for his outstanding contributions to the study or shorebirds and to the wider shorebird and ornithological communities.

Elected members of Council, as Trustees of the charity, confirm that they have referred to the guidance contained in the Charity Commission's general guidance on public benefit when reviewing objectives and activities.

Activities in Scotland

The BOU is an unincorporated charity registered in Scotland (SC044850). As well as having members in Scotland, at the time of this report, five of our Trustees, Dr Helen Baker, Dr Will Cresswell, Dr Emma Cunningham, Dr Francis Daunt and Dr Julie Miller, and three of our journal editors, Dr Dominic McCafferty, Dr Rudolf Nager and Prof Jeremy Wilson, also reside there.

ADMINISTRATION DETAILS

(continued)

Bankers

The Union holds accounts with the following banks:

CAF Bank Ltd
25 Kings Hill, West Malling, Kent ME19 4JQ

Natwest Bank plc
PO Box 6037, Brompton Road, London SW13 1XJ

Scottish Widows
67 Morrison Street, Edinburgh EH3 8YJ

Solicitor

The Union's solicitors are:

Laytons
Ranger House, Walnut Tree Close, Guildford, Surrey GU1 4UL

Accountant & Auditor

The Union's accountant and auditor are:

Azets Audit Services
(formerly Baldwins Audit Services)
Ruthlyn House, 90 Lincoln Road, Peterborough PE1 2SP

Achievements & Performance

The BOU Office

Staff

During the year, the BOU employed two full-time, home-based staff members within the BOU Office: Steve Dudley (Chief Operations Officer) and Angela Langford (Journal & Office Manager).

Office duties

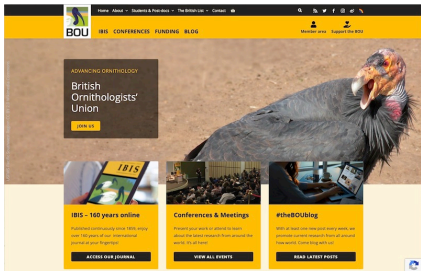
The BOU Office is responsible for the effective running of the BOU, managed by the Chief Operations Officer and overseen by Council and the Union's standing committees.

The BOU Office's key responsibilities are:

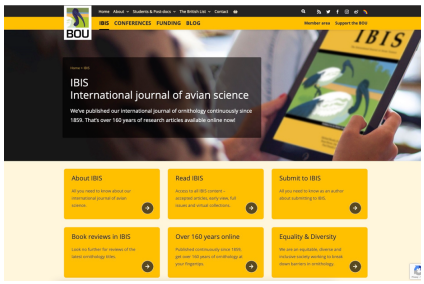
- undertake the day to day running of the BOU;
- to support BOU Council and its committees, implementing much of the work arising from them, specifically;
  - working with the IBIS Management Committee, manage non-editorial, business and marketing of the Union's journal, IBIS;
  - working with the Meetings Committee, organise BOU conferences and meetings;
  - working with the Engagement Committee, develop and deliver engagement initiatives including equality and diversity items;
  - working with the Grants Committee, manage the Union's Small Grants and Career Development Bursary schemes and John & Pat Warham Studentships;
  - working with the Records Committee, manage the British List and associated areas;
  - working with the new Awards Nominations Committee to develop and deliver changes to our nominations processes and awards criteria;
- working with the Honorary Treasurer, maintain accounts and budgets and the preparation of annual accounts and prepare annual forecasts;
- working with the IBIS Editorial Team
  - oversee and manage the manuscript process and flow for IBIS;
  - oversee marketing of the journal;
- to service the BOU membership;
- to develop and manage the BOU's web content;
- to develop and manage the BOU's social media activity;
- to undertake routine administration;
- to manage BOU sales, stock and storage facility;
- to handle general enquiries, press and publicity.

BOU.ORG.UK

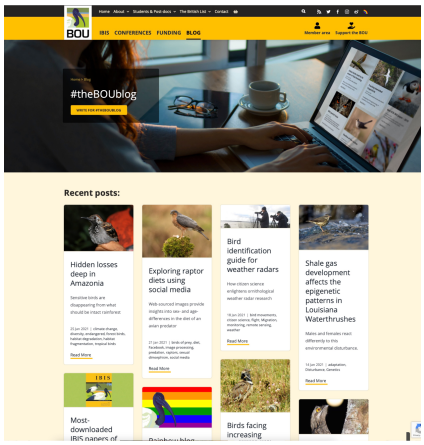
At the end of the year we delivered a completely new website, with an integrated member area.



Our new homepage.



IBIS landing page.



Our new blog page.

In addition to working with the Union's various committees (see individual committee reports below) the BOU Office undertook the following activities.

Website

BOU.ORG.UK

Investment in digital infrastructure is critical in our digital age and increasingly online lifestyles. The BOU website remains a key component of our communications strategy providing opportunities to promote IBIS, membership, conferences and grants. With a dynamic social media presence delivering thousands of visitors to our website annually, Council agreed to embark upon a complete redesign of the website during the year for what is our largest ever capital expenditure project to date. The project included the integration of MemberPress membership management software, to provide a much-needed member portal for members to manage their own subscriptions and purchase member-discounted items, such as preferential conference rates.

As with most things in 2020, the project was initially held up due to the impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic on our developers, Douglass Digital, and then slowed down because the rescheduled development period then overlapped with busier than usual periods (due to the pandemic) within the BOU Office. We eventually finished the redesign in the autumn, at which point we set about the complicated task of a bespoke integration of MemberPress with our complex membership data. The website eventually went live in mid-December, with the member area rolled out in early January 2021. Despite all pandemic-enforced delays, the project ended up being only three months late.

The end result is a hugely more dynamic site that visitors are already reporting that they are enjoying using.

Conferences

BOU.ORG.UK/BOU-CONFERENCES/

See also Meetings Committee (page 21).

Like all societies, our conferences were massively impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic.

The postponement of the annual conference (Restoring Bird Populations) to 2021 necessitated the Office having to cancel the 2020 conference at just three weeks' notice – which is no small feat! With the kind cooperation of the University of Nottingham, we were able to postpone the conference without incurring a penalty, we worked with presenters to move as many as possible of the talks to the rescheduled 2021 event, and refunded registration fees to delegates.

By late spring it was apparent that our autumn one-day meeting (climate change and birds) was unlikely to go ahead as an in-person event so an early decision was made to switch this to a virtual conference (on Zoom) with a parallel Twitter conference. The

OUR SOCIAL YEAR

@IBIS_JOURNAL

Tweets	6,186	-15%
Engagements	179,450	+47%
Organic impressions	11.8m	+30%
Followers at 31 Dec 20	17,533	+12%

IBISJOURNAL

Posts	4,142	-5%
Engagements	150,242	-34%
Impressions/reach	2.75m	-44%
Fans at 31 Dec 20	9,836	+13%

IBIS_JOURNAL

Posts	138	+16%
Engagements	4,411	+25%
Followers at 31 Dec 2020	1,311	+17%

WEIBO
英国鸟类学会会刊

Posts	20	-50%
Reads	2,076,600	-18%
Followers at 31 Dec 2020	9,648	+18%

early switch ensured that we not only maintained an excellent (extended) programme but also attracted the largest ever audience for a BOU event (see page 23).

Before the Covid-19 pandemic was even heard of we had already committed to three Twitter conferences for 2020 – supporting the 6th World Seabird Twitter Conference (#WSTC6), leading on the first ever International Shorebird Twitter Conference (#ISTC20) to be delivered jointly with the International Wader Study Group, and running our own Twitter event, #BOUsci20, alongside the Climate Change and Birds virtual Zoom conference. With the onset of the pandemic, all three events took on a much more meaningful and societal role than expected, as our community sought ways to stay connected and continue to present their work.

During the year, our Chief Operations Officer, Steve Dudley, Chaired the Marketing Committee for the 2020 North American Ornithological Conference (NAOC). Although increased commitments within the BOU due to the ongoing pandemic prevented Steve from seeing NAOC2020 switch to a virtual event, under his Chairmanship the event attracted the highest ever number of submissions and largest ever attendance for an NAOC.

Sponsorship

Leica (UK) continued their support providing prizes for the best paper in IBIS with an early career researcher as lead author and for our science communication awards.

Social media

BOU.ORG.UK/SOCIAL-MEDIA/

See also Engagement Committee (page 14).

Social media continue to play an increasing and significant role in everything we do as a society and remain our primary marketing tool. We continue to refine the use of all our social platforms, to enable us to inform the wider ornithological community about our activities, including IBIS, conferences, grants and awards, and of course membership. Social media is key in our strategy to direct people to the BOU and IBIS websites and, after search engine searches and direct-to-site visits, social media remains the third most important source of visitors to both of these websites.

Twitter (@IBIS_JOURNAL) remains our key platform and at the end of the year we had over 17,500 followers, maintaining @IBIS_JOURNAL as by far the largest ornithology society/journal on the platform. Our account continues to provide an active news service for ornithologists around the world, on which we promote newly published papers from a wide selection of journals, conferences, meetings, news items, job opportunities and more. Our online community is highly engaged, is the envy of many other taxa-based groups within ecology, and helps us to spread BOU, IBIS and other ornithological news far wider than previously.

ALTMETRICS

ALTMETRIC.COM

Altmetrics are metrics and qualitative data that are complementary to traditional, citation-based metrics. They can include (but are not limited to) peer reviews on Faculty of 1000, citations on Wikipedia and in public policy documents, discussions on research blogs, mainstream media coverage, bookmarks on reference managers like Mendeley, and mentions on social networks such as Twitter and Facebook (not all social media contribute to altmetrics).

Sourced from the Web, altmetrics can reveal how often a journal is discussed and used around the world. For that reason, altmetrics have been incorporated into researchers' websites, institutional repositories, journal websites, and more.

ALTMETRICS IN ORNITHOLOGY

Altmetrics became mainstream in 2014. The BOU were quick to see the important role this new metric could play in measuring the outreach of not just our own social media activity, but online mentions of ornithological research as a whole. We have been tracking altmetrics for IBIS, as well as other ornithology journals and ecology journals which carry a significant number of ornithology articles. It was this dataset that was used to look at the impact of social mentions of ornithology articles, especially linking mentions to citations of those papers (Finch, O'Hanlon & Dudley, 2017).

