



SCOTTISH
ORNITHOLOGISTS'
CLUB

ANNUAL REPORT AND ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2022



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A WELCOME FROM THE PRESIDENT

A warm welcome to the 2021-22 Annual Report and Accounts of the Scottish Ornithologists' Club. This report summarises key activities of the Club throughout the reporting year, set out in the context of our five charitable objectives. The accounts fulfil one of the Club's responsibilities as a Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation (SCIO) regulated by the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator (OSCR).

It is a privilege and an honour to have been co-opted as SOC President in March 2022, right at the end of the year covered by this report. These pages illustrate how, in spite of the challenges we all continued to face in 2021-22, the Club managed to maintain, even exceed, its normal level of outputs and achievements and make progress with some important new areas of activity. It is a great time to step up!



I believe this success can be attributed to our members' keen interest in ornithology (and/or birdwatching, birding and nature generally). Many are also active as Council and Committee members, Branch leaders, Local Bird Recorders, local project leaders and ambassadors for the Club and for birds. Others share time, friendship and expertise with novice birders, to Club events, to local recording and much more. All have continued to be strongly supported and serviced by our small team of experienced staff, who have been most imaginative in keeping the show on the road.



The SOC is about enjoying, documenting, studying and conserving wild birds. It is uniquely placed to focus on Scotland's birdlife. During a period when the direct benefits to people of nature and outdoor interests were widely recognised, there has been no better opportunity to promote the value, beauty and fascination that birds hold for us. Or of the need to continue gathering data and records to inform our understanding of their needs and future conservation.



2021-22 saw the Club beginning to resume 'normal' group activities, always in line with national guidance. Waterston House was able to re-open and host exhibitions. The year culminated in March with the long-awaited in-person Scottish Birdwatchers' Conference in Elgin, hosted by the Moray Branch and held once again in partnership with BTO Scotland. SOC plays a key role in monitoring and growing our understanding of bird species and populations in Scotland, and how they change. Much of what we do as members, like contributing records to BirdTrack or to local surveys, can be described as citizen science. In 2021, Council agreed to commit funds to a new full-time professional post, that of Birding and Science Officer.

Mark Lewis, who was appointed, gives an account later in this report. Some scenarios, such as the avian flu in Barnacle Geese during 2021-22, followed by mass mortality of seabirds in the current year, serve to highlight how timely it is that we have a post dedicated to maximising the scientific aspects of the Club's activities.



A WELCOME FROM THE PRESIDENT (CONT)

Last but definitely not least, there are two main changes to record among our Trustees in 2021-22. SOC President, Ian Bainbridge, tendered his resignation in November, obliged by long-term poor health to stand down. He continued to counsel the Club throughout the year; on behalf of Council, I thank him for his leadership during his time in office and wish him good birding in future. One of our two Vice Presidents, Jeremy Wilson, deputised for Ian at several Council meetings and is also due special thanks. In June, the Club welcomed Rich Kerr as its new Treasurer, and in November, long-standing Council member, Bob McGowan, stood down, and was replaced by Hannah Lemon. Thanks are of course due to all who have committed energy and enthusiasm to the Club this year. We have much more to do, and many more birds to observe and enjoy!



Ruth Briggs
SOC President



OBJECTIVES & ACTIVITIES

The Scottish Ornithologists' Club (SOC) promotes the study, enjoyment and conservation of wild birds and their habitats across Scotland.

To this end, the Club operates 15 local branches across the country and has a growing membership of more than 3500. It brings together like-minded people with a passion for birds, nature and conservation, through a programme of talks, outings, conferences and publications.

We also support a network of volunteers across Scotland, gathering vital information about Scotland's birdlife. The health of birds reflects the health of the wider environment. By recording which species we've seen, when and where and how many we saw, scientists can better understand the effects of pollution, habitat loss, climate change and modern farming on our wild birds.

This data is one of the first points of reference in informed conservation planning, and we work with other organisations to promote the practice of keeping bird records and submitting them for scientific research.

We offer grants for ornithological field work and publications, develop and support young birdwatchers, maintain Scotland's largest ornithology library and host regular art exhibitions at our Waterston House headquarters in East Lothian.

OUR AIMS

The purpose of the SOC is to advance the study and appreciation of birds in Scotland and to do so by:



PROMOTING
the study and documentation
of Scotland's birdlife



PROMOTING
interest in wild birds



PROMOTING
the conservation of birds and
their habitats in Scotland



PROVIDING
a focus for information relating to the
study of birds in Scotland



ENCOURAGING
the appreciation of the creative
arts relating to natural history



ACHIEVEMENTS & PERFORMANCES

PROMOTING THE STUDY AND DOCUMENTATION OF SCOTLAND'S BIRDLIFE

Constantly gathering information about birds is key to conservation in a time when many species' numbers are declining. Every day, our volunteers all over the country endeavour to record vital information about Scotland's birds to help protect them, provide a picture of wider environmental change, and build up ornithological history.



The importance of monitoring bird numbers and breeding success as part of long-term surveys and studies has never been more important in the face of the pressures that all bird species are experiencing.

Taking time to watch birds and their different behaviours contributes to my personal happiness and mental wellbeing often with the added benefit of being outdoors in beautiful places.

Helen Aiton, SOC Orkney



INVESTING IN BIRDING AND SCIENCE

The Birding and Science Committee was formed in 2019 to develop the Club's role in promoting birds, birdwatching and conservation activities in Scotland. The Committee is chaired by Professor Jeremy Wilson (SOC Vice-President *Birding and Science*) and made up of members of several conservation organisations and SOC committees. A significant development during the reporting year was the recruitment of a full-time Birding and Science Officer. Since taking up post in June 2021, Mark Lewis has been working with the Committee to identify knowledge gaps in Scotland's avifauna, develop support and guidance for Local Bird Recorders, and strengthen the Club's representation on the BirdTrack Steering group. He has also been working closely with fellow SOC staff members to help deliver new communications content and assist with conference and youth event programmes.

My Role as Birding and Science Officer – Mark Lewis



*“Since taking up post as Birding and Science Officer in June 2021, I've been involved in a range of tasks that have been as diverse as they have been fascinating, and these have fallen into four main workstreams. Before I came on board the Birding and Science Committee had started reviewing knowledge gaps for Scottish Birds, based on what was published in *The Birds of Scotland* (Forrester et al, 2007). Originally intended to be a paper in the Club's journal, the review summarised these gaps and the project has developed to include a database that researchers, SOC branches, ringing groups, and interested individuals will be able to use to find discreet questions that we still need answers to. Ideally, this will help to focus future research efforts and highlight to conservation bodies where knowledge gaps lie for Scotland's most important bird populations.*”

ACHIEVEMENTS & PERFORMANCES (CONT)

I've also been working with various groups involved with BirdTrack – the national online platform for birdwatchers to record and store their sightings. The Birding and Science Committee decided that much of what we as a BirdTrack partner want to achieve with the platform could be done by promoting it more and telling a series of user stories, which will be appearing in Scottish Birds in due course. I've been working with members of the Committee to identify potential improvements to the BirdTrack app, with plans afoot at the time of writing to circulate a questionnaire to BirdTrack users, in order to discern which elements of the app work well, and where users would like to see improvements. Crucially, Local Bird Recorders are also feeding into this discussion, as they are among the most active BirdTrack data users.

SOC has offered guidance to the Local Bird Recorder community in the past but this, and the entire relationship between SOC and recorders has been in need of review for some time. Recently, we have worked more closely with Recorders to pinpoint where blockages exist in the process of data collation and Local Bird Report production and are looking to facilitate solution sharing between the various parties, and explore where SOC could provide bespoke support, if it were needed.

Local Bird Recorders devote a staggering amount of their free time to this role, and it is vital that we do what is feasible to make their task more streamlined.

Finally, a fair bit of my day-to-day work involves communications and other 'public facing' parts of the Club's activities. A key focus has been to increase the flow of bird-related content through the SOC's various social media platforms. I've also been involved with developing new ideas for training courses, working on a partnership with JNCC on their Volunteer Seabirds at Sea (VSAS) program, which will hopefully offer SOC members access to training courses and survey routes on ferries.

This is just a summary of the main tasks I've been working on. It's a busy, challenging, but really rewarding job and I look forward to telling you about how it is developing in future Annual Reports!"

