

British Ornithologists' Club

Founded 5 October 1892

Registered Charity No. 1169733

Chairman's Review for 2018

During 2018 the Club consolidated the fundamental changes set in train in 2016: the creation of the new-style BOC CIO (Charitable Incorporated Organisation), the move of the Bulletin in 2018 to an online open access format on the BioOne platform and the cessation of a paid-up membership. The Club also continued to develop its quarterly programme of talks at the Barley Mow pub. These highly informative events have attracted a growing audience including viewers of the recordings put up on YouTube. In addition, in June last year, the Club held a highly successful conference at the World Museum in Liverpool, together with the Society for the History of Natural History, marking the 250th anniversary of Captain James Cook's first voyage to the Pacific on HMS Endeavour. An account of the talks programme and the conference is given below.

BOC CIO

The introduction of the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) in May 2018 required the updating of the Club's Privacy Policy and its repositioning to a more prominent position on the website.

As a consequence of establishing the BOC CIO, the old-style Herbert Stevens Trust Deeds required replacing with a new single Deed between the HS Trustees and BOC CIO. Matthew Boyer, the Club's solicitor, has set these changes in train and we are grateful to him for his patient and skillful advice.

Whilst the Club's banking transactions are mainly through the BOC CIO account it remains the case that most standing orders continue to be paid into the BOC old-style account and the Trustees have decided to keep open that account and

thus defer the dissolution of the old BOC. The Charity Commission has not demurred.

Financial Report 2018

Richard Malin, Hon Treasurer, writes:

By way of background: these figures are prepared on a cash book basis (actual payments in or out of our bank accounts in a calendar year) with no attempt made to allocate income or expenditure to a particular year, past or future. The figures are 'consolidated' to represent the combined figures for both BOC charities, Old BOC and the new CIO, but these charities are not actually combined. The numbers have not been audited or professionally examined but have been scrutinised by a Trustee not involved in their preparation.

Income and expenditure

Income in 2018 was £21,546.21 – an increase of £1,820.54 (or 9%) compared to 2017. Much of the increase came from higher distributions from Herbert Stevens investments (in part because in prior years some distributions had been capitalised), and by a catch-up of four prior-year Gift Aid reclaims. Reductions in old BOC subscriptions more than offset increased CIO donations (there was a combined net 10% reduction) and bank interest was almost 20% down (maturing higher rate deposits). Book sales were broadly constant.

Expenditure in 2018 was £10,194.52 – a reduction of £8,035.51 (or 44%) compared to 2017. The largest savings were in publications where the 2017 cost (£5,500.74) of the Falklands Checklist was zero in 2018, and in membership management where we paid BOU £4,760.33 in 2017, but limited residual charges (£671.90) in 2018. We started paying BioOne in 2018, and our website costs rose, but we saved on Bulletin postage (for which there was a legacy charge in 2017).

The net surplus for 2018 was £11,351.69 – an increase of £10,080.44 (or 793%) on 2017.

Such a surplus is not expected in 2019 – our BioOne cost is now £3,325 p.a. (£840 in 2018), we now have a single year's Gift Aid to reclaim, and our subscription income continues to fall.

Balance Sheet

A pro-forma combined balance sheet at the end of 2018 shows assets of £457,803.44 – a net reduction of £14,554.94 (or 3%) on the 2017 total of £472,358.37.

The value of our Herbert Stevens investment units fell by £25,906.63 (or 8%), reflecting lower investment values in these uncertain times.

Our medium-term bank deposits fell by £92,359.27 at 31 December as maturing deposits were placed in short-term accounts in readiness for purchase of £100,000 investment Units (similar to Herbert Stevens). Such purchase, made in January 2019, is expected to produce higher income for the BOC CIO than current deposit rates.