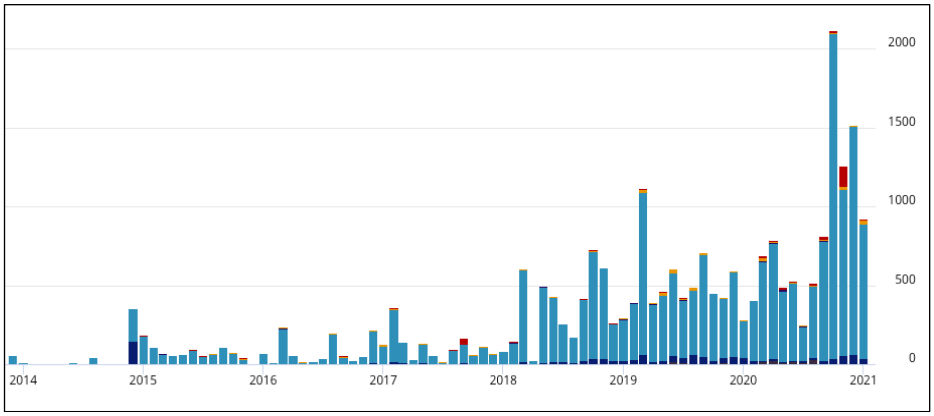
For more information on the use of social media in ornithology and altmetrics see BOU.ORG.UK/SOCIAL-MEDIA/.

Finch, T., O'Hanlon, N., & Dudley, S. P. 2017. Tweeting birds: online mentions predict future citations in ornithology. *Royal Society Open Science*, 4. DOI: 10.1098/rsos.171371

Our growth on Twitter continues to be notable with our follower growth increasing by 11% (on 2019). A slight refinement in what we share on Twitter saw our posted content drop by 15% but overall engagements and reach increased, back in line with 2018 metrics. Since much of our content is informing the community about new papers in ornithology, it means we have little control over the substance of the content shared, which is highly variable, covering topics right across avian science. Our increase in engagement and reach is considered to be due to the three Twitter conferences we supported/ran during the year and also due to more people spending more time on social media during the pandemic. The former is perhaps obvious, and it's no coincidence we see better performance on the platform in years in which we run Twitter conferences, but the latter should not be underestimated. The pandemic meant many more people were not just working from home but were also working remotely, meaning that social media took on a more important role in keeping people connected both personally and professionally.

Ornithology articles continue to see growth in the number of overall online mentions (measured with altmetrics). The figure below illustrates this growth for IBIS articles which is in line with our own follower base on twitter, and the continued growth of the online ornithological community. It also partly demonstrates the immediacy of online attention, with more recently published articles receiving more attention than older articles. 92% of online mentions of articles published in ornithology journals are derived from social media, 75% from Twitter alone (the pale blue bar in figure below) which also plays a part in the immediacy of attention (Finch et al, 2017).

Online mentions of IBIS articles, 2014 – 2020



Source: Altmetric Explorer (almertic.com/explorer) 22 January 2021.

In 2020, from 17 selected ornithology titles tracked since 2015, 2,098 articles received 54,264 online mentions. Mentions for IBIS articles accounted for 47% of these (25,358 mentions of 532 articles) and IBIS again received the most mentions of any ornithological journal from five of the six most important contributing streams to ornithology's overall altmetrics. The online mentions of ornithology articles are truly

BOU.ORG.UK

The Union's primary website promotes the BOU to a wide audience and is important for recruiting new members, disseminating information about the work of the BOU, taking online bookings for conferences and for selling BOU publications.

IBIS.AC.UK

The primary gateway to IBIS – the BOU's international journal of avian science.

global, with 58% of online mentions being recognised from 165 countries (remaining 42% are of unknown origin).

Online mentions of the top 5 altmetric-scoring ornithology journals (in 2020)

			Mentions					
	# Articles	Total AAS*	News	Blog	Twitter	Facebook	Wiki	Policy
IBIS	532	14,756	352	421	22,793	1,272	369	133
IBIS change 2019 v 2020	+5%	-25%	+47%	+4%	+33%	+1%	-9%	+137%
The Auk	367	5,796	341	171	2,958	156	452	7
J Avian Biology	203	5,038	199	62	5,943	380	56	10
J Ornithology	242	3,142	112	61	3,228	159	95	13
Bird Study	175	3,081	38	34	4,659	109	29	30

* AAS = Altmetric Attention Score (here combined for # Articles)

Data from Altmetric Explorer (almertic.com/explorer) downloaded 22 January 2021.

The two top scoring individual articles in ornithology during 2020 were both papers published in IBIS:

Four-legged foes: dogs disturb nesting plovers more than people do on tourist beaches

Miguel Ángel Gómez-Serrano

doi.org/10.1111/ibi.12879 | Published 2 September 2020

Urban gulls adapt foraging schedule to human-activity patterns

Anouk Spelt, Oliver Soutar, Cara Williamson, Jane Memmott, Judy Shamoun-Baranes, Peter Rock, Shane Windsor

doi.org/10.1111/ibi.12892 | Published 2 November 2020

These two papers reflect the different ways a paper can attract online attention. Neither was selected by our publisher, Wiley, for media attention, so any promotion will have been down to the authors and ourselves.

Altmetrics for the two top altmetric-scoring articles in ornithology

		Mentions				
	AAS	News	Blog	Twitter	Facebook	Wiki
Dogs disturbing nesting plovers	1,433	17	2	2,858	3	1
Urban gulls foraging	1,085	124	8	214	7	0

AAS = Altmetric Attention Score

Data from Altmetric Explorer (almertic.com/explorer) downloaded 22 January 2021.

WEIBO

英国鸟类学会会刊

2020 was our third full year on Weibo, China's largest social media platform, and we continue to enjoy modest growth, thanks to our two volunteers Yachang Cheng and Lei (Robbi) Zhu.

Our warm congratulations to Yachang who graduated with a PhD from the International Max Planck Research School for Organismal Biology in Germany in 2020.

E-NEWSLETTERS

Our regular e-newsletters are sent to over 8,500 researchers, and others interested in ornithology, all around the world.

Looking at the above data, the disturbance of nesting plovers paper became the highest altmetric-scoring ornithological article of all time, through a driven Twitter campaign by the author aided by ourselves. The 2,858 Twitter mentions is the highest of any ornithological paper. In contrast, the paper on the diet of urban gulls, the second highest ever altmetric-scoring ornithology article, achieved an unprecedented uptake (for an ornithological article) from news media. The news media attention was solely attributed to the author's own institute, the University of Bath, putting out their own press release. Both of these paper's Altmetric Attention Score was more than double the previous highest-scoring ornithological article up to the end of 2019.

Our presence on Facebook (FACEBOOK.COM/IBISJOURNAL) continues to grow, with an established and expanding community on this platform with our follower number increasing by 13%.

We made some changes to our output content for 2020, with a greater focus BOU and IBIS activities and a reduction of third-party content. Whilst on the face of it these changes had a negative impact on some of our metrics, as can be seen on page 9, and to continue the decline first noted in 2018 and explained in the 2019 annual report. The intention of the changes were to drive more of our Facebook followers to the BOU and IBIS websites. In this respect the changes have been very successful; for the first year ever, Facebook delivered more visitors to the BOU website than Twitter.

We continue to see modest but steady growth on Instagram (IBIS_JOURNAL). Our follow-base increased by 17% by the year-end, even though our output on this non-altmetric scoring platform remains significantly lower than that for Twitter or Facebook. Posting 138 BOU and IBIS related posts attracted nearly 4,500 engagements – a 25% increase on 2019.

Our third full year on Weibo, China's largest social media platform, saw a modest increase in followers (18%) but with the impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic and increased work commitments on our two volunteers, fewer articles were posted, with 20 articles (-50% on 2019) receiving over 2 million reads (-18% on 2019).

E-newsletters

BOU.ORG.UK/E-NEWSLETTERS /

We saw a continued steady growth in readers, as people signed up via our website. E-newsletters continue to be a key medium for us to promote BOU activities to both members and the wider ornithological community.

We published a total of 39 e-newsletters during the year, with a focus on IBIS, conferences and BOU news. This represents an increase on recent years, due to a need to communicate the impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic on our activities.

#THEBOUBLOG

Our most-read blog posts in 2020:

A twist in the tale: Red Kites are back in town
Why are so many Red Kites visiting our towns?
Melanie Orros
Hawk Conservancy Trust

The secret lives of Nightjars
Where do European Nightjars go?
Katrina Sharps
University of East Anglia

Got an old smartphone? Turn it in to a bird-monitoring app
The use of a smartphone app for motion detection to monitor birds remotely
Ronny Steen
Norwegian University of Life Sciences, Norway

#theBOUblog

BOU.ORG.UK/BLOG/

Our blog is now the main arrival point for visitors (30%) to the BOU website and the most read section of the website, accounting for 30% of overall page views. During the year we published 79 blog posts (64 in 2019) of which 41 were on IBIS papers (47 in 2019) (see Engagement Committee on page 14 for more detail).

As discussed in previous years, blogs are increasingly popular in our sector and continue to contribute more year on year to our sector's altmetrics. For the 17 selected ornithology journals we've monitored since 2015, blogs accounted for 853 online mentions in 2020 (756 in 2019 and from a starting point of 61 in 2013) (source: Altmetric Explorer accessed 22 January 2021).

After a marked decline last year, the number of authors from third-party journals writing for #theBOUblog picked up again in 2020, with a total of 21 articles received (4 in 2019, 24 in 2018). This was a result of a concerted campaign to attract third-party authors, educating them about the benefits of blogging with the most-read general ornithology blog on the web, and the clear benefits of publishing on more than one blog; multiple blogs increase the altmetric attention score and engage with a wider audience, especially through associated social media posts, thereby increasing the probability of work being cited.

Press and media

We continue to work closely with our journal partner, Wiley. As a result, 2020 saw another increase in the coverage of IBIS articles in the wider media and press, as reflected in the number of altmetric mentions (see table on page 11), although the majority of the 47% increase on 2019 can be attributed to one paper promoted by the author's own institute (see page 11).

We continue to receive coverage of BOU Records Committee announcements in the UK birding press and online birding services, as well as in regional bird reports and e-groups.

General administrative items

General correspondence (largely emails and contact forms received via the website) continues to increase and take up significant Office time. We continue to maintain a storage facility in Peterborough.

AWARDS NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE

Chair

Dr Lucy Wright (RSPB)

Members

Dr Niall Burton (BTO)
Ms Aurora Gonzalo-Tarodo (University of West England)
Prof Rhys Green (retired, formerly RSPB & University of Cambridge)
Dr Grant Humphries (HiDef Aerial Surveying)
Dr Rebecca Laidlaw (Natural Resources Wales)
Dr Elizabeth Masden (University of Highlands & Islands)
Mr David Stroud (retired, formerly JNCC)
Dr Alice Trevail (University of Exeter)

ENGAGEMENT COMMITTEE

Chair

Dr Hugh Wright (JNCC)

Members

Miss Ailidh Barnes (BTO)
Dr Lynda Donaldson (Wildfowl & Wetlands Trust)
Mr Steve Dudley, BOU COO
Dr Jenny Dunn (University of Lincoln)
Dr Tom Finch (RSPB)
Dr Daniel Hayhow (Earthwatch Europe)
Dr Julie Miller (University of Glasgow)
Dr Nina O'Hanlon, Social Media Support Officer (Environment Research Institute)
Dr Ashley Sendell-Price (Uppsala University, Sweden)
Dr Saskia Wischnewski (RSPB)

Awards Nominations Committee

The Awards Nominations Committee was set up during 2020 to oversee the criteria and nominations process for each of the BOU's awards, currently the Godman-Salvin Prize, Janet Kear Union Medal and the Alfred Newton Lecture. The Committee also intends to develop a new award for early to mid-career researchers.