Mark Lewis



ACHIEVEMENTS & PERFORMANCES (CONT)



TURNING BIRDWATCHING INTO VALUABLE DATA

The SOC is the umbrella organisation for bird recording in Scotland, supporting the network of Local Bird Recorders (LBRs) who volunteer their time to undertake the crucial work of collating information about birds in their area. The vast archive of data and reports generated by LBRs is an invaluable conservation tool, made available to birders, conservationists, planners and developers through the Local Bird Reports, the Online Scottish Bird Report, BirdTrack, and the National Biodiversity Network Gateway. The Birding and Science Committee are looking to work with local recorders to develop good practice guidance, SOC support and solution sharing within the community of Local Bird Recorders, particularly with regard to the collation of data. Scotland's Local Bird Recorders process, validate and report on an estimated two million records every year in their free time and we would like to do what we can to make this task easier. Other planned outputs include support for new Recorders and an action plan for areas where the role of Recorder is not filled.

One function carried out by the LBR community is the production of **Local Bird Reports**. These keenly anticipated publications annually summarise the status of birds within a given recording area, using data supplied by the local birding community. They usually consist of accounts for each species occurring in the area, describing numbers, distribution, and phenology amongst other things, as well as articles relevant to the local birding community. Examples of species accounts for each region can be found via the Online Scottish Bird Report.

The 2021/22 period was a bumper year for local bird reports, with the following reports published by the local SOC groups: Ayrshire 2017 (digital), Borders 2020 (print and digital), Clyde 2010, Caithness 2020 (digital), Highland 2020 (digital), and Lothian 2019. Praise too to the Clyde Branch who are undertaking the monumental task of bringing the *Clyde Bird Report* up to date, beginning with the 2010 report, published in February. A further five reports were published by regional bird clubs or independent bird report groups. A complete list of the latest reports available can be found on the SOC website (Bird Recording/Bird reports and atlases).



ACHIEVEMENTS & PERFORMANCES (CONT)



BIRDTRACK – COLLATING DATA FOR CONSERVATION

The SOC sits alongside BTO, RSPB, BirdWatch Ireland and the Welsh Ornithological Society as a BirdTrack partner, attending two steering group meetings each year. BirdTrack is an online tool that birdwatchers can use to store their sightings, keep up to date with what others are seeing, analyse trends, and contribute to a national database to support species conservation. SOC plans to take a much more active role in the continued development of the platform, with the Birding and Science Committee involved in identifying desired modifications from a number of different user perspectives. A key area for development has been the facilitation of the use of 'big data' in local bird reports. During the year, the BirdTrack team worked on a suite of tools that will allow bird report compilers to produce a variety of maps and graphs for species occurring in their recording area. This will make meaningful reporting on a greater number of species much easier at a local level.

DEMYSTIFYING RARE BIRD DESCRIPTIONS

To offer guidance to people writing descriptions of rare birds, the Scottish Birds Rarities Committee (SBRC) started the publication of an annual 'exemplar' description. This year's chosen description of a Citrine Wagtail on Fair Isle included detailed analyses of the bird's plumage as well as calls and discussed separation of this bird from both Eastern and Western Yellow Wagtails. SBRC also produced new guidance on the identification of crossbills in Scotland.

INSPIRING CITIZEN SCIENCE THROUGH OUR BRANCH NETWORK

Around Scotland, branches sought to encourage, engage and enable members, bird enthusiasts and the general public alike to record the birds they see via a number of innovative projects, which included activities such as species campaigns, mentoring schemes and nest box monitoring.

HIGHLAND

In Highland, the local branch appealed for birdwatchers in the region to submit sightings of Red-breasted Merganser and Crested Tit, two species for which the region holds important breeding populations, but surprisingly few actual breeding records. This resulted in the Local Bird Recorder receiving almost double the records of these species during the reporting year, compared to the previous year.

CLYDE

Clyde branch continued with its 'Boxes for Barnies' project, documented in last year's Annual Report. Unfortunately, this year proved to be a poor one for Barn Owl breeding. More positive news from the branch came in the form of a marked increase in the number of people reporting birds regularly; for the first time, records reported via BirdTrack for Clyde region topped 100,000 in a year.



ACHIEVEMENTS & PERFORMANCES (CONT)

NORTH-EAST SCOTLAND

Thought to be in decline in the region, the branch appealed to birdwatchers in North-East Scotland for records of Collared Dove. With COVID-19 impacting fieldwork in the previous reporting period, the local SOC committee also encouraged records of that year's focus species, Mistle Thrush. Additionally, following a number of sightings in Deeside, members were reminded to keep a watchful eye on their bird feeders for the sightings of Nuthatch.

BORDERS

The SOC Borders Discussion Group coordinated monitoring of Wood Warbler, Pied Flycatcher, Marsh Tit (a species that may have been lost as a breeding bird from Scotland in recent years) and breeding Gadwall – the latter a joint project with neighbouring Lothian Discussion Group. In January, the Borders branch also began pulling together resources for a survey of Nightjar and other nocturnal species, having secured a research grant from the SOC Endowment Fund.

LOTHIAN

Lothian Discussion Group continued to plan, review and analyse fieldwork and survey results throughout the year, with meetings in April and September to March.

One important piece of fieldwork entered its second and final year. The aim of the winter atlas of birds in East Lothian is to collect data to investigate changes in range and numbers of wintering birds in the region since the last local atlas in 2007-13. A progressive element of the project was the trial of a mentoring scheme with students (aged 18 and over) from Napier and Edinburgh Universities. Experienced ornithologists, recorders and surveyors took small groups of new or novice birders out and helped explain how to find, identify and record birds, with the resulting data contributing to the atlas results.

The scheme aims to support the development of field survey skills, provide networking opportunities as well as encouraging and nurturing a progression of learning. A total of 30 students (mentees) with varying degrees of bird experience and knowledge and nine experienced ornithologists from the Discussion Group (mentors) registered for the scheme, and 19 field sessions were completed throughout the second winter of the Atlas.

Other activities carried out by the Lothian group during the year included inland seabird colony surveys, goose roost counts, heronry monitoring, and the annual low-tide rocky shore count, a joint census with Borders Discussion Group.

DEVELOPING SKILLS IN THE COMMUNITY, ON LAND...

In line with COVID-19 restrictions starting to lift for outdoor gatherings, we were able to resume HQ's programme of Bird ID Skills guided walks in mid-May. The walks, led by our friendly, experienced trainer, Scott Paterson, continued in popularity, booking up quickly. A total of 31 individual walks and six courses (blocks of four walks) were organized between May 2021 and March 2022.

The locations used for the sessions around the Lothians, Fife and Kinross covered a range of habitats, such as woodlands, coastal sites and wetlands, providing opportunities to learn about a wide variety of birds. The seasons were also used to theme some of the walks, with the focus on birdsong in spring, and migrants in autumn.

ACHIEVEMENTS & PERFORMANCES (CONT)



Group outing at Tay Reedbeds, Errol © Scott Paterson

“

Really great Aberlady walk with Scott, he is so helpful to those who are less experienced, yet his wealth of knowledge means even experts can learn from him.

Will Howarth, North Berwick, September 2021

”

“

Thank you VERY much for a really enjoyable and hugely informative Sunday morning despite the Arctic temperatures. I have listened much more carefully on my daily walks and am managing to identify much more than I could before.

Jane McCormack, East Lothian, January 2022

”

ACHIEVEMENTS & PERFORMANCES (CONT)

“

Thanks so much for the guided walks - I really enjoyed them and will remember them as a special time! I feel like I learned a lot, and appreciated being around someone so knowledgeable, experienced and enthusiastic. I particularly appreciated the things you mentioned about how to remember differences between birds, and interesting facts.

Naomi, March 2022

”

“

Just enjoyed the last of the four Bird ID walks with Scott – what a great guide he is! So much information and knowledge with a dollop of fun and humour thrown in for good measure.

John Kerr, March 2022

”

“

My daughter and I loved the walk yesterday. We saw so many different birds and several species that we'd never spotted before, such as Redshank, Golden Plover, Pink-footed Geese and some Whooper Swans swooped in from Iceland at the end. Scott was such an enthusiastic and knowledgeable guide and has fueled Emma's passion for birdwatching. We hope to be able to book onto other walks in the future.

Alice Brander, October 2021

”

The SOC *Birdwatching for Beginners* Facebook group was launched during the COVID-19 pandemic as a way to support beginners at a time when Government restrictions meant that we were unable to lead group guided walks. The platform is an active and growing community of over 600 bird enthusiasts who post their ID or other bird-related queries, sharing photos and birdwatching experiences along the way.