The detailed figures are set out below:

Income and Expenditure for year ended 31.12.2018

All figures in £				
	Old BOC	CIO BOC	Total	%
Income				
Herbert Stevens	809	12,899	13,708	64%
Subs / Donations	2,165	869	3,033	14%
Sales	0	1,288	1,288	6%
Gift Aid	1,924		1,924	9%
Licence	27		27	0%
Interest	5		5	0%
Deposit Interest	713	849	1,562	7%
	5,641	15,905	21,546	100%
Expenses				
Editor		(4,421)	(4,421)	43%
Eng-LI		(2,705)	(2,705)	27%
BioOne		(841)	(841)	8%
Websites		(589)	(589)	6%
Meetings		(457)	(457)	4%
BOU	(672)		(672)	7%
Legal		(450)	(450)	4%
Bank	(60)	0	(60)	1%
	(732)	(9,463)	(10,195)	100%
Income vs Expenditure (Surplus/ (Deficit)	4,909	6,442	11,352	

Balances Sheet (All figures in £)

	For year ended 31.12.2017			For year ended 31.12.2018		
	Old BOC	CIO BOC	Total	Old BOC	CIO Boc	Total
Bank	16,705		16,705	311	120,105	120,416
Deposits	144,573		144,573		52,213	52,213
Herbert Stevens	311,080		311,080	285,174		285,174
	472,358		472,358	285,485	172,318	457,803

Bull. BOC Online

Guy Kirwan, Hon Editor, writes:

The Bulletin

Vol. 138 comprised 413 pages (a record under the current editor) and 31 papers of broad geographical scope, although contributions on New World, especially Neotropical, birds were particularly well represented, with a particularly important contribution on the birds of Guatemala. A new subspecies of Mascarene Swiftlet *Aerodramus francicus* appeared in the June issue. For papers published in 2018, the interval between receipt and publication was 2–11 months, with a mean of *c.* 5.1 months. The year marked the Bulletin's transition

to the BioOne site. The Bulletin received a total of 55 new manuscripts in 2018; a considerable increase on 2017 and perhaps associated with the extra visibility the Bulletin potentially enjoys in its new online home at BioOne. Of these, 14 have been rejected to date and the rest have been accepted or are still being refereed for potential publication.

Grateful thanks are due, as ever, to referees who have given freely of their time and expertise; members of the Standing Committee on Ornithological Nomenclature (SCON), especially Edward Dickinson, Richard Schodde and the Bulletin's Associate Editors, Frank Steinheimer and Robert Prÿs-Jones; and to Eng-Li Green, of Alcedo Publishing, for her constant dedication to Bulletin duties, including production of the index and updating the website in tandem with David Fisher. Chris Storey and Robert Prÿs-Jones helped prepare the cover information and Club Announcements, whilst staff at The Natural History Museum, Tring, continue to offer much-needed assistance in all manner of ways.

Conference and Talks

Robert Prÿs-Jones, Hon Secretary, writes:

Meetings in 2018

After passing the year 2017 without involvement in what has over the past decade become its normal annual one-day meeting, the BOC amply made up for this in 2018 by joining forces with the Society for the History of Natural History to co-host the two-day conference *Bon Voyage? 250 Years Exploring the Natural World*, held at the World Museum Liverpool on 14-15 June. In conjunction with this, the day prior to the conference proper comprised a rare opportunity for attendees to visit the extraordinary natural history library and artworks still held at nearby Knowsley Hall, home to successive Earls of Derby. These had been largely assembled by the 13th Earl (1775–1851), a passionate natural historian whose extremely important bird specimen collection passed to what is now the World Museum, Liverpool after his death. Although the subject matter of the

conference itself covered natural history *sensu lato*, the programme was structured to include a substantial array of bird-focused talks, and most of the remainder had a wide general interest. Among friends of the BOC who attended, all those with whom I discussed the event subsequently deemed the conference to have been a great success. A considerably more detailed review of the event can be found in *Bull. Brit. Orn. Club* 138(3): 143–146, 2018.