Committee members were nominated using two open calls for nominations from within the BOU membership and wider ornithological community. A start-up group comprising Dr Niall Burton, Prof John Croxall, Prof Rhys Green and Dr Lucy Wright met once in July and had useful discussions regarding the remit and priorities for the Committee. John Croxall decided not to continue as a member of the Committee, but we thank him for his insightful contributions at this early stage. From the priorities set by the start-up group, additional members were appointed in the autumn (from the second call for nominations), after which the following joined the Committee: Ms Aurora Gonzalo-Tarodo, Prof Keith Hamer, Dr Grant Humphries, Dr Rebecca Laidlaw, Dr Elizabeth Madsen, Mr David Stroud and Dr Alice Trevail.

The first meeting of the full Committee will take place in early 2021. The Committee's initial work will focus on (i) developing an early to mid- career award, and (ii) writing more detailed criteria for the existing awards, with the aim of increasing the diversity of nominations. The first awards for which the Committee will oversee the nominations process will be awarded in 2022.

Engagement Committee

The Committee oversees engagement between the Union, its members and the wider ornithological community. It aims to advance avian science by facilitating communication and collaboration within the ornithological community. It also increases awareness of the BOU´s activities, champions equality and diversity in the BOU´s work, and strives towards a stable membership base. The Committee delivers this by developing and improving opportunities to engage with more people (and enabling ornithologists to communicate with each other), primarily through our conference and social media activities. The Committee also reviews the benefits that the Union provides to its members.

The Committee met twice during the year, with other business conducted regularly by email.

The Committee welcomed five new members in 2020, bringing with them ideas and enthusiasm which are already leading to new initiatives. New Committee members are: Miss Ailidh Barnes (BTO), Dr Daniel Hayhow (Earthwatch Europe), Dr Julie Miller (University of Glasgow/early-career researcher rep on BOU Council), Dr Ashley Sendell-

EQUALITY & DIVERSITY WORKING GROUP (EDWG)

Chair

Prof Juliet Vickery, BOU President (BTO)

Members

Miss Ailidh Barnes (BTO) *
Dr Emma Cunningham (University of Edinburgh)
Mr Steve Dudley, BOU COO
Dr Jenny Dunn (University of Lincoln)
Dr Daniel Hayhow (Earthwatch Europe)
Dr Rosie Trevelyan (Cambridge University)
Dr Ashley Sendell-Price (Uppsala University, Sweden) *
Dr Leila Walker (freelance editor) *
Dr Hugh Wright (Chair of BOU's Engagement Committee, JNCC)

* EDWG Secretariat

The BOU is committed to diversity in ornithology. We aim to help overcome barriers preventing equality for ornithologists. All our activities are open to anyone interested in ornithology regardless of, but not limited to, nationality, gender, ethnicity, disability, sexuality and socio-economic status.

Gender ratio of different BOU groups and social media accounts (2020)

	male	female	not known
Council	47%	53%	
BOU committees	59%	41%	
BOU membership	63%	26%	11%
Twitter	64%	36%	
Instagram	59%	41%	
Facebook	61%	37%	2%

Price (Uppsala University) and Dr Saskia Wischnewski (RSPB). Dr Sarah Burthe retired from the Committee and we thank her for her valuable, well-considered contributions, particularly to improve engagement with early-to-mid career ornithologists. Dr Tom Finch's term was extended by a year as he will be the Council nomination for Chair of the Committee at the 2021 AGM.

Early-career support

The BOU has had great success in engaging with early-career researchers (ECR) over the last seven years, providing benefits such as reduced membership subscriptions, concessionary conference rates and specially tailored workshops. Students have benefitted the most from the ECR initiative, so this year the Committee identified ways to better support ornithologists who have recently finished their education, as they look to establish their careers.

After completing postgraduate education, upcoming ornithologists face important decisions about the direction of their careers. However, leaving education often means losing access to funding sources and other forms of support that they received as students. From 2021 the BOU is extending its ECR initiative to include ornithologists up to 5 years since their last degree (increasing the eligibility window by two years), giving early-career ornithologists access to our member benefits, including cheaper rates for BOU conferences.

Equality and diversity

BOU.ORG.UK/ABOUT-THE-BOU/EQUALITY-DIVERSITY/

Equality and diversity (E&D) issues came to the fore in 2020, creating international headlines and provoking discussion within the scientific community and across society, as a whole. Motivated by these developments and building on the Equality and Diversity Working Group's (EDWG) efforts over the last three years, the BOU sought new ways to improve inclusivity in 2020, particularly in moving 'beyond gender' to better engage with other underrepresented groups within ornithology.

In July 2020 the BOU launched a series of Rainbow Blogs on the #theBOUblog, bringing the LGBTQIA+ initialism to life through the personal perspectives of LGBT ornithologists and those who support or ally themselves with this community. The series informed readers about the breadth of identities within our discipline and the challenges that LGBT scientists face while working in ornithology. The seven blogs posted to date have explained the LGBTQIA+ initialism, provided insight to people's real-life experiences and emotions, described the challenges of fieldwork in gay-illegal countries and explored what it really means to be an ally. The series has raised awareness amongst ornithologists who may not have direct experience of these issues but, importantly, it's also received a very positive response from LGBT ornithologists who recognise the welcoming environment, openness and support that the BOU offers.

BOU, DISCRIMINATION AND THE LAW

In response to Black Lives Matter, and the subsequent initiatives that have sprung up throughout society, we are looking at ways to better identify and overcome barriers for all groups within our community.

We are delighted that the recent legacy left by former member John Warham and his wife Pat is already funding PhD students from Commonwealth nations, as they both wanted. This year, Black Lives Matter highlighted the fact that the first three of these studentships were awarded to universities in the UK, Australia and Canada (with New Zealand the fourth and only other country from which we received applications). Students from these same three countries became the recipients. Although this may simply reflect where qualifying projects and candidates are most likely to come from, it is sad that we have not received an application from any institute in the other 50 'new' Commonwealth jurisdictions, whose citizens comprise the majority.

UK discrimination legislation prevents us from discriminating against any group on grounds of race, ethnicity or religion. We still have at least one Warham studentship to award and we strongly wish better to reflect the diversity of the Commonwealth, by making an award to an institute and student from a Commonwealth country, other than the four we have received applications from to date. However, we cannot do so unless suitable projects are put forward and candidates apply.

When we next make a call for applications (likely to be in 2022), we ask that you firstly encourage qualifying institutes that you know to apply to host a studentship, and secondly, encourage seabird researchers who are citizens of these Commonwealth nations to apply for the position when advertised.

Events in the USA led to much needed attention to racial equality and diversity issues in 2020 and prompted the BOU to issue a Black Lives Matter statement. We support the Black community and stand against all forms of racism and prejudice, both in ornithology and in wider society. It is very apparent that ecological sciences have a lower representation of ethnic minority groups and nationalities than other scientific disciplines, and therefore the BOU is committed to ensuring that all underrepresented ethnic or cultural groups feel welcome and are supported in ornithology. The EDWG continues to look for ways to identify and overcome the barriers faced by underrepresented groups in our community, and the BOU will continue to strongly encourage applicants from the new Commonwealth nations for the next John & Pat Warham PhD Studentship.

Meanwhile, ensuring that BOU activities are open and supportive to everyone, regardless of their gender identity, also remains a priority. In 2020, we continued to progress towards the BOU's target of a 50:50 gender balance on BOU Council and committees, improving on the 64:36 split recorded in 2019 to 59:41 in 2020. Women now outnumber men (by one person) on the BOU Council for the first time in the Union's 162-year history.

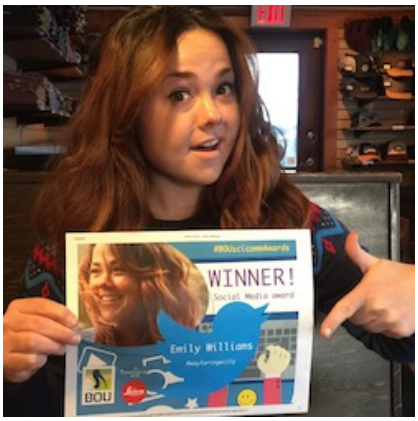
We also took a significant step towards achieving our target of a 50:50 male-to-female ratio in short lists for awards by establishing an Awards Nominations Committee this year. This new committee is tasked with implementing a more open and accountable nomination procedure and will establish a shortlisting process to enable us to progress towards and meet this target from 2022 onwards (see page 14).

The BOU community is open and welcoming to neurodiverse and disabled members of the ornithological community and we strive to make our activities as accessible as possible. The recent move to online conferences provides an opportunity to engage with ornithologists that might not routinely attend in-person events and so we will maximise the accessibility and inclusiveness of online events, such as our virtual conferences in 2021. However, regardless of how conferences are hosted, it is essential that presentation materials are accessible to as many people as possible and so in 2020 we issued guidance for presenters on the use of colour palettes to ensure that presentations are colour-blind aware.

Unconscious bias training was completed by 100% of our BOU Council members, committee members, staff, IBIS editors and conference organisers to ensure that we all remain aware of the impacts of implicit bias and subconscious stereotyping on our decision-making.

Towards the end of the year, with an ever-increasing workload on E&D initiatives, we appointed Ailidh Barnes, Ashley Sendell-Price and Leila Walker as the EDWG Secretariat to oversee the development and delivery of future E&D items.

SCIENCE COMMUNICATION AWARDS



Emily Williams voted the best social media scicommer of 2019.



Kiran Dhanjal-Adams and Tamara Emmenegger voted the best article on #theBOUblog in 2019.

We are grateful to Leica Camera (UK) Ltd for supporting our Science Communication Awards.

Recognising excellence in science communication

In recent years the BOU has been at the forefront of promoting science communication within ornithology. We champion the use of social media for promoting and discussing research, and #theBOUblog is one of the most-read avian science blogs.

Supported by Leica Camera UK, 2020 saw the BOU present our first Science Communication Awards, with separate prizes for the social media science communicator of the year and best article published on #theBOUblog during 2019. We had a good response to the open call for nominations and an assessment panel comprising Chiara Ceci (Chair), Jody Allair (Birds Canada), Anthony Caravaggi (University of Swansea), Steve Dudley (BOU), Christina Ieronymidou (BirdLife Cyprus & BOU Blog Editor), Nina O'Hanlon (University of Highlands and Islands & BOU Social Media Support Officer) and Jordan Rutter (American Bird Conservancy) selected five nominees for each award which were then put to a public vote.