... AND AT SEA

This year, we began exploring options for a partnership with JNCC (Joint Nature Conservation Committee) on its popular Volunteer Seabirds at Sea (VSAS) program. SOC members were invited to apply for a free place on a training course, which ran in September and was led by SOC Birding and Science Officer and former VSAS trainer for JNCC, Mark Lewis, with funding support from both organisations. The outcome of this was the addition of eight new surveyors and mentors to the volunteer pool, and many of those who took part in the training have gone on to enjoy leading or taking part in subsequent surveys. To read about the course, see participant Emma Anderson's illustrated account, which was published as the SOC Blog in February: Volunteer Seabirds at Sea (the-soc.org.uk)



ACHIEVEMENTS & PERFORMANCES (CONT)

In September 2021, I found myself driving down the long winding road towards Tarbert and Kennacraig. I had managed to secure a place on the joint SOC/JNCC VSAS mentor training course. I was excited to get back to surveying and being out on the sea after the hiatus in surveying and conservation work that had been enforced on myself and the rest of the country as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Little did I know where the course would eventually lead me when sitting in the community hall in Tarbert and subsequently when setting foot at the crack of dawn the following day on Calmac's MV Finlaggan to survey the Islay route. The training itself was excellent with some superb sightings including Storm Petrel about halfway between Kintyre and Islay and a beautiful 'ringtail' (Hen Harrier) floating from one side of the mouth of west loch Tarbert to the other.

I undertook my first VSAS survey the following January on the Arran route. It was a relatively quiet day with the normal January birds about, but it was still brilliant to be out at sea in a bracing wind crossing the Clyde. I was delighted to find that I had been partnered with another very keen and knowledgeable birder and fellow seabird enthusiast, Vivi Bolin. In the quiet periods, with visibility slightly obscured, we discussed cetaceans, seabirds, and work. Vivi suggested to me that I should perhaps apply for a position with the company she was working for who were looking for ornithologists (or more aptly, for me, 'birders!'). I sent an application off, not really expecting anything to come of it. By the middle of June, I found myself sat at the edge of a muddy pool surrounded by clouds of Arctic Terns, singing Snow Bunting and a group of Red-necked Phalarope displaying right in front of me on the Arctic circle straddling the Icelandic Island of Grimsey – I had landed my dream job as an ornithologist/guide on an expedition cruise ship! I am grateful to the SOC for helping to pave the way for me to have this amazing opportunity.

Sam Hood, SOC member, Newcastle-upon-Tyne



Sam Hood in his dream job, on board an expedition cruise ship

ACHIEVEMENTS & PERFORMANCES (CONT)

COVID-19 AFFECTS UPTAKE OF SOC RESEARCH GRANTS

During the year under review, uncertainty caused by the COVID-19 pandemic resulted in a disappointing level of applications for research grants from the Club's Endowment Fund.

As knowledge is limited regarding the numbers of sea ducks around our coast, the SOC Research and Surveys Committee welcomed an application from Dave Patterson and Carl Mitchell for their late spring sea ducks work in the Moray Firth. A grant of £600 was awarded for the work carried out in May in Portmahomack, Easter Ross. In the end, only £121 of the finance was required, with the underspend returned to the Fund. Details of the study, which included video footage from the fieldwork, were used as an engaging feature on the Club's social media platforms as a way to highlight to promote the availability of such assistance for amateur research and survey work.

The lifting of restrictions in late spring allowed recipients of SOC research grants in 2020 to resume fieldwork. David and Helen Aiton continued their Quandale Skua project, now in its ninth year. The site on Rousay, Orkney, was visited ten times during the 2021 breeding season for the purposes of this study, with an additional visit in August to monitor Bonxie fledging success and to check the fledging successes of Arctic Skua chicks. The study revealed 19 territorial Arctic Skua pairs, with two new territories used but overall, two fewer territorial pairs compared with 2019. Quandale also has a high density of breeding Great Skuas. In 2021, there were 60 territorial pairs in the study area, representing a large increase of 14 pairs from 2019.

Results of the project were presented by Liz Humphreys (BTO Scotland – project collaborator) at the 2022 Scottish Birdwatchers' Conference in March. Helen also shared details of the work with the SOC northern branches in November, as part of the Club's winter programme of online talks.

Hayley Douglas' start-up project colour-ringing terns on Tiree resumed. The Inner Hebridean island has three breeding species: Common Tern in small numbers, Little Tern – a Schedule 1 species found in a few locations around the island, and the more prolific Arctic Tern. Over the years, the Sandwich Tern ringing project run by the Clyde Ringing Group (CRG) along with the gull ringing projects on the mainland has acquired a lot of information through re-sightings, particularly in Africa, and it was felt that Tiree offered an opportunity to increase knowledge on both Arctic Tern and Little Tern movements.

“Our target was to ring chicks at some of the breeding colonies on the island so that we would also get an understanding of longevity. The project was due to start in the breeding season of 2020 but COVID-19 restrictions at the time meant that field work was delayed until 2021, with two sites identified for the project: the Arctic Tern colony at Heanish (GR NM039435) and the small colony of Little Terns at Miodar (GR NM075503).

The first visit to Heanish was made early in the breeding season when one of the homeowners above the beach became concerned that the nests were being trampled by visitors accessing the beach. Indeed, the day before, I had been shown photos by a visitor of “all these tiny eggs in the sand and all these noisy birds in the air”. Signage was quickly installed along the machair above the colony to advise members of the public to avoid this

ACHIEVEMENTS & PERFORMANCES (CONT)

area and we believe this may have contributed to the increase in breeding success in this particular spot. The first two chicks were ringed on 21 June and a further 56 ringed on 30 June, with the help of two members of CRG. During this visit, a brief visit was made to Miodar. We first surveyed the site from a distance, as this species is highly susceptible to disturbance. After spotting a chick, we headed onto the island and successfully colour ringed the bird. A small number of nest hollows were found (11 in total) but a short search of the area found no more chicks. They are incredibly well camouflaged and not wanting to stay too long in the colony (recorded time was 24 mins from shore to island and back) we headed back across to Heanish.

At the end of the breeding season, it was recorded by the RSPB Warden that across the island, 355 pairs of Arctic Tern fledged 250 chicks, and 39 pairs of Little Tern fledged 21 chicks.

So far, this winter we haven't had any re-sightings of our chicks but with Spring around the corner, it is hoped that we'll have re-sightings of individuals back at the colonies and we are prepping to carry out a second season of ringing".

Hayley Douglas, February 2022



ACHIEVEMENTS & PERFORMANCES (CONT)

CLUB COMMITS £4K TO SUPPORTING FIELD WORK IN 2022/23

With the lifting of the restrictions in 2021, the Research and Surveys Committee received an encouraging level of applications in January and by the end of the reporting year, total funding of £3,920 had been approved in order to support six excellent projects. However, at the time of writing, all seabird ringing in Scotland has been banned due to the avian Influenza (HPAI) outbreak, which may impact two of the projects supported.

SUPPORTING ORNITHOLOGICAL PUBLICATIONS

The *Birds of Scotland Fund* was established in 2008 from proceeds of sales of the Club's award-winning two-volume book, *The Birds of Scotland* (Forrester et al., 2007) and since then it has helped to finance over 25 other ornithological publications and special projects in Scotland. The total amount committed to publications in 2021/22 was £11,750.

- Scottish Raptor Monitoring Scheme annual report, BTO Scotland (£1,750)
- *The Birds of Moray and Nairn*, Martin Cook (£5,000)
- *The Birds of Fair Isle*, Ian Andrews on behalf of Fair Isle Bird Observatory Trust (£5,000, with the provisional option of an additional £3,000 for a digital edition)

A full list of publications supported by the Birds of Scotland Fund over the years can be found on the SOC website: www.the-soc.org.uk/supported-projects

There were two new funding applications to the North-East Scotland Branch's Atlas Fund – one for £300 for trees for a local ringing station, and one for £3,000 towards an update to the book *The Birds of Moray and Nairn*. Both were approved by the local Fund committee, with the proviso that the latter application was modified to £1000 grant and £2000 loan.





ACHIEVEMENTS & PERFORMANCES (CONT)

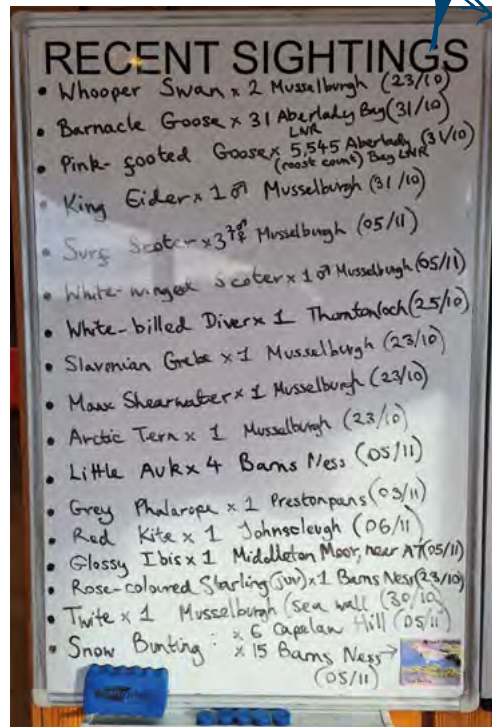
PROMOTING INTEREST IN WILD BIRDS

Getting people to take an interest in and care about wild birds is important if we want to protect them. As is inspiring and nurturing the next generation of recorders, conservationists and observers. We do this in many different ways.