The BOC additionally held its four usual evening meetings during 2018, covering a characteristically wide diversity of ornithological topics, all presented in an attractive and compelling fashion. In March, Justin Jansen from the Netherlands provided fascinating insight from his PhD studies into the hugely important Baudin expedition (1800–1804) to Australia. For a variety of reasons, including the effects of the Napoleonic wars and severe personal rivalries, this was never written up properly at the time; many of the specimens subsequently became dispersed, although the majority remained in Paris, and Justin's work has brought information from all of them together. In May, Bård Stokke from Norway provided an in-depth overview of his long-running studies into *Host use by the Common Cuckoo*, which included some superb photographic illustrations. His talk notably concentrated on spatial variation in host use across Europe, drawing on the massive database he has assembled on this topic. In September, Huw Lloyd outlined the way that he and colleagues at Manchester Metropolitan University have been assisting Chinese counterparts in their aim of developing the next generation of Chinese conservationists. As well as studies of how some of China's threatened bird populations are likely to respond to climate change, he focused in particular on research into the ecology of the migratory Red-crowned Crane *Grus japonensis*. Concluding the talks for the year, in November Joe Tobias from Imperial College, London spoke on *The shape of birds, and why it matters*. Largely using the bird research collection of the Natural History Museum, Joe has assembled detailed measurements of almost all the world's bird species and, in combination with spatial, phylogenetic and ecological data, used this to address fundamental questions such as how bird diversity arose and how it can best be conserved.

More detailed information on each of these talks can be found on the BOC website at: <http://boc-online.org/meetings/past-meetings/2018-boc-meetings> . All evening talks are free and open to all, so all Friends of the BOC are urged to encourage potentially interested colleagues and associates to attend the future ones advertised at: <http://boc-online.org/meetings/upcoming-meeting> .

BOC Publications

The Falkland Islands Checklist continues to sell a steady pace and at the end of the year 243 of the original 400 remain in stock at NHBS.

Work continues on the two checklists in preparation: Cuba and Paraguay. David Wells continues in his role of commissioning editor of Cuba and Nigel Redman oversees Paraguay, and to both we owe our thanks for their highly professional contributions.

BOC Website

The website requires constant attention and the Club is indebted to Eng-Li Green as our webmaster and David Fisher who keeps the site up-to-date. In addition the Facebook and Twitter sites are ably maintain by Douglas Russell. In addition, and bearing in mind the web's importance to the Club, we have established a website subgroup to oversee and develop the Club's online presence. The group (Stephen Chapman, David Fisher, Douglas Russell and Chris Storey) meets regularly before the main committee meetings.

Trustees and Administration

At the beginning of the year Mike Earp resigned as a trustee owing to the pressure of other commitments: the committee thanked him for his valuable contributions to the work of the Club.

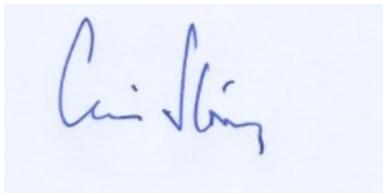
The Trustees would like to thank Guy Kirwan for his editorship of the Bulletin which continues to attract outstanding contributions to ornithological studies; Robert Prÿs-Jones for the Barley Mow talks and the annual conference; and Frank Mullen for videoing and editing the talks for posting on YouTube.

The Trustees are indebted to the trustees of the Herbert Stevens Trust for their clear and supportive advice in the management of the HS Trust funds and their wholehearted support of the Club.

The Club continues to have the administrative support of Josephine Rogers in managing the MailChimp lists and helping Stephen Chapman with the production of the regular Newsletters.

The Club also receives at its official email address a constant flow of ad hoc enquiries ranging from requests to identify birds (often on the basis of scant accounts/images) to help in tracking down neglected ornithological manuscripts; although time consuming, such requests are welcome evidence that the Club is active on the web.

Finally, as Chairman, I am very much aware of the unstinting support and collaboration of my fellow trustees. The success of the Club is very much dependent upon their hard work and commitment. Many thanks.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Chris Storey", is centered within a light blue rectangular box.

Chris Storey, Chairman

14 May 2019