Best Social Media Science Communicator (2019)
Awarded to Emily Williams for her use of Twitter to communicate her research to the ornithological community and wider public.

Best of #theBOUblog (2019)
Awarded to Kiran Dhanjal-Adams and Tamara Emmenegger for their blog post on 'following the movements of a new population'.

You can read about both award winners in their Q&A with the award panel Chair, Chiara Ceci, on the BOU website (BOU.ORG.UK/BLOG-CECI-SCICOMM-AWARD-WINNERS/).

Honorary positions

The Committee's Support Officers assist the BOU office with journal publicity, social media activities and the BOU blog. Their achievements in 2020 include:

Blog (#theBOUblog) – edited by Dr Christina Ieronymidou

79 new posts in 2020.

- The BOU blog continues to reach a global audience and remains the most visited section of the BOU website, accounting for 30% of all page views for the site.
- The 79 new posts published on the #theBOUblog in 2020 continued to deliver a high diversity of content and highlight the popularity of our blog.
- The 25 blogs authored by the Journal Publicity Support Officer were complemented by a further 16 written by the authors of IBIS papers.
- 10 blogs covered equality, diversity, inclusion and accessibility, including the seven blogs in our Rainbow Blog series which gave personal perspectives on LGBTQIA+ issues in ornithology.

- Blogs with a BOU focus included two posts written by BOU Warham student Kirsty Franklin, on the Round Island Petrel, and a further two from BOU Small Research Grant recipients.
- There was also a review of BOU's first virtual conference: Climate Change and Birds: Solutions to the Crisis (BOUSci20).

Journal publicity – supported by Dr Jente Ottenburghs

- Produced 25 blog posts for the BOU blog, summarising a variety of IBIS papers published in 2020.
- These posts contributed 11% of overall #theBOUblog post 'reads' (across all posts 2012 - 20).
- Promoted all IBIS paper blog posts across our social media platforms.
- Referenced IBIS papers on Wikipedia with help from the Social Media Support Officer; these references contribute to each paper's Altmetric Attention Score as well as helping to improve the overall coverage of ornithology on Wikipedia.
- Promoted IBIS papers on other websites internationally.

Social media – supported by Dr Nina O'Hanlon

- Working jointly with the International Wader Study Group, hosted the first International Shorebird Twitter Conference (#ISTC20) - see below.
- Delivered our first dual-platform conference (#BOUsci20) simultaneously on Zoom and Twitter - see below.
- The BOU's Twitter account (@IBIS_journal) had over 17,500 followers at the year-end (an increase of >1,700 compared to the end of 2019).
- The BOU's Facebook account (@IBIS_journal) had over 9,800 likes and 10,500 followers at the year-end.
- The BOU Instagram account (@IBIS_journal) continues to grow, with over 1,300 followers, posting content focused on IBIS papers, BOU blogs, BOU events and the British List.

SUPPORTING MEMBERS



Towards the end of 2020 we developed a member mentoring scheme which will be trialed from early 2021.

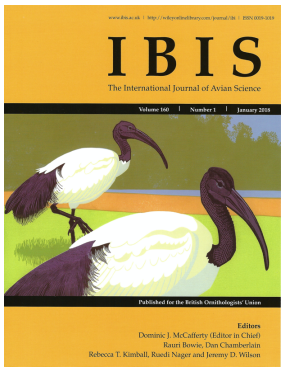
Conferences

See BOU Office (page 7) and Meetings Committee (page 21).

Looking ahead – a member mentoring scheme

Access to a community of like-minded individuals that support and empower each other is really effective in helping people manage and navigate through their careers. The global pandemic has demonstrated the tremendous value of community, but it has also made it much harder for conventional, face-to-face interactions and has left some people feeling isolated.

To extend the BOU's support to its members, the Committee is launching a pilot mentoring scheme in early 2021 to provide peer-to-peer support for ornithologists at all career stages. The 6-month trial will convene small groups of mentees who share a common focus or face similar challenges (e.g. career progression, work/life balance,



IBIS MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

Chair

Dr Jen Smart (RSPB)

Members

Mr Graham Appleton, BOU Honorary Treasurer

Dr Richard Broughton (UK Centre for Ecology & Hydrology)

Dr Rauri Bowie, Editor (University of California – Berkeley)

Dr Dan Chamberlain, Editor (University of Turin)

Mr Steve Dudley, BOU COO

Dr Rosemarie Kentie (NIOZ Netherlands Institute for Sea Research)

Dr Rebecca Kimball, Editor (University of Florida)

Mrs Angela Langford, Journal Manager

Dr Dominic McCafferty, Editor in Chief (University of Glasgow)

Dr Ruedi Nager, Editor (University of Glasgow)

Dr Staffan Roos (Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences)

Prof Jeremy Wilson, Editor (RSPB)

women in ornithology). The mentees will meet via monthly video calls to get to know each other, discuss decisions or challenges, identify opportunities and seek advice from mentors. Mentors will be selected by a facilitator to meet the specific needs of each group.

This scheme is a brand-new initiative for the BOU, and the Committee will be monitoring its uptake, gathering feedback and adapting the format as lessons are learned. Pending the result of the pilot, we hope this will create a long-term peer support base to guide individuals through their careers and reinforce the BOU community, as ornithologists from any location and all career stages engage to support one another

IBIS Management Committee

IBIS.AC.UK

The IBIS Management Committee provides strategic direction, support and advice to editors and staff on the management of the journal, and with our publisher, Wiley.

The Committee's annual journal publishing meeting with Wiley was held in February, where annual reports covering editorial, production, marketing and finance were presented. We held an additional online editorial meeting in November that was attended by the full editorial team, for the first time in my time as Chair, demonstrating how the use of online meetings really increases inclusivity given the team are spread round the globe. This meeting was an opportunity to discuss the impacts of Covid-19, the change to blind reviewing, progress with increasing the number of reviews being submitted for publication, our ethical policy and several minor editorial matters. Other business throughout the year was conducted by email.

Impacts of Covid-19

We saw an increase of over 20% in the number of manuscripts submitted between April and September, compared to the same period in 2019, which may have been a result of cancelled fieldwork. The effects of increased submissions, coupled with the fact that many people were under increased family-related pressures while working from home, may have affected the speed with which manuscripts were processed but the full impacts are unlikely to be understood until our annual publisher's report is available early in 2021.

Editorial team

There were no changes to the editorial team in 2020. Thanks go to the whole team who really make the journal a success. Our Editor in Chief, Dominic McCafferty, continues to do an excellent job, with the help of our great team of Editors; Rauri Bowie, Dan Chamberlain, Rebecca Kimball, Ruedi Nager and Jeremy Wilson and our Journal

TOP CITED PAPERS

From most recent Impact Factor period (2019)

A review and meta-analysis of the effects of climate change on Holarctic mountain and upland bird populations / Davide Scridel et al / DOI: 10.1111/ibi.12585

A review of the occurrence of inter-colony segregation of seabird foraging areas and the implications for marine environmental impact assessment / Mark Bolton, Georgia Conolly, Matthew Carroll, Ewan. D. Wakefield, Richard Caldow / DOI: 10.1111/ibi.12677

Effects of environmental conditions on reproductive effort and nest success of Arctic-breeding shorebirds / Emily L. Weiser et al / DOI: 10.1111/ibi.12571

MOST DOWNLOADED IBIS PAPERS

Papers downloaded in 2020

A review and meta-analysis of the effects of climate change on Holarctic mountain and upland bird populations / Davide Scridel et al / DOI: 10.1111/ibi.12585

Patterns and processes in shorebird survival rates: a global review / Verónica Méndez, José A. Alves, Jennifer A. Gill, Tómas G. Gunnarsson / DOI: 10.1111/ibi.12586

The impacts of introduced House Mice on the breeding success of nesting seabirds on Gough Island / Anthony Caravaggi, Richard J. Cuthbert, Peter G. Ryan, John Cooper Alexander L Bond / DOI: 10.1111/ibi.12664

Manager, Angela Langford, and Steve Dudley, who manages the business and marketing areas of the journal.

Our Associate Editor Board plays a vital role in the management of the journal and we thank each and every one of them for their time and dedication to the journal. In 2020, we welcomed David Douglas, Melanie Kershaw, Alexandre Millon, Chima Nwaogu, Álvaro Ramírez García, Chevonne Reynolds and Martin Stervander to the Board. Sarah Burthe and Auriel Fournier retired from the Board this year and we thank them for their support and commitment during their time as Associate Editors.

Journal publishing and management

IBIS is published on behalf of the BOU by Wiley Publishing from whom we continue to receive excellent service, support and advice and the efforts of Wiley staff during 2020 are greatly appreciated, especially Andreas Petersen, our Journal Publishing Manager. We have an excellent relationship with Wiley and maintain constant communication throughout the year, with both parties striving to improve IBIS, to ensure the journal remains at the forefront of ornithology.

Journal impact factors and article level metrics

IBIS's 2019 2-year Impact Factor (the number of papers published in the previous two years that are cited in other papers) was 2.076, ranking us fourth out of the 28 Ornithology journals listed by Thompson Reuters ISI. It is positive to see our impact factor and ranking improve on 2018 (1.944; 5/28). Over the last two years, the Committee has made progress to better understand factors that influence submission and citation rates and to implement changes that we hope will continue to improve our impact factor, our online profile and for IBIS to remain competitive among the ornithology journals, for many years to come. Two changes that have been implemented are i) special issues and ii) increased promotion to encourage submission of review papers. In April 2020, we published a special issue which brought together an outstanding collection of 20 original articles and 5 short communications on Avian Migration and Movement. Our promotion targeting submission of review papers has been extremely successful, with seven manuscripts submitted resulting directly from promotion in February 2020. This initiative, together with several existing reviews in the system now gives us a healthy pipeline of diverse review papers. An additional benefit has also become apparent, in that a high percentage of these review papers have first authors who are early career-researchers (ECRs) and around 50% are female first authors.