WATERSTON HOUSE – WELCOMING VISITORS FROM FAR AND WIDE

Staff at the Club's Headquarters in Aberlady welcomed approximately 6,400 visitors during the 2021/22 period, comparable to pre-pandemic levels, in spite of shifting to part-time opening. Visitors represented a broad cross section of the birdwatching and naturalist community; from Club members and experienced birders and those just starting out on their birding journey, to students, families curious about nature, holidaymakers, and regulars. Waterston House is a hub for many in the local and wider community, and in her role as Visitor Experience Officer, Shenaz Khimji aims to continue this legacy by ensuring it is a place where curiosity and enthusiasm for Scotland's birdlife is welcomed, encouraged, and celebrated:

"As well as enjoying panoramic views of Aberlady Bay, our HQ provides a relaxed environment to share and discuss bird sightings, browse our wonderful selection of ornithological literature and wildlife art, or check out the latest optical equipment. One of the most popular focal points for visitors is also the most low-tech – the 'Recent Sightings' board! I really enjoy keeping the board up to date and interesting for all levels of birdwatcher; as well as providing a comprehensive list of 'what's about' in the Lothians, it also serves as a talking point and an opportunity for staff to assist with on-the-spot identification queries and advice on when and where to see certain species.



Like my colleagues managing the library and gallery, I make use of the Club's social media channels to extend the reach of the Waterston House experience. We even get the occasional opportunity to get SOC on the airwaves! In October, I appeared on BBC Radio Scotland's Out of Doors programme to talk about Musselburgh Lagoons as a top accessible birding hotspot near Edinburgh".

ACHIEVEMENTS & PERFORMANCES (CONT)

What people are saying about Waterston House on Google:

Beautiful space, huge collection of reference material and the lady at the desk was very knowledgeable and helpful.

Very good range of binoculars for all levels of bird watching. Excellent professional advice on what to choose to suit individual needs.

We came across the SOC by chance which is a hidden gem and a source of valuable ornithological information... and we want to say a big thank you to the staff who could not have been more helpful.

WATERSTON HOUSE EVENTS – OFFERING A RANGE OF ‘SPECTACLES’ (WINK, WINK)

One of Scotland’s greatest and most accessible birdwatching spectacles has to be thousands of Pink-footed Geese taking off from – or touching down on – their roost site each day. With SOC Headquarters overlooking Aberlady Bay Local Nature Reserve (one of the best sites to view geese in the Lothians), the centre is ideally placed to promote this experience. We were pleased to continue our long-standing collaboration with East Lothian Countryside Ranger Service to deliver an early morning Goose Walk, led by Aberlady Bay Reserve warden and Club member, John Harrison. Attendees were invited to wake up with the geese and enjoy seeing the birds take off from their watery roosting site, while benefitting from John’s in-depth knowledge of the birds and entertaining instructional style.



John Harrison, Aberlady Bay Warden

As well as offering a regular stock of optical equipment and advice all year round, we ran a number of dedicated Optics Clinics, hosted by our friendly Viking Optical Ltd rep, Trish Donald. The clinics operated on an appointment system to facilitate one-to-one sessions, rather than open events, as a consequence of COVID-19.



Optics clinic, Trish Donald, Viking Optical Ltd

ACHIEVEMENTS & PERFORMANCES (CONT)



SOC/BTO SCOTLAND ONLINE YOUTH EVENTS PROGRAMME

With the pandemic resulting in postponing the 2021 Scottish Bird Camp until summer 2022, the Club sought other ways to continue to engage and develop young bird enthusiasts. The product of this was a collaboration with BTO Scotland to arrange a series of free, monthly online events for young people in Scotland under the age of 30. Launching in October and drawing on the skills of our dedicated membership and supporters as contributors, the programme was delivered across seven consecutive months and included a careers workshop; a species-focused session on Northern Gannet; a seabird identification workshop; an in-depth look at how nature inspires art, photography, film and song; two bird calls workshops; and an event for young nature writers. All sessions were well attended, with an average audience of around 50 participants. A dedicated mailing list of around 160 subscribers facilitates longer-lasting communication with these aspiring naturalists, signposting them to other relevant SOC opportunities and activities. Indeed, a number of the successful applicants for the 2022 Scottish Bird Camp were contacts from the online youth events.



...I really enjoyed it and took a lot away from it. I thought it was the perfect mix of talks, which was excellent as I think there was something there for everyone and provided some really accessible info for beginners whilst also offering plenty of new information for folk who've been involved a little bit longer.

Attendee, 'The Gannet'



Thank you for signing me up to this event - it was excellent, super engaging, and it has really helped with my call ID.

Attendee, 'Further bird calls and songs'



What a lovely evening. Thank you so much for tonight, the session was wonderful again! I really enjoyed all of the talks, interesting to see such different presentation styles.

Attendee, 'Capturing the spirit of Birds'



ACHIEVEMENTS & PERFORMANCES (CONT)

PROMOTING INTEREST IN BIRDS VIA OUR BRANCHES

The 2021/2022 winter talks programme continued to be impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, with branches preferring to stick with the online format rather than face-to-face meetings.

Numbers attending the Zoom programme remained solid, with many members having clearly taken to joining in from the comfort of their own homes. For others, the online arrangement has enabled them to participate in branch activities for the first time.

Topics covered a diverse range of subjects from talks on specific species (Corn Buntings and Storm Petrels), research and conservation projects (remote tracking, peatland restoration), special sites (St Kilda, the Balearics), and human-induced issues (oceanic plastic debris), to nature writing and personal reflections of a life enhanced by birds. Member interaction was facilitated by opening the Zoom meeting ahead of the talk start to allow for some 'what's about' chat among participants.

From September 2021, and under relevant COVID-19 restrictions, many branches started up their regular programme of outings again. Clyde Branch engaged some 60 birdwatchers across six outings, while at the same time recording a total of 95 different bird species. Part of a long-standing partnership, Ayrshire Branch members joined Central Ayrshire RSPB Local Group outings, which resumed in February.

The popular annual Highland Branch Bird Race took place in mid-January. Fifteen teams and a total of 43 participants took part from all over the region, including the Isle of Rum and even an enterprising team on the Calmac ferry crossing from Mallaig to Eigg. The winning team, 'Lord of the Wings' (two young birders) and runners up were announced over a friendly and light-hearted get-together on Zoom.



ACHIEVEMENTS & PERFORMANCES (CONT)

SOC'S WHERE TO WATCH BIRDS IN SCOTLAND MOBILE APP

The SOC's free mobile app was launched in April 2019 and has proved to be immensely popular, helping wildlife enthusiasts to find new places to see birds or to observe familiar sites in a new light. In the reporting year, monthly views of the app's 600 sites averaged around 26,000, with 39,654 views in May 2021 alone, and a total for the year of 315,062 site account visits, up from 200,551 the previous year. During the pandemic lockdowns, with travel restricted, as expected, the site accounts viewed were mainly in the Central Belt and close to population centres, but since the lockdowns were eased, the spread of sites viewed has widened across the country with a strong emphasis on Strathspey in summer.

Top 10 app sites (by number of views) in the year to 31 March 2022

Musselburgh Lagoons
 Aberlady Bay
 Aviemore
 Granttown on Spey
 Ythan Estuary, Aberdeenshire

Balgray Reservoir, East Renfrewshire
 RSPB Skinflats, Inner Forth
 Loch of Strathbeg, Aberdeenshire
 Kinneil Lagoons, Inner Forth
 Hogganfield Park, Glasgow

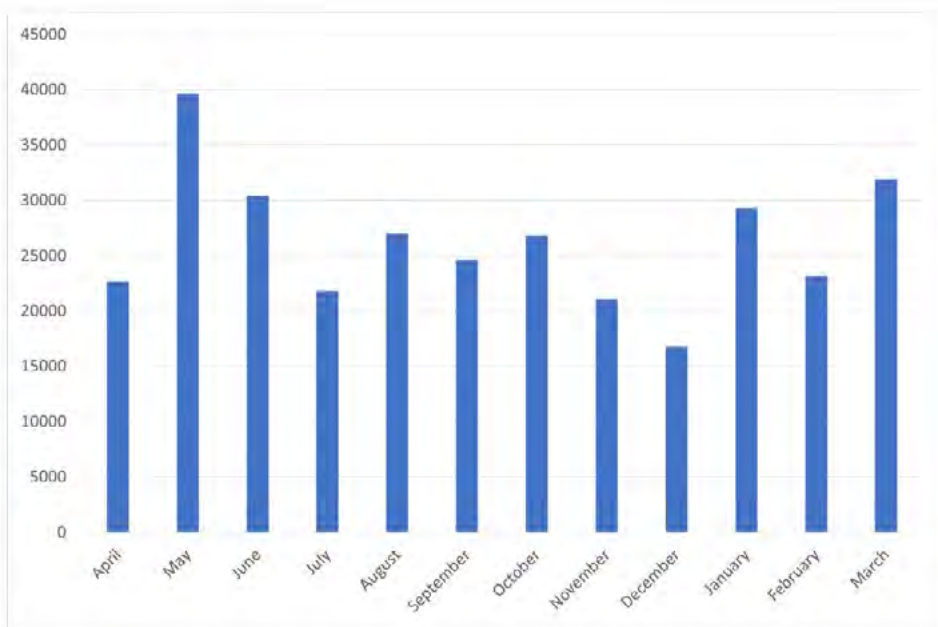


Figure 1. Number of SOC app site accounts viewed per month (April 2021-March 2022)



ACHIEVEMENTS & PERFORMANCES (CONT)



SOC BLOG PROVIDES A SPACE FOR PERSONAL STORIES

The SOC Blog was launched during the pandemic and continues to provide an ideal platform for members and the wider birdwatching community to share their personal stories or impart their expertise on specialist subjects. Features during the year included a detailed look at the taxonomy of Red Grouse, the success of White-tailed Eagle on Arran, and accounts from enthusiasts describing special birding experiences – some close to home, others in far-flung places.

ENCOURAGING INTEREST IN SPRING MIGRANTS

The [Spring Migrants Table](#), a long-running resource available exclusively on the SOC website and provided by BirdLine Scotland, keeps track of the very latest migrant birds reported in Scotland and encourages contributors to log their own sightings. After a break in spring 2020, owing to the pandemic, we were pleased to be able to resume the service in spring 2021, with the first Willow Warbler and White Wagtail arrivals and sightings of Sand Martin and Chiffchaff getting the show on the road. In addition to the table on the website, a free email alert service was launched, offering the choice of table updates only or a popular enhanced version, which included helpful migrant bird ID hints and tips. By the end of the season, there were nearly 800 subscribers to the alerts.



I so enjoyed this - will you be sending out more emails like this as time passes and more migrants come in?

Subscriber, Spring Migrant alerts



ENGAGING THROUGH REGULAR BRANCH NEWS

Many Branches compile e-newsletters as a way to keep in touch and stay engaged with their local membership. Circulars might focus on details of notable bird sightings, as in the case of the Central Branch monthly *Chit-chat* bird news digest and the Clyde *Grapevine* service, or may take the form of a compendium of local news and features including reminders of upcoming branch events, trip reports, details of environmental developments or initiatives, articles from contributors, and other interesting snippets. Stewartry, Central, Lothian and Fife Branches all publish this form of local digest.

OUR MEMBERS – THE BEATING HEART OF THE CLUB

Growing our membership base is crucial to enabling the Club to continue its work, not only in terms of subscription fees helping to finance our investment in ornithological activities but also to secure a community of experts to draw upon to help deliver our charitable aims and to be a captive audience for us to inspire and equip with knowledge and skills that will ultimately benefit Scotland's birds.

ACHIEVEMENTS & PERFORMANCES (CONT)

SOC membership was buoyant and showed the highest level of new subscriptions for several years at 287. With cancellations falling slightly on the previous year, the result was a significant net gain in the total number of members (counting joint and family subscriptions as two people) and reached 3,532 by the end of the financial year (3,414 in 2020-21). This sustained upward trajectory reflects the continued hard work to promote the Club, on social media (both at a Club and branch level), via our popular Guided Walks courses, and via members' word of mouth to family and friends. We were also delighted to have 28 gift memberships and welcomed back 17 past members who decided to re-join.

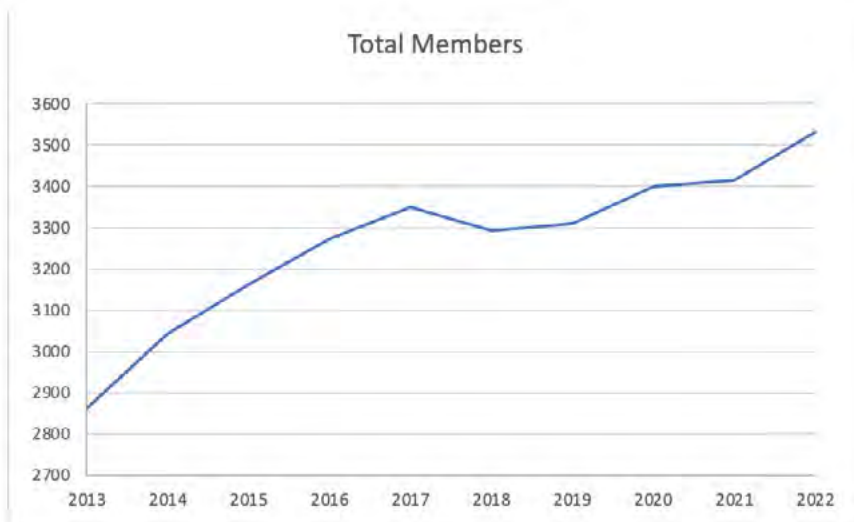


Figure 2. Total number of members (where joint and family subscriptions are counted as two members) in the 12 months to 31 March

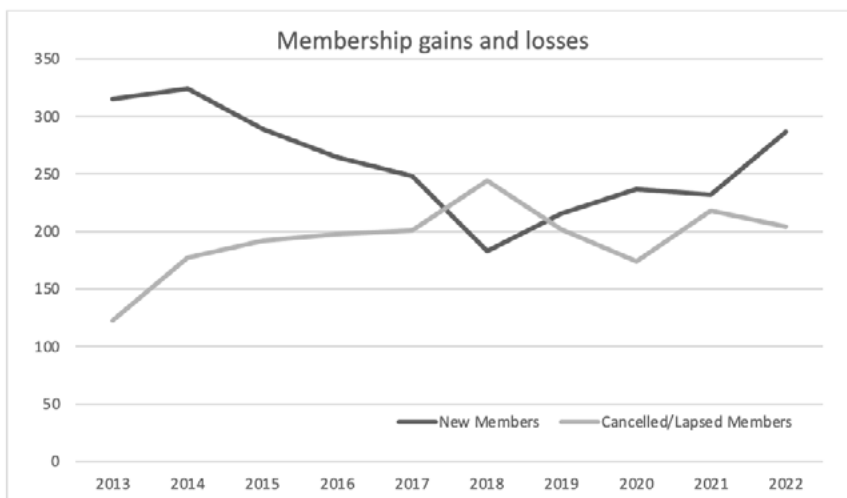


Figure 3. Number of new and cancelled/lapsed memberships in the 12 months to 31 March



ACHIEVEMENTS & PERFORMANCES (CONT)



Caithness Bird Group returning happy from Stroma after confirming breeding of European Storm Petrels for the first time in the county. Photo by Julian Smith.

PROMOTING THE CONSERVATION OF BIRDS AND THEIR HABITATS IN SCOTLAND

CAITHNESS BRANCH CONFIRM BREEDING STORM PETRELS IN THE REGION, FOR THE FIRST TIME



In 2020, Caithness Bird Group (the Caithness branch of the SOC) welcomed a grant from the Seabird Group to make a visit by boat to a group of islands off the north Sutherland coast, including Eilean nan Ron, Eilean Iosal, Neave/Coomb Island and the Rabbit Islands, to survey breeding seabirds. These are all locations that were yet to be counted as part of the current national seabird census (Seabirds Count).

“From a deferred 2020 trip, postponed owing to COVID-19, Jean Maclean kindly took us aboard her boat from Skerry and gave us a fascinating history of the islands as we travelled around them. During the first trip, we circumnavigated Eilean nan Ron, Eilean Iosal and Neave/Coombes. A flock of mixed Arctic and Common Terns lifted off one of the skerries, which was a nice surprise, presumably moved in to breed from another site since Seabird 2000. Another surprise was seeing that the Cormorant colony had expanded on Eilean Iosal from 20 apparently occupied nests (‘AON’) to 55. Shags also seem to be doing well with 110 AON recorded during our visit, a 224% increase on the 34 AON recorded during Seabird 2000!”

ACHIEVEMENTS & PERFORMANCES (CONT)

The same could not be said for Fulmars, with a 61% decline from 1309 to 509 apparently occupied sites.