IBIS continues to have an excellent social media presence, developed by our Chief Operations Officer, Steve Dudley and the wider activities of our Engagement Committee. Together we promote IBIS papers across all our social platforms, including our excellent BOU blog (#theBOUblog) and our electronic newsletters, which should pay dividends in terms of citation rates in future. Jente Ottenburgh, our Journal Publicity Support Officer, continues to do a brilliant job, writing blog posts covering papers

TOP ALTMETRIC PAPERS

Papers published in 2020

Four-legged foes: dogs disturb nesting plovers more than people do on tourist beaches / Miguel Ángel Gómez-Serrano / DOI: 10.1111/ibi.12879

Urban gulls adapt foraging schedule to human-activity patterns / Anouk Spelt, Oliver Soutar, Cara Williamson, Jane Memmott, Judy Shamoun-Baranes, Peter Rock, Shane Windsor / DOI: 10.1111/ibi.12892

Killing of raptors on grouse moors: evidence and effects / Ian Newton / DOI: 10.1111/ibi.12886

Implications of bacterial, viral and mycotic microorganisms in vultures for wildlife conservation, ecosystem services and public health / Pablo I. Plaza, Guillermo Blanco, Sergio A. Lambertucci / DOI: 10.1111/ibi.12865



Dean Evans' paper was voted the best ECR paper published in IBIS in 2019

Individual condition but not fledging phenology carries over to affect post-fledging survival in a Neotropical migratory songbird Dean R. Evans, Keith A. Hobson, Jackson W. Kusack, Michael D. Cadman, C. Myles Falconer, Greg W. Mitchell. / DOI:10.1111/ibi.12727

published in IBIS, with 25 articles published this year on #theBOUblog. An additional 16 blog posts were penned by authors themselves, and collectively these 41 articles highlight the breadth of the avian science we publish. (see also Altmetrics, page 11)

The future

As reported last year, the immediate publishing future of IBIS is secure; 2020 was the first year of a new four-year publishing contract with Wiley. The journal, however, could not operate without the support of members of our community, who submit high quality papers and contribute freely of their time to assist with the review and editorial process that keeps IBIS at the forefront of publishing in ornithology. Thank you!

The landscape of scientific publishing continues to develop at pace and the IBIS Management Committee is dedicated to improving journal management and staying abreast of the changes in publishing. We are always keen to hear from members of our community with feedback or ideas that could help us to achieve a better journal for everyone. Authors (published and prospective) can do this via our own IBIS author contact form on the BOU website (BOU.ORG.UK/IBIS/AUTHOR-CONTACT-FORM/) and by replying to Wiley's 'Voice of the Author' surveys after publishing with us (our authors are contacted directly by Wiley).

On a personal note, this is my last report as Chair of the IBIS Management Committee as I move onto other commitments and step aside for a new Chair. It has been an absolute pleasure working with everyone involved in IBIS and the BOU and I am absolutely sure that the journal will successfully adapt to the changing publishing environment and continue to be at the forefront of ornithological publishing.

Meetings Committee

BOU.ORG.UK/CONFERENCES-AND-MEETINGS/

The Meetings Committee is responsible for maintaining the ongoing programme of BOU conferences and meetings and providing advice and support to the BOU Office and others responsible for organising and running BOU events.

The Committee met (remotely) twice during the year and also conducted business by email and telephone. Dr David Douglas completed his term in 2020 and we thank him for his commitment to BOU events and for being the lead on two – BOUsci18, Grassland Birds meeting in Vancouver in August 2018, and the Restoring Bird Populations conference which was due to delivered in 2020 and which will now be held on Zoom in spring 2021. The Committee welcomed Dr Ana Payo Payo and Dr Joelene Hughes as new members during the year.

In 2019, Council approved membership extensions for a further two years beyond an individual's current four-year term. Dr Maria Bogdanova and Dr José Alves agreed to

MEETINGS COMMITTEE

Chair

Dr Francis Daunt (UK Centre for Ecology & Hydrology)

Members

Dr José Alves (University of Aveiro, Portugal and University of Iceland)
Dr Maria Bogdanova (UK Centre for Ecology & Hydrology)
Mr Steve Dudley, BOU COO
Mr Danny Heptinstall (JNCC)
Dr Joelene Hughes (RSPB)
Mrs Angela Langford, Journal & Office Manager
Dr Cat Morrison (University of East Anglia)
Dr Ana Payo-Payo (University of Aberdeen)
Dr Rob Robinson (BTO)
Dr Amanda Trask (Institute of Zoology)

stay on for a further two years until 2022. Dr Rob Robinson was the first member to undertake this extension in 2019 and will complete his extended term with us in July 2021, so we will be recruiting one new member this coming year.

2020 conferences

Conferences remain a major focal point for many small societies, a key way to engage with members and their wider research communities.

Annual conference - Restoring bird populations (#BOU2020)

Like all other societies, our conference activities were dominated by the global Covid-19 pandemic. In mid-March, with a national lockdown looking inevitable, BOU Council decided to postpone our 2020 annual conference on 'Restoring Bird Populations' to 2021. The response to this decision was universally positive. The Scientific Programme Committee of Dr David Douglas (RSPB; Chair), Dr Nancy Ockendon (Endangered Landscapes Programme), Dr Geoff Hilton (Wildfowl & Wetlands Trust) and Dr Amanda Trask (Institute of Zoology) kindly agreed to continue in their roles and the vast majority of presenters indicated that they would be willing to move their talks back 12 months (see below for further details of 2021 annual conference).

The additional work and strain required to cancel an event just three weeks before the scheduled start cannot be understated. The Committee is not only thankful to organisers and presenters for agreeing quickly to the postponement, but also to the BOU Office who implemented not just the cancellation of the 2020 event but also oversaw the switch to 2021. We are grateful to the University of Nottingham for supporting this move before the country was put into lockdown, and for ensuring the deposits paid towards BOU2020 would be transferred in full to 2021, and now to 2022.

The BOU has run and supported Twitter conferences for some time, so when in-person events became impossible due to the Covid-19 pandemic we were already well-placed to deliver conferences virtually and for free. In fact, before the pandemic struck, we already had two events scheduled as Twitter conferences, so these events took on a greater importance, as ornithologists looked for online means of sharing their research and engaging with other researchers.

6th World Seabird Twitter Conference - #WSTC6

The BOU again supported WSTC, helping to promote and market the event more widely within the ornithological community and beyond and to support the organsiers when called upon.

The seabird researcher community is one of the most active groups within our wider ornithological community and this event provides an excellent way of promoting the BOU to this key group.

International Shorebird Twitter Conference - #ISTC20

The first ever International Shorebird Twitter Conference was held on 7-8 October 2020 jointly with International Wader Study Group. This was the first taxon-specific Twitter conference the BOU had delivered. It ran over two days with nine keynotes and 65 offered presentations. The nine keynotes were carefully selected to cover all regions, providing wider geographic coverage which resulted in a larger audience. A peak audience of 2,604 included 670 active participants generating, generating over 5,000 tweets and retweets across the two days.

The event was excellent promotion for the BOU but it is not possible to know if this led to more memberships or whether it will increase future bookings for our conferences.

We are very grateful for the support from our sponsors Lotek UK and Wildlife Acoustics.

Autumn scientific meeting - Climate change and birds - #BOUsci20

#BOUsci20 was already scheduled to be a dual platform one-day conference, with an in-person event and parallel Twitter event originally scheduled to take place in Peterborough on 24 November 2020.

When the Covid-19 pandemic hit, we quickly moved the in-person component onto Zoom and delivered our first ever totally remote, virtual conference simultaneously across two platforms - Zoom and Twitter.

Over the course of the summer, Committee members experienced a number of virtual meetings in different formats and on different platforms, from which a pre-recorded event on Zoom was selected for our autumn 2020 event. Because of the extra planning needed to deliver our first virtual conference, we appointed Ryan Burrell as a Support Officer for this event following his successful delivery of the International Wader Study Group virtual conference. Ryan's first-hand experience proved invaluable and working alongside our own Steve Dudley ensured the high standard we expected from a BOU event would be delivered for this meeting.

The theme of the conference was unchanged from the original plan for an in-person event. The conference aim was to bring together scientists, conservationists and policy experts to understand future vulnerabilities to climate change and evidence that adapting our conservation practice will provide solutions to the climate crisis for birds. In particular, it considered different approaches to estimating future impacts of climate change on birds and their habitats, and how these can inform adaptation needs. It tackled the question of adapting biodiversity conservation to make climate-smart choices, considering potential implications for landscapes, protected site management and species, and to synthesise evidence to inform decision-making. It was tasked with identifying key knowledge gaps that will inform future work. The conference was organised by Prof James Pearce-Higgins (BTO), Dr Jo Gilbert (RSPB), Dr Christine Howard (Durham University) and Dr Francis Daunt (UK Centre for Ecology &

CODE OF CONDUCT

We welcome everyone to BOU events, be these in person at our conferences, meetings and workshops, or online events such as Twitter conferences.

We work hard to engender and promote a welcoming environment that is collaborative, supportive and engaging for everyone involved. Our events provide opportunities to share, develop and broaden viewpoints in a safe and inclusive environment.

We celebrate diversity in all its forms and expect that all our participants are respectful and considerate of each other, that they provide supportive critique, and embrace the multitude of opinions that are on offer.

If you have any concerns, feel that any participant of an event has breached this code, or have suggestions for how we can make our events more inclusive and productive, please contact any member of the BOU staff, BOU's Meetings Committee or event organisers (named contacts are listed in all event programmes). During an event, please report any incident as soon as you feel able, to allow us to act upon your concerns.

Hydrology). Keynote speakers were Dr Alexsi Lehikoinen (University of Helsinki), Dr Beth Scott (University of Aberdeen), Dr Graham White (RSPB), Prof Kathy Martin (University of British Columbia) and Dr Ben Zuckerberg (University of Wisconsin-Madison). The latter two speakers were added once the decision had been made to extend the conference schedule into the evening, to attract delegates from the Americas.

Since this was our first virtual conference, we decided to focus on delivering an excellent core scientific programme without adding additional activities around it. A decision was made some weeks before the conference to pre-record all talks as technical problems with live talks had proved to be the most challenging problem with conferences organised by other societies over the preceding months. This proved an excellent decision, with few technical problems on the day.

All 37 Zoom presentations were summarised as Twitter presentations as part of the parallel Twitter event which also included 17 Twitter-only presentations during the Zoom programme breaks.

We rescheduled the day so that it ran long enough into the evening to attract an audience from the Americas, with the programme schedule running from 09:00 - 23:00 UTC. The programme was advertised from the early autumn, and included five excellent keynote speakers, a rich diversity of other presentations, and a schedule of regular breaks, to avoid screen fatigue. We were hopeful that the format, scheduling and affordable registration rate would allow us to attract a much larger and more diverse, international audience than we usually achieve with physical conferences. We were delighted with the response, with 375 registering for the event, by far the largest number of people attending a BOU conference. The international composition was strikingly different from a typical in-person BOU event. For an in-person event we expect our audience to be made up by 85% of attendees coming from the UK. This virtual event attracted attendees from 41 countries with 58% of attendees from outside the UK. As such, moving the international reach and diversity was substantially enhanced.

Engagement from delegates on the day was excellent, with up to 311 people (83% of those registered) logging into the event at any one time. Interaction with delegates was via the Q&A function within Zoom (for live questions with each presenter at the end of each talk) hosted by the session chair. A Slack channel was set up for further discussion, which was extensively used, with 55% of delegates attending the live event using it.