On the second day, we surveyed the Rabbit Islands, three small uninhabited islands in Tongue Bay. Whilst waiting at the Skerray harbour, Risso's Dolphins fed offshore with Gannets plunging nearby. Shortly after leaving, a Harbour Porpoise swam past the boat. As with the previous islands, the Rabbit Islands' Shag population has increased since the Seabird 2000 count of nine AON to 23. Interestingly, one of the first-summer Shags roosting on the rocks had a white darvic and had been ringed on the Isle of May by CEH in 2020 and was the first sighting away from the May. The Great Black-backed Gull appears to have remained stable. However, as with the other islands, the Fulmar population has declined by 75% from 657 to 164 apparently occupied sites."

The second part of the grant money was used by the group to visit Stroma, an island off the north Caithness coast, to search for breeding European Storm Petrels. It has long been suspected that Storm Petrels breed on the island but that has never been proven. They breed on many of the other small surrounding islands in the Pentland Firth, including Muckle Skerry, Switha and Swona, so why not Stroma?

"Seven of us, armed with playback tapes each loaded with a standardised Storm Petrel song/call headed off to Stroma from Gill's Bay. With Stroma having plenty of disused buildings, old walls, boulder beaches and cairns, there was a lot of habitat to cover, but we divided the island into three sections and began our search. After an hour, it was exciting, and a relief, to hear that the first Storm Petrel had responded to a tape in a disused quarry area on the east of the island. Shortly afterwards, another responded from a crag on the cliff, and once we had an indication of their rough habitat preferences, we concentrated our efforts on the coastal locations, with no 'inland' responses heard from the walls and buildings. By the end of the day, we elicited ten responses from different occupied burrows, much to the delight of some members that had not heard a Storm Petrel before. Given the habitat around the island and many good petrel-smelling burrows and crevices, it is suspected that many more are breeding on the island".

DOING SOMETHING POSITIVE FOR BIODIVERSITY AND THE CLIMATE EMERGENCY

In 2021, SOC Fife Branch donated £500 to Crail Community Trust towards the restoration of Kilminning Coast Nature Reserve, a wildlife oasis with great potential, which sits amid the industrial farmland in the East Neuk of Fife. The branch's donation is being used to help restore the site's natural environment, to benefit people, birds and other wildlife. Although covered in a large part by tarmac left over from its use as an airfield, trees and shrubs have begun to take over, making Kilminning a magnet for migrant birds, as one of the only bits of wooded habitat on Fife Ness. The site is well known to birders and gets scarce migrants regularly such as Red-backed Shrike, Barred Warbler, Greenish Warbler, Red-breasted Flycatcher and Rosefinch. It occasionally gets spectacular rarities like the long-staying Eastern Olivaceous Warbler a few years ago and this year's Siberian Thrush.



ACHIEVEMENTS & PERFORMANCES (CONT)



WORKING TOGETHER TO IDENTIFY RESTORATION POTENTIAL IN NORTH-EAST SCOTLAND

Lowland peatlands and mosses are an important feature of the landscape in North-east Scotland, with over 100 found within the region. Single visits were made to 84 sites (3724 ha) by RSPB Scotland and others in 1995 – 2000, to document their habitats and birdlife. Seventy-six bird species were recorded, with Curlew being one of the most widespread. Since the recolonisation of the area by breeding Common Cranes in 2012, focus has once again been placed on these priority habitats. Most are degraded and although some habitat restoration work has recently been carried out at key sites, uptake has been slow, despite the availability of funding. An ambitious plan by RSPB Scotland and SOC North-East Scotland Branch to re-survey a selection of these sites was implemented in summer 2021, to document changes and identify sites with restoration potential. In total, 46 sites (2305 ha) were revisited, using the same methodology as in the earlier surveys. Second visits were made to around 50% of sites, primarily to contribute to a Butterfly Conservation project on Large Heath butterflies. Eighty-four bird species were recorded, along with seven mammal and 14 butterfly species.

LONG-TERM SURVEY SITE IN CENTRAL SCOTLAND PRODUCES 'LITTLE' RESULT

Branch Secretary, Neil Bielby, continued to carry out monthly surveys of the birds (and other taxa) at the Howietoun Fishery & Old Sauchiemill Nature Sanctuary on behalf of the Club. The highlight from these visits was the first Little Owl record for the Upper Forth on the 9 September 2021. This, along with three other new species, takes the total number of species recorded at the site since April 2019 to 82.

SUCCESS IN THE FIGHT FOR SCOTLAND'S NATURE!

May 2021 saw the second phase of the *Fight for Scotland's Nature* campaign, launched in 2018 by Scottish Environment LINK. In May, LINK included a new e-action asking people to support the call for the Scottish government to set legally binding targets for the recovery of Scotland's nature by writing a short message about why nature matters to them.

The Club also added its voice to an open letter, again coordinated by LINK, calling for nature recovery targets in Scotland. The letter was signed by 34 other organisations and was published by *The Scotsman* in June 2021, alongside a prominent article reporting on the letter.



The nature and climate emergencies go hand in hand and must be tackled together. Restoring our natural habitats and increasing our wildlife populations on land and at sea will help to limit the effects of climate change, helping to safeguard Scotland's nature and its people and contributing to global efforts to protect the planet for everyone.

Excerpt from open letter co-signed by SOC President, Dr Ian Bainbridge, to *The Scotsman* newspaper, June 2021



ACHIEVEMENTS & PERFORMANCES (CONT)

The campaign worked! The e-action resulted in more than 1,200 people writing messages to Scotland's Minister for Environment and Land Reform Màiri McAllan about why nature matters to them. You can read a selection of the messages at <https://myalbum.com/album/7wNDTRSmrSJC>.

In August 2021, the newly formed SNP-Green Scottish government committed to setting targets for nature restoration in a Natural Environment Bill to be introduced in 2023-24. Green MSP Lorna Slater now leads on nature recovery targets as Minister for Green Skills, Circular Economy and Biodiversity.



It's great to see this issue given prominence at a ministerial level...It's thanks to all the people and organisations who've supported the call for targets over the last three years that we've got this far.

Miriam Ross, Scottish Environment LINK, September 2021





ACHIEVEMENTS & PERFORMANCES (CONT)

PROVIDING A FOCUS FOR INFORMATION RELATING TO THE STUDY OF ORNITHOLOGY

We are Scotland's hub for information on ornithology, providing vital resources for enthusiasts and researchers doing important work on the study of birds and their conservation and protection. We do this most visibly through the SOC library, our publications, conferences, and the website.

MAINTAINING OUR EXTENSIVE LIBRARY, ARCHIVES AND SECOND-HAND BOOK SHOP

Staff at Waterston House were pleased to fully welcome back visitors to browse and borrow books from the Club's extensive collection during the reporting year.

The Archive continued to provide material for researchers, and the library itself offered a relaxing, pleasant environment in which to sit, read and study. New books continued to be added to the collection, mostly through publishers' review copies, although also from donations, which, together with our journal exchanges and subscriptions, allow us to provide up-to-the-minute ornithological information and publications to visitors.

“A few weeks ago, I finally got to the [center] at Aberlady. What a pleasure to see the wonderful building and the library in such excellent shape and organization.”

Jameson, New Hampshire, USA, November 2021



Recordings from the SOC audio collection have been used by the National Library of Scotland (NLS) and featured in a podcast series from the NLS and the *Scotland's Sounds* network. The clips in [Unlocked – Episode 2 – Environment](#) (8 September 2021) included a soundscape with Redwing singing and, rather more extraordinarily, a Red Grouse heartbeat. Recordings were also broadcast in the 2021 *Take One Action* film festival, where the cinema viewing of the film *Living Proof – A Climate Story* was bookended by an SOC soundtrack.

ACHIEVEMENTS & PERFORMANCES (CONT)

The Club is extremely grateful to all those who kindly donated books. Any titles that were not required for the library were added to our second-hand book stock for the shop at Waterston House. In February, we ran a half price sale to help to turn over stock, which was well received by visitors. Sales of second-hand books raised £4,560.33 (excludes Gift Aid that will be claimed in the next financial year) for Club funds in the reporting year



In something of a milestone, the Library Committee held its 100th meeting in February, albeit via video conference on Zoom.

SCOTTISH BIRDS – THE JEWEL IN THE CLUB’S CROWN

The journal contains great quality well researched articles and is the reason I joined SOC in the first place.

Having such a high-quality publication is rare nowadays. This is to be commended. It really is a beautiful journal.

The Club’s quarterly journal is regarded as the leading authority on Scottish ornithology. One of the great strengths of the publication is the diversity of its content, with each issue covering research papers and notes, birding articles and observations, and Club news, views and quirky snippets.

Twenty-seven peer-reviewed papers and notes on a wide range of original ornithological research and observations were published in *Scottish Birds* during the period, including, for example, notes on aerial surveys of Gannet colonies, changing distribution and habitat choice in breeding waders, and river breeding Red-throated Divers, plus 29 accounts of rarities, with highlights such as the Hudsonian Godwit on the Eden Estuary (Fife, November 2020), the Rose-breasted Grosbeak on Tiree (September 2021), and Western Orphean Warbler in Highland (October 2020). We also detailed occurrences of two UK firsts – the Fair Isle and Shetland Long-legged Buzzard (September 2019) and the Ruby-crowned Kinglet on Barra (November 2020).

As an example of the diversity of content, issue one of volume 42 included papers on the aging and sexing of Snowy Owls, Merlin breeding phenology, roosting Grey Wagtails, Arctic Skua passage, Taiga Bean Goose tracking, Scottish Crossbills, an influx of Grey Phalaropes and much more. There continues to be something for everyone in each issue of *Scottish Birds*, and we thank all of those who have contributed papers, notes, articles and photographs and as such, continued to ensure the journal’s high standard of readable and relevant content.

The latest [Scottish Birds] is first class. It is excellent how you keep up the quality and the balance.

Ken Shaw, SB contributor and Fife member



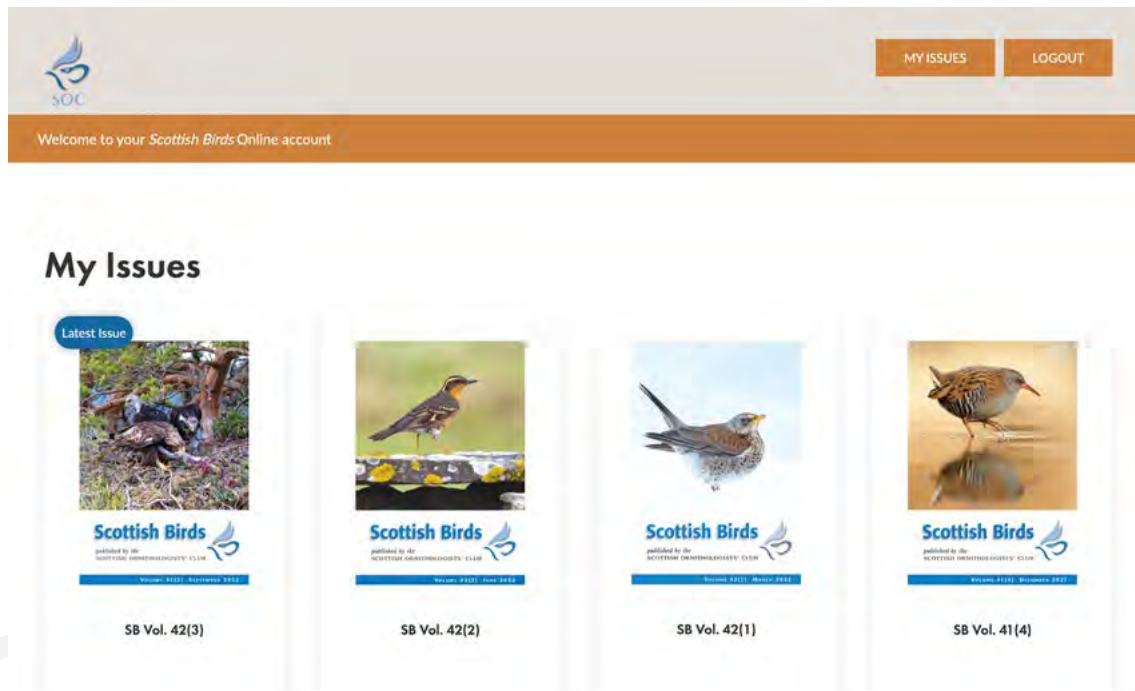
ACHIEVEMENTS & PERFORMANCES (CONT)

INTRODUCING SCOTTISH BIRDS ONLINE

From June 2021, all members were given complimentary access to *Scottish Birds Online*, a digital flipbook version of the journal hosted on the SOC website. This was the start of a one-year trial period to allow members to experience the digital version ahead of deciding whether to switch to digital-only from September 2022. Overall, there was a positive response to the online publication, with a poll of members in January pointing to a relatively high level of uptake of a digital-only subscription. In addition to feedback and suggestions regarding the online publication, members used the survey to provide more general feedback on the journal.

In January 2022, the SOC Finance Committee met to discuss subscription rates and recommended to Council at trustees' meeting in March that membership fees be increased, in light of increased costs as well as subscription rates having remained at the same level over a prolonged period (unchanged since 2017) despite a rise in inflation. Having a digital offering available, at a reduced rate compared to the print version, gave many members a way to avoid the subscription rate increase that Council agreed.

The Club also continued to host the popular [Online Scottish Bird Report](#) on the SOC website, a constantly updated and freely accessible database of birds observed in Scotland. The database now holds over 180,000 species records from more than 700 bird reports, local avifaunas and other publications.



ACHIEVEMENTS & PERFORMANCES (CONT)

THE HOOT – A QUARTERLY DIGEST OF FASCINATING FACTS

Compiled by SOC Librarian and Communications Officer, Rosie Filipiak, The Hoot continued to interest, inform and enthuse readers. Popular items over the year included a feature on the impressive longevity records of Scottish birds, the first results of analyses of the 2020 auk wrecks, and factors influencing Moorhen mate choice. Images from the Club's online photo gallery were used to bring many of the stories in the digest to life.

“An amazing selection of fascinating bits and pieces, most of it new to me, and all very interesting and well put together!”

“Thank you. This always makes enjoyable, interesting reading. The compilers are to be warmly congratulated and thanked for their efforts.”

SOC WEBSITE – PORTAL TO ALL THINGS SCOTTISH BIRDS

The Club's multifaceted website continued to stand the test of time and welcomed new visitors from around the world, as well as attending to the needs of returning users. Nearly 70,000 individuals visited the platform across the reporting year, a 23% increase on the previous period. Among the most popular pages, in number of views, were the [Home page](#), [Events](#) (up by 200%), and the [Online Scottish Bird Report](#).

The platform acts as channel of communication for members and the wider birdwatching community to find out about Club activities and news, seek out resources, develop their birding skills, and simply be inspired by Scotland's birdlife. As such, great attention is given to making each page as visually appealing and engaging as possible. We are extremely fortunate to have the support of professional wildlife photographer, Laurie Campbell, and bird artist, Darren Woodhead, both SOC members who kindly allow us to draw on their respective spell-binding images to illustrate the content on the site.

BRANCH WEBSITES – PORTAL TO LOCAL BIRDING SCENE

In January 2022, Clyde Branch celebrated the launch of the [Birds in Clyde website](#) – a fantastic resource for anyone interested in birds and birding in the Clyde area. A popular feature of the new platform is the Recent Sightings page, which catalogues the many and varied ways to keep abreast of bird sightings in the region and includes a step-by-step guide on how to record and report the birds you see and a host of useful resources associated with this.

The website was designed and developed as a result of a huge effort by Branch volunteers Emma Anderson, Zul Bhatia, Rebecca Dickson and in particular, Kevin McCormick, who was the technical and development lead, with SOC Development Officer, Jane Allison, providing project support. Much inspiration was taken from the excellent Highland Branch website www.highlandbirds.scot and the [Birds in Moray and Nairn](http://www.birdsinmorayandnairn.org) site www.birdsinmorayandnairn.org

ACHIEVEMENTS & PERFORMANCES (CONT)