Whilst 375 people registered for the Zoom component, 1,818 people followed the event on Twitter, with 503 active participants reaching 650,000 impressions.

FUTURE CONFERENCING

Long before the Covid-19 pandemic, ornithology, and the BOU, have led the way by hosting global Twitter conferences (#BOU17TC, #BOU18TC and supporting the World Seabird Union's WSTC events). These events were widely lauded by researchers all around the world and inspired other groups to take to Twitter to hold similar events.

When the pandemic took hold in spring 2020, we were already involved in running three Twitter conferences later in the year. With just three weeks' notice, we could not replace our annual spring conference, so #WSTC6, #ISTC20 and the dual platform #BOUsci20 (see page 23) all took on wider societal significance, as our community looked for new ways to conference, network and share research during a pandemic.

The Zoom event was recorded in its entirety and the recording was made available (until early January 2021) to those who had registered.

The feedback from the conference was universally positive. As an output from the conference, the Scientific Programme Committee and keynote speakers are writing a ten-year update of a previously published IBIS Viewpoint from the 2010 BOU conference 'Birds and climate change'. We learnt a great deal about what works well in a virtual conference and are taking these experiences forward to help design the 2021 annual conference.

Third party conferences

BOU contributed to NAOC2020, with Steve Dudley acting as Chair of their Marketing Committee. With the switch to a virtual event and the expected time commitment going forward, Steve had to withdraw from the committee so that he could focus on the increased impacts of the pandemic on the BOU Office. The BOU was still acknowledged as a partner, recognising that pre-conference marketing had delivered a record number of submissions for a NOAC conference and a record attendance of more than 2,800 delegates.

Future events

Future conferencing

The dual format #BOUsci20 Climate Change and Birds Zoom and Twitter conference was particularly lauded by our community. This event delivered a win-win format, with a relatively cheap pay-to-attend Zoom event for those happy to pay, running simultaneously with a wider event available on a free social media platform (Twitter). We recognise that social media events are not necessarily 'free' to access for everyone (e.g. relative to income, those in developing countries pay disproportionately more to access online services), but they are ideal media to reach our global community and improve accessibility to our core activities.

With the success of #BOUsci20 we have taken the decision that from 2021 all BOU conferences will be run similarly, in full, across an in-the-room platform (either in-person or virtually) and on Twitter.

2021 annual conference - Restoring Bird Populations - #BOU2021

Following the postponement of the 2020 annual conference to spring 2021, a decision on the exact format of the conference - in particular whether it would be a physical or virtual conference - was postponed until later in the year, to allow as much time as possible to assess the likely situation of the pandemic in spring 2021. This also allowed the Committee time to observe different virtual conference formats during the course of 2020, including our experiences of our own 2020 autumn conference (see below).

With the pandemic seemingly unabating, and with little chance of people committing to attend an in-person event months in advance of spring 2021, the decision to move the

2021 ANNUAL CONFERENCE



RESTORING BIRD POPULATIONS

30 Mar – 1 Apr 2021 | on Zoom & Twitter

With ongoing COVID-19 restrictions in the UK, we reached an agreement with the University of Nottingham to cancel our in-person meeting in spring 2021 and have switched the event on to Zoom and Twitter over three half-days, Tues, 30 March through to Thur, 1 April 2021.

The conference will bring together the latest science underpinning the restoration of bird species and their ecosystems, focusing on successes, challenges and future directions. It comes on the eve of the UN Decade of Ecosystem Restoration that will run from 2021 through to 2030. It will be of interest to conservation-, population- and community-ecologists, practitioners and policy makers.

SCIENTIFIC PROGRAMME COMMITTEE:

Dr David Douglas: Chair (RSPB Centre for Conservation Science, UK)
Dr Nancy Ockendon (Endangered Landscapes Programme, UK)
Dr Geoff Hilton (Wildfowl & Wetlands Trust, UK)
Dr Amanda Trask (Institute of Zoology, Zoological Society of London, UK)

Image: Female Great Hornbill | Angadachappa | CC BY SA 4.0 via ky.m.wikipedia.org

event wholly online was taken in the latter part of 2020. All Zoom presentations will be summarised as Twitter presentations, with separate Twitter-only presentations, following the success of this approach at the autumn 2020 meeting. In order to attract a wider audience, including those from the Americas, and to minimise screen fatigue, the conference will run over three afternoons from the 30 March to 1 April 2021. It will include a range of activities for early-career researchers on the previous afternoon (29th) and during the main conference. The AGM will be on the Wednesday evening.

The conference theme remains unchanged, with the focus on new techniques in restoration science and research/policy surrounding the 2020 biodiversity targets. The natural world is under huge pressure from human activity, placing bird populations and their habitats at risk. At the same time, there is growing recognition that avian conservation should look beyond slowing species' declines and avoiding extinction, to actively restoring avian abundance and diversity in landscapes and working to restore whole ecosystems. Despite the challenges facing nature, our understanding of how to restore species and ecosystems has never been greater, and the momentum for ecological restoration is building globally. Restoring bird populations requires working at a range of scales, from individual animals to whole ecosystems, and from local sites to whole flyways. Birds can be indicators of recovery trajectories for entire ecosystems and can be integral to the success of habitat restoration, for example through their functional roles as predators, scavengers and dispersal agents. The conference will bring together the latest science underpinning the restoration of bird species and their ecosystems, focusing on successes, challenges and future directions. The Alfred Newton Lecture will be delivered by Prof Carl Jones (Durrell Wildlife Conservation Trust) and the other keynote speakers are Mary Colwell (Freelance producer and writer), Nicola Crockford (RSPB), Dr John Ewen (Institute of Zoology), Dr Karen Varnham (RSPB) and Dr Joe Tobias (Imperial College).

We are again extremely grateful to the University of Nottingham for again supporting us and allowing for the deposits paid originally towards BOU2020 to be transferred in full to 2022.

2021 autumn meetings

In 2019, we decided to increase the number of autumn meetings from one to two from 2021.

In response to the marked increase in research and wider interests of **birds and conflicts**, an in-person event in Peterborough is planned to take place on this topic on 9 November 2021. The Scientific Programme Committee is led by Dr Barry McMahon (University College Dublin, Ireland) and includes Dr Juliette Young (INRAE, National Research Institute for Agriculture, Food and the Environment, France), Dr Isla Hodgson (University of Stirling), Dr Bea Arroyo (Instituto de Investigación en Recursos Cinegéticos/Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, Spain) and Dr Francis Daunt (UK Centre for Ecology & Hydrology).

2021 AUTUMN CONFERENCES



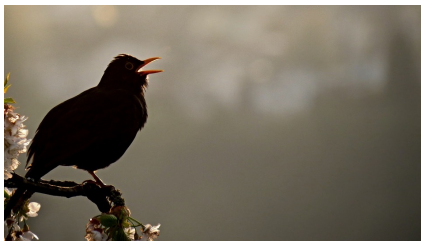
BIRDS AND PEOPLE

9 November 2021 | in-person & Twitter
#BOUaut21

The first of two autumn meetings in 2021 will be on our relationship with birds, the conflicts, the resolutions and the successes.

The Scientific Programme Committee is Chaired by Dr Barry McMahon (University College Dublin, Ireland) – see page 26.

Further details in due course at BOU.ORG.UK.



DEVELOPMENTS IN MONITORING SCIENCE

24-25 November 2021 | on Zoom & Twitter
#BOUsci21

The second autumn 2021 one-day meeting will be on the advances in the monitoring of birds, with an emphasis on the development and use of new technologies.

The Scientific Programme Committee is Chaired by Dr Mark Eaton (Rare Birds Breeding Panel & RSPB, UK) – see right.

Further details in due course at BOU.ORG.UK.

Conference images: CC0 PD

The second of our 2021 autumn conferences will be on the theme of **advances in bird monitoring**, chosen to showcase the many new data collection and analysis methods that have been developed in recent years. This is planned to be a virtual Zoom conference on the 24 - 25 November 2021. Dr Mark Eaton (Rare Breeding Birds Panel & RSPB) has agreed to lead the Scientific Programme Committee and will be supported by Dr Dawn Balmer (BTO), Dr Fiona Burns (RSPB) and Dr Jos é Alves (University of Aveiro, Portugal).

Keynote speakers are currently being invited to both events, and the programme will develop in the early months of 2021.

2022 annual conference - Avian reproduction - #BOU2022
With the postponement of the 2020 conference to 2021, we have moved the 2021 conference on 'Avian Reproduction' to 2022. This will take place on 12-14 April 2022 at the University of Nottingham. Planning for this conference will take place during the first half of 2021. The Scientific Programme Committee comprises Dr Ian Hartley (University of Lancaster; Chair), Dr Becky Laidlaw (NRW), Dr Sarah Burthe (UKCEH) and Dr Rob Robinson (BTO).

Improving BOU conferences

Our focus during 2020 was on how to deliver online conferences successfully. We were delighted with the success of the dual platform (Zoom and Twitter) 2020 autumn conference and have carried forward much of what we learnt from this into planning for the 2021 conferences and other future events. Please see earlier sections for the various approaches and innovations that we took forward.

At the end of 2020 a decision was made jointly by the Meetings and Engagement committees that, whether in-person or virtual, all conferences will involve dual oral and Twitter presentations, following the success of this format at the 2020 autumn conference.

At the 2021 annual conference, we will trial a new idea, originally planned for the postponed in-person 2020 conference and following feedback that conferences could be a good opportunity to help postdocs in build a peer community. The Committee agreed to trial a workshop for postdocs that runs in parallel to the ECR workshops, to be driven and delivered by postdocs themselves.

The use of blind review of submissions continues to work well for conferences. We have published a conference code of conduct (see page 24 and BOU.ORG.UK/BOU-CONFERENCES/CODE-OF-CONDUCT/) and continue to implement equality, diversity and inclusiveness initiatives (BOU.ORG.UK/ABOUT-THE-BOU/EQUALITY-AND-DIVERSITY/) into all of our activities, working with the Engagement Committee's Equality and Diversity Working Group. Online events offer significant opportunities for enhancing diversity at

our conferences, and we are encouraging all event Scientific Programme Committees to make maximum use of this. Regardless of conference format, ensuring that presentation materials are accessible to everyone is vital, and we issued guidance for presenters on the use of colour palettes, to ensure that presentations are colour-blind aware.

GRANTS COMMITTEE

Chair

Dr Sonya Clegg (University of Oxford)

Members

Dr Tom Bradfer-Lawrence (RSPB)

Mr Steve Dudley, BOU COO

Dr Ilya Maclean (University of Exeter)

Dr Sam Patrick (University of Liverpool)

Grants Committee

BOU.ORG.UK/FUNDING/

This Committee advises Council on the selection of research grant and bursary applications that the BOU should support.

The Committee considers applications for small research grants and career development bursaries from BOU members and those from developing countries. It also assesses applications for the BOU John & Pat Warham Studentships, which are funded by a bequest left to the BOU by the late John and Pat Warham for the study of Sphenisciform (penguins) and Procellariiform (tubenoses) seabirds.

The Committee met once during the year to consider research grant and career development bursary applications and conducted the rest of its business by email.

Prof Phil Atkinson (BTO) retired as Chair of the Committee this year and we would like to thank him for his greatly valued input and leadership as Chair and as an ordinary member, during his eight years with us. Existing Committee member Dr Sonya Clegg was elected as the new Chair of the Committee at the BOU AGM in June and Dr Tom Bradfer-Lawrence (RSPB) joined us to replace Sonya as an ordinary member.

Small Ornithological Research Grant scheme

The Committee received 51 grant applications (55 in 2019, 62 in 2018, 68 in 2017), which was broadly in line with expectations. One application was rejected due to breaches in submission criteria, leaving 50 to be assessed (46 in 2019, 48 in 2018, 47 in 2017). 18 applications were removed during an initial sift by the Committee Chair, on the basis of scientific quality. Committee members were able to view all of these rejected applications and request any individual application be considered in full. The remaining 32 applications were scored individually by Committee, ahead of their annual meeting held on 4 February 2020, when their combined scores and comments were used for the basis of the on-the-day discussions to determine which projects to support.







The BOU's small ornithological research grants and career development bursaries enable members to undertake small to medium scale research projects, across a wide range of subjects, around the world.

Images:
top © Darren Evans
centre © Elfego Cuevas Domínguez
bottom © Mark Mainwaring

Council approved six awards, totaling £10,029, to be made in 2020:

Josh Arbon (UK) | £1,750 (requested £2,000)
PhD candidate, University of Exeter, UK.
Does pair-bond strength affect parental care strategies?

Fraser Bell (UK) | £1,989 (amount requested)
PhD candidate, University of Exeter, UK
Patterns and consequences of parasite infection in a declining long-distance migratory passerine

Amanda Bourne (South Africa) | £1,020 (amount requested)
PhD candidate, University of Cape Town, South Africa
Do seasonal changes in food resources predict breeding phenology and reproductive success in Southern Pied Babblers *Turdoides bicolor*?

Crinan Jarrett (UK) | £1,600 (requested £2,000)
PhD candidate, University of Glasgow, UK
Putting a price on the menu: Quantifying bird ecosystem services in African cocoa plantations

Jenna McCullough (USA) | £1,600 (requested £2,000)
PhD candidate, University of New Mexico, US
Island kingfishers as an emerging model system to study the genomics of speciation

Darren O'Connell (Ireland) | £1,650 (requested £2,000)
PhD candidate, Newcastle University, UK
Birds as monitors of ecosystem restoration: using avian soundscapes for assessing biodiversity and functioning of restored mangrove forests

Due to the impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic, all the above projects bar one (Amanda Bourne) were not undertaken during 2020. With funding already paid out we hope that the five outstanding projects can be undertaken in the coming year.

Career Development Bursary scheme

A total of seven applications were received this year (7 in 2019, 5 in 2018, 10 in 2017, 6 in 2016). All satisfied our submission criteria and were assessed by the Committee.

Council approved two awards, totaling £4,880, to be made in 2020:

Amparo Herrera-Dueñas (Spain) | Awarded £2,400 (amount requested)
Freelance scientific counsellor
Project: Getting older in the city (evaluating the effects of urbanisation on the telomere attrition in adult and nestling Blue Tits)
Project location: University of Glasgow, UK
Supervisor: Davide Dominoni

Kate Rogerson (UK) | Awarded £2,480 (amount requested)
PhD candidate, University of East Anglia, UK
Project: Identifying priorities for seabird conservation using a "ridge to reef" approach
Project location: Birdlife International, Cambridge UK
Supervisor: Maria Dias

Due to the impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic, these two bursaries were not taken up during 2020, with the funding held over until 2021, in the hope these projects can be undertaken in the coming year. With these two awards being held over to 2021, no new awards have been advertised or will be made in the coming year.

John & Pat Warham Studentships

Of the four fully funded studentships available, three have been appointed in previous years. Updates from each of the three students on their respective projects are included below. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, we suspended awarding the next studentship in 2021 and will review the situation for a 2022 studentship in early 2021.

WARHAM STUDENT



Our 2018 Warham Student, **Kirsty Franklin**, University of East Anglia, UK.

Kirsty Franklin, University of East Anglia, UK (commenced 2018)
The 'Round Island petrel' conundrum
Principal supervisor: Prof Jennifer Gill

The main aim of my BOU-funded PhD is to explore the factors influencing the extraordinary levels of individual variation in ocean movement patterns of Round Island petrels. Over 420 geolocators (GLS) have been deployed on adult petrels since 2009, and ongoing retrieval of these has resulted in me being able to process 263 complete migration tracks, using up-to-date processing methods.

Similarities between the second BOU Warham studentship [Paige Green, University of Tasmania – see below) and my own provided a great opportunity for Paige and I to discuss and refine these analytical methods and apply them to our individual data sets. Using these data, I have also developed a method for consistent classification of daily locations, in order to calculate colony arrival and departure dates of migrating petrels.

I have just finished the first data chapter of my thesis, which uses these GLS data to explore the within- and between-individual variation in migratory locations and timings, and more specifically to investigate how repeatable are petrel migratory journeys from year to year. Having quantified the extraordinary levels of between-individual variation in petrel migrations, I am now starting my next chapter, where I will be using Bayesian cluster analysis in combination with genetic and environmental data to investigate what is driving this variation. In addition, I have conducted a comprehensive literature review of tracking studies in which repeatability of avian migratory timings was reported, allowing the assessment of repeatability across species, seasons, and tracking methods. This review paper on repeatability of avian phenology has been submitted for publication.

As part of my PhD I have been incredibly lucky to spend three wonderful months in Mauritius and see my study system in the flesh. This fieldwork involved the installation and set-up of ten remote cameras on Round Island, to trial the use of time-lapse photography for monitoring the breeding activity of the petrel population. Since these cameras were deployed, the team on Round Island have transferred nearly 100,000 images to me online and I have investigated different methods for speeding up image processing. This has led to an exciting spin-off collaboration with Tom Hart (University of Oxford) and Mark Jessopp (University College Cork) hosting my petrel images through their citizen science project website, Seabird Watch. In the remaining time of my PhD I also plan to test the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) and machine learning to process the images. These two methods, along with the 'expert' manual classification of images undertaken by myself and a final year undergraduate student (Max Hellicar) who I am supervising, should inform us as to what might be best in the long-term for image processing and will also inform a suitable sampling strategy in terms of image frequency and timing.

During my PhD I have been very fortunate that other opportunities have made available to me. In June 2019 I spent two weeks in Látrabjarg, Iceland, where I joined project LOMVIA, tracking Common and Brünnich's Guillemots. As part of an Institute of Zoology and Queensland government (Australia) collaboration, I have processed a set of GLS tags for Herald Petrels from Raine Island. I've attended an animal migration workshop in Copenhagen, Denmark, presented a poster at the BOU 2019 annual conference, as well as presenting two Twitter-presentations at the 5th and 6th World Seabird Twitter Conferences (#WSTC5, #WSTC6). I've also been involved in the organisation of two WSTCs (including one year as Chair) and have been part of a team writing a paper on the role of Twitter conferences in ecology and ornithology, which is currently under review.

WARHAM STUDENT



Our 2019 Warham Student, **Paige Green**, University of Tasmania, Australia.

Paige Greene, University of Tasmania, Australia (commenced 2019)
Quantifying the ecological factors under-pinning population trends in crested penguins
Principal supervisor: Prof Mark Hindell

I am currently 18 months into my PhD project. I can't believe how times goes by! I've been busy completing the first data chapter of my thesis in which I investigated the niche differentiation between two endemic New Zealand crested penguins, the Snares and Fiordland Penguins. In this chapter we developed new methods for calculating utilisation distributions with geolocation data as well as quantifying niche overlaps. We're in the process of getting this manuscript published. Once we have, I will write a blog post for BOU so please keep an eye out! I also participated in the International Penguin Conference (Sept 2019) and the World Seabird Twitter Conference (#WSTC6, May 2020) – and yes, that means I've joined Twitter!

As I am using light geolocation data to track penguins, I have had to process the raw light files collected from the geolocation devices into tracks with longitude and latitude co-ordinates, so that they are usable in my studies. A single track can take between 20–60 mins to process. So far, I have completed over 400 tracks, for six different species, across 24 colonies throughout the Southern Ocean. Phew! For my next data chapter, I will use the tracks for Macaroni and the three Rockhopper species to develop ecological niche models in the first near-global distribution study. This will then allow us to predict future distributions of these species under climate change conditions.

We have been extremely lucky that our fieldwork season has gone ahead despite Covid-19 related setbacks. For a while we thought we would have to postpone our deployments for a full year, but very excitingly we have been able to deploy our tracking devices this season. These devices will collect the first non-breeding tracks for Rockhopper penguins at the Antipodes, as well as the first ever collected tracks for Erect-crested Penguins. As yet, there is no knowledge of where Erect-crested Penguins forage and so, once the devices are collected again next season, we will be able to provide the first insights into the foraging ecology of this species. We should collect the devices back from birds on the Antipodes at the end of this year, which will then allow me to process these data and start the analyses for my final data chapter.

By the end of this year, I aim to have complete drafts of my second data chapter and my introduction chapter. Further, I would like to present my findings at the World Seabird Conference, in Hobart, Tasmania (where I am based) which has been planned for October 2021.

The learning curve in using R and understanding new analyses has been steep but rewarding. A PhD is never a smooth ride but I am immensely grateful for the incredible supervisory team I have who continually support and encourage me. This project really is a dream come true for me.

WARHAM STUDENT



Our 2020 Warham Student, **Émile Brisson-Curadeau**, McGill University, Canada.

Émile Brisson-Curadeau, McGill University, Canada (commenced 2020)
Foraging behaviour of King Penguins under extreme climatic events
Principal supervisor: Dr Kyle Elliott

I'm back in the field on the other side of the world on the Kerguelen Islands! I have a sketchy internet, but at least I'm surrounded by penguins . . . and albatross . . . and petrels . . . and prions . . . and skuas! So, things are more than fine!

What have I been up to? I've been working on two papers recently. The first will look at the year 2010, which was catastrophic for the reproduction of King Penguins at Kerguelen. It will help us understand how climate can cause extremely dramatic effects on the penguins. This paper is well advanced, but we are waiting on results of tests we are currently conducting during this field season: we are putting GLS on penguins to know where the Kerguelen population overwinter. This will help us

understand which climatic indeces are crucial for penguins during the pre-reproduction season (so we can then check whether something happened just before the reproduction of 2010, which could have caused a cascade of effects into the reproduction).

The second paper looks at a new method to remotely detect prey captures using accelerometers. Accelerometers can be attached to penguins, and we hypothesized that they can be used to detect small bursts of acceleration associated with prey capture. This will in turn be useful to calculate energy budgets of penguins by looking at how much prey they ingest during each foraging trip (and see if this metric varies with different climatic conditions). This paper is almost ready and will be submitted in early 2021.

Since all conferences were cancelled this year, our entire budget went into covering fieldwork costs. We are lucky enough that we can still conduct fieldwork out here, so we might as well take the opportunity to collect as much data as we can! Most of the budget was spent on the purchase of loggers that we are currently deploying.

Luckily my work on the Kerguelen Islands hasn't really been impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic. The NGO responsible for the logistics of all scientific projects on Kerguelen is very active and they are taking extreme measures to ensure scientific projects can continue on the island without contamination. I had to quarantine before taking the boat here and I was tested twice. Thankfully, Covid-19 still hasn't reached the island, so those measures are working so far! The only real change for me has been outside the field season, when I work at home (in Canada) on my data rather than in the lab. I also might have wanted to go to a conference or two, but like everyone else, I'll have to wait a little longer for those kinds of events to come back. Other than that, Covid-19 hasn't really slowed down my project!

RECORDS COMMITTEE

Chair

Dr James Gilroy (University of East Anglia)

Secretary

Dr Chris McInerny (University of Glasgow)

Members

Ms Dawn Balmer (BTO)
Mr Chris Batty (Lancashire)
Mr Steve Dudley, BOU COO
Mr Paul French (BBRC Chairman)
Dr Alex Lees (Manchester Metro University)
Dr Pierre-Andre Crochet (French National Centre for Scientific Research (CNRS))
Mr Andrew Stoddart (Norfolk, UK)

Records Committee

bou.org.uk/british-list/

The Records Committee is responsible for maintaining the British List, the official list of birds recorded in Britain.

The Committee met once (remotely) during the year with other business conducted by email.

Andy Musgrove retired as an Ordinary member of the Committee in July 2020. We are enormously grateful for Andy's hard work over the course of his term, in particular in maintaining the spreadsheet version of the British List – a task he has kindly offered to continue into the future. We welcomed Piere-Andr**é** Crochet as a new Ordinary member of the Committee; Pierre-Andr**é** also serves on the Portuguese, Egyptian and French



'Mandt's' Black Guillemot (Lincolnshire, December 2017) was one of three sub-species admitted to the British List in the Records Committee's 51st and 52nd reports.
Image © Steve Gantlett / cleybirds.com

rarities committees as well as the French Avifaunistic Committee, and we are very excited that his appointment will lead to greater collaboration and synergy with other European committees

Changes to the British List

The Committee's 51st Report, covering the period from October 2019 to January 2020, was published in February 2020 (IBIS 162: 600-603), and included the following changes:

- Merlin *Falco columbarius* – North American subspecies *columbarius* added.
- Horned Lark *Eremophila alpestris* – North American subspecies group *alpestris/praticola/hoyti* added.

The 52nd Report, covering the period from February 2020 to October 2020, was published in December (IBIS 163: 305-308), including the following change:

- Black Guillemot *Cepphus grille* – subspecies *mandtii* added.

These changes to the British List, together with taxonomic changes in line with IOC taxonomy, brings the total to 622 species as at 31 December 2020.

Links with other groups

The Committee maintains close links with the British Birds Rarities Committee (BBRC). The BOURC Secretary continues to work closely with BBRC's Secretariat and other European committees, and informal links are maintained with Association of European Records Committees (AERC).

BOURC online intranet

The Committee operates an online intranet site that is used for the storage of images and documents, to assist with its work.

Acknowledgements

The Union would like to extend its thanks and gratitude to the following who have assisted with the many BOU activities throughout the year: Raurie Bowie, Dan Chamberlain, Rebecca Kimball, Dominic McCafferty, Ruedi Nager, Jeremy Wilson, Patrick Smith, all Associate Editors (listed in each issue of IBIS) and the hundreds of reviewers (listed annually in IBIS) for their invaluable work for IBIS; Richard Sale (on behalf of the Alexander Library, Oxford University) for his editing of the IBIS book reviews; Farhath Jabeen, Andreas Petersen, Anita Sye, Joe Walsh and colleagues at Wiley, for their help in delivering our high quality journal; Leica (UK) for their support of our science communication and IBIS ECR awards; Nigel Crocker, Richard Price and Stephen Rumsey for their excellent management of the Union's investment portfolio; Dr David Douglas (RSPB; Chair), Dr Nancy Ockendon (Endangered Landscapes Programme), Dr Geoff Hilton (Wildfowl & Wetlands Trust) and Dr Amanda Trask (Institute of Zoology) for their work preparing the programme for the postponed annual conference (Restoring bird populations); Dr James Pearce-Higgins (BTO), Dr Jo Gilbert (RSPB), Dr Christine Howard (Durham University), Ryan Burrell (University of Bournemouth) and Monika Reiss (Liverpool John Moores Univerity) for the planning and delivery of our autumn Zoom and Twitter conference (Climate change and birds); the International Wader Study Group, in particular, Triin Kaasiku, Elwyn Sharps, Camilo Carneiro, Verónica Méndez Aragon and Yvonne Verkuil for their support delivering the International Shorebird Twitter Conference (#ISTC20); Lotek UK and Wildlife Acoustics for supporting #ISTC20; Yachang Cheng and Zhu Lei for running our Weibo account in China; Sophie Detchon, Agnes Szmat, Robert Bogdan, Stoycho Stoychov, Brian Edwards and Charlie Douglass at Douglass Digital for delivering our new website; Maria Rogers and the conference staff at the University of Nottingham Conferences for working with us on the ongoing postponement of our in-person annual conference; City College Peterborough (venue for BOU meetings pre-pandemic); Chas Holt (BBRC Secretary), Bob McGowan (National Museums Scotland), British Birds Rarities Committee (BBRC), and bird records committees across Europe who have assisted BOURC; and Caroline Gillis, Tracey Richardson and colleagues at Azets (accountants and auditors).

We apologise to anyone we have inadvertently omitted.

Membership

At the end of the year our total membership stood at 1,041 (1,022 at 31 Dec 2019) comprising 751 full members (725 at 31 Dec 2019) and 290 reduced rate subscribers (297 at 31 Dec 2019) made up of 273 early career researchers (ECRs) and 17 from developing countries.

27 resignations were received during the year, and Council noted, with sadness, the following deaths: Mr A Archer, Mr Hermann Hoetker, Dr Krzysztof Rajkowski, Mr John Simms, Dr Adelheid Studer-Thiersch, Dr Denis Summers-Smith and Mr Robin Woods.

Subscription rates remained unchanged for 2019 but following review, and in light of reducing membership and increased costs coming into effect during 2020, Council agreed to a membership subscription increase to be implemented from mid-2020.

It's always encouraging to see our membership total hold up year on year, but even more so during the Covid-19 pandemic. We are very grateful for the continued support of our members and hope we can count on your continued commitment to the BOU and ornithology during what will almost certainly be an equally challenging 2021.

Financial review

Graham Appleton, Honorary Treasurer



The Covid-19 pandemic meant that 2020 was a difficult year for the charity sector. By acting quickly and using technological solutions to keep conferences and other activities going, the Union has fared better than most. Over the course of the year, we made an operating loss of £77,046, most of which (£75,162) can be attributed to 2020 payments for the three John & Pat Warham Studentships. The pandemic significantly limited activities in support of the Union's charitable aims, thereby reducing planned expenditure. A fall in the value of assets of £62,890 means that the declared loss is £139,936. This is reflected in the balance sheet.

There were more between-year changes to income and expenditure than might normally be expected. Many of these changes, such as the reduced income and expenditure related to conferences, lower costs of Council and committee meetings and a trimmed marketing budget, reflected changes brought about by or in response to the pandemic. We were fortunate that Council was scheduled to meet on 11 March. By this stage, at a time when the evidence of the spread of Covid-19 within the UK was clear to scientists, the decision to call off our Nottingham conference was obvious. It was made early enough for there not to be a huge financial penalty; we are grateful that the University felt able to hold over our deposit to 2021 (and now to 2022).

For 2020, we had already budgeted for a drop in sponsorship income, with the ending of the support from Leica during 2019, and a reduction in journal income, in line with the new contract with Wiley from 1 January 2020. Reduced journal sales to institutes impacted on IBIS income further and there was a drop in income from investments. The autumn conference, switched from in-person to a virtual event, made a useful contribution to income, having attracted a much larger number of attendees, thanks to great work by Steve Dudley and the event's Scientific Programme Committee. One kind member made a donation equivalent to the cost of the money usually paid to attend a spring conference but everyone else helped simply by maintaining their memberships.

The only unusual costs in 2020 were associated with the new BOU website and the purchase of a new batch of Godman Salvin Prize medals, for which we had to pay for the creation of new dies.

Investments

The value of reserves dropped sharply in the spring, as markets reacted to the pandemic, but recovered somewhat during the rest of the year. We are grateful to our Investment Trustees, Nigel Crocker, Richard Price and Stephen Rumsey, who guided us through a tricky 2020.

The Union relies on a mix of income and capital from investment funds to pay for grants and the John and Pat Warham Studentships. The timing of the fall in global markets meant that we were able to act quickly to slightly trim the amount of money that we made available via grants and travel scholarships in 2020 and to delay the start of the fourth Warham Studentship.

Council policies

The Union is continuing to reduce the amount of cash savings we hold, in line with the expectations of the Charity Commissioners. Council has agreed that we should reduce Unrestricted Funds to £350k, in the medium term, representing one year of operations (£250k) and a buffer of £100k. The size of this reserve takes account of uncertainty over medium-term income from journal publishing, which is currently a significant part of the Union's turnover.

Responsibilities of the Trustees

The Members of Council are responsible for preparing the Trustees' Report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

The law applicable to charities in England and Wales and in Scotland requires the Members of Council to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charity and of the incoming resources and application of resources of the charity for that year.

In preparing these financial statements, the Members of Council are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP;
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable accounting standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements; and
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in operation.

The Members of Council are responsible for keeping sufficient accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Charities Act 2011, the Charity (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008, the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005, the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006 (as amended) and the provisions of the trust deed. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

Staff remuneration is reviewed annually in January by the principal officers (President, Honorary Treasurer and Honorary Secretary). The decision on whether to make a pay award is contingent on affordability and the 12-month average CPIH for the previous calendar year. Benchmarking of pay and pension against comparators within the same sector, including the main avian research charities, is undertaken periodically according to availability and affordability of information.

Approved by the Council on 3 March 2021 and signed on their behalf by:



Prof Juliet Vickery President