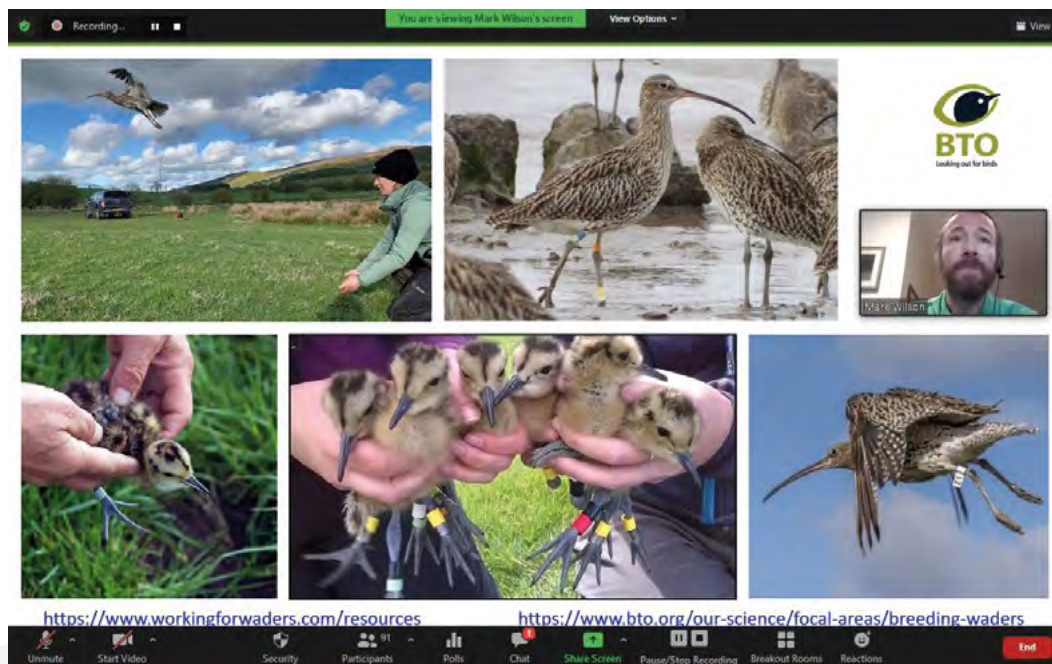


VIRTUAL SOC ANNUAL CONFERENCE, 19-21 NOVEMBER 2021

Although we left the decision to cancel our booking with the Atholl Palace Hotel as late as possible in the hope that we would be able to go ahead, the situation with the spread of COVID-19 was looking less and less encouraging so a decision was made in early autumn to organise an online event, using Zoom. A programme of online talks was organized around the theme of bird conservation and biodiversity, given the proximity of this year's event to the Glasgow COP26 meeting. An audience of over 200 people participated, enjoying insights from a wide range of speakers working in the field of conservation science, wildlife ecology and policy making: Dr Tom Finch, Dr Jen Smart, and Yvonne Stephan (RSPB), Mark Wilson (BTO Scotland) - pictured, Kenny Kortland (Cairngorms Connect) and Lauren Evans and Mark Pitt (University of Edinburgh). We also heard from SOC's Birding and Science Officer, Mark Lewis, the Scottish Investigative Support Officer for the National Wildlife Crime Unit, PC Gavin Ross, and the Climate Change and CoP Coordinator for NatureScot, Debbie Bassett.

As the Club's Constitution did not make provision for an online AGM, this was replaced by a 'Club Business' slot after the talks on the Saturday where the Club's office bearers presented the year's annual report and accounts and made members aware of temporary trustee appointments and other developments.

A full account of the conference was published in *Scottish Birds* Vol42 (1) March 2022, pp32-39.



ACHIEVEMENTS & PERFORMANCES (CONT)

SCOTTISH BIRDWATCHERS' CONFERENCE, 19 MARCH 2022, ELGIN TOWN HALL

There was a real air of rejuvenation on the morning of this year's BTO/SOC spring conference; the sun shone on Elgin, the local gulls were getting down to the serious business of establishing themselves on their rooftop territories, and we were getting together in person for the first time since the pandemic. The theme was northern coasts and seas, and Elgin Town Hall felt like a perfect location, with the speakers competing with the Herring, Common, and Lesser Black-backed Gulls outside. This was partly due to the fact that the windows and doors were wide open, as if the audience of 120 masked faces wasn't enough to remind us that although we were heading in the right direction, life wasn't back to normal just yet.

Adding to the feeling of renewal, we were delighted to welcome, and indeed be welcomed by, Ruth Briggs, SOC's new president. Opening conference was Ruth's first official duty as SOC president, on behalf of the host SOC branch, Moray Bird Club, and BTO Scotland. This was closely followed by her second presidential task – chairing the first session of talks, with Colin Moffat leading the way and setting the scene. Colin's frank and realistic message was delivered with enough energy and enthusiasm to keep the audience going all day. Colin's presentation was followed by talks on tracking Arctic Skuas (Liz Humphries, BTO Scotland), Curlew studies (Bob Swann, Highland Ringing Group - HRG), the migrations of Greenshank and Wood Sandpiper (Ron Summers, HRG), the birdwatcher's year in Spey Bay (Martin Cook, Moray Bird Club), reminisces of seabird work on Fair Isle (Roy Dennis, Roy Dennis Wildlife Foundation), seabirds and plastics (Nina O'Hanlon, Environmental Research Institute, University of Highlands and Islands) and an overview of seabirds in the northern seas (Daisy Burnell, JNCC).

On the Sunday, those booked on one of the organized group outings to local hot spots enjoyed fine weather, great birding and good company.



ACHIEVEMENTS & PERFORMANCES (CONT)



INSPIRING APPRECIATION OF NATURAL HISTORY ART

Our art gallery, named after wildlife artist Donald Watson, is one of the jewels of Waterston House. It's a favoured venue for many of the UK's leading wildlife artists, all with a shared love of depicting the natural world.

The reporting period saw a return to “almost normal” in the gallery at Waterston House. With appropriate measures in place to ensure the safety of staff and visitors, we presented nine exhibitions over the period. These showed a diverse mix of artists, including well-known exhibitors as well as new talent and new media, from outdoor sculptures to graphic stories and tapestry.

One of the highlights of the year was the first extensive exhibition of outdoor sculptures, which showed in our garden throughout the summer. Created by Andrea Geile, the large-scale pieces fitted extremely well with the wild garden, being themselves inspired by botanical form and rendered in weathered corten steel.

Taking place at the same time in the gallery, the ‘Insectarium’ exhibition was also breaking new ground. Organised in collaboration with the Society of Scottish Artists (SSA), this show presented selected works created by artists based in Scotland on the theme of insects. We benefitted from the support of the SSA in organising and promoting the exhibition and we were also grateful to National Museums Scotland for its support.

Together these two exhibitions brought us to the attention of a new audience interested in contemporary art. Also noteworthy was ‘Song Lines’ by Val O’Regan. This short show, which had postponed by the second COVID-19 lockdown, was inspired by the SOC sound archive. Val’s work managed the seemingly impossible task of translating the evocative sounds from the archive into a visual experience.

During the year, we were pleased to show work by established artists including Darren Woodhead, Derek Robertson, Claire Harkess and John Threlfall. New to the gallery were Adele Pound, whose graphic stories inspired by wildlife delighted visitors, and brothers Ed and James Harrison, whose ‘Under the Skin’ exhibition featured UV-sensitive prints to (literally) shine a light on extinction.

This range of creativity and skill inspired and attracted visitors to the centre, including local school children on their first outing since the pandemic. Social media continued to be a key driver here; the Club’s Instagram account (1,162 followers, up 29% on last year) is predominantly focused on, and well-suited to, promoting the exhibitions and posts consistently enjoy a high level of engagement.

Thanks to the exceptional contribution made by some of our established exhibitors, the exhibitions also made a considerable financial contribution to Club funds during the year. The Online Art Shop generated additional welcome revenue as well as allowing us to communicate the ethos of the gallery and wildlife art in general to a wider audience and to Club members too far away from Waterston House to visit the gallery.

ACHIEVEMENTS & PERFORMANCES (CONT)





FINANCIAL REVIEW

The Club generated a deficit for the year of £59,390 (2021: surplus of £102,004). Total income amounted to £274,655 (2021: £206,625), of which £Nil (2021: £Nil) was related to restricted projects and £274,655 (2021: £206,625) to unrestricted funds. The deficit position is slightly offset by the gain in value of investments of £17,168 (see Note 9, p58) for the year. Excluding this, the Club had an operational deficit of £76,558 (2021: £8,808).

Once again, it is tricky to compare the results of the current year, when the Club's activities were more in line with normal levels, with those in the prior year, which were impacted by continuing restrictions relating to COVID-19. This year, membership subscriptions were slightly up again, Waterston House was open to a much greater extent throughout the financial year, and other popular activities, such as the bird identification skills walks, resumed. It is worth making mention of the return of art exhibitions, in particular the ever-popular Darren Woodhead, and the huge success of optics demonstrations, both bringing in substantial revenues during the year. Once again, the Club is extremely grateful for the support of members and received some very generous donations, in line with the previous year. This year, we started to reap the benefits of having registered the Club on the EasyFundraising platform in February. Members can sign up easily to support the SOC, with any purchases made through [EasyFundraising](#), which accesses many high street retailers, resulting in a small percentage donation to the Club. This raised funds of £148 in the current year.

With a return to business as usual, certain expenses, which were reduced over the last couple of years, have returned to normal levels. Salary costs are higher with a return to full staffing levels and the Club has incurred a number of maintenance costs now that work has been possible, which would have otherwise been incurred over the previous year or two. Inevitably, due to many economic factors that affect us all, overhead costs are increasing, and this has had a direct effect on the Club's bottom line. There is little prospect of this changing in the short term; in fact, costs are likely to increase further as inflation rises.

Although the Club gratefully received an additional COVID-19 grant from East Lothian Council during the year, it was much lower than support received during 2020/21.

At 31 March 2022, the market value of investments held was £549,516 (2021: £549,057). Investment income from dividends was slightly down from last year at £11,356 (2021: £13,534). The Club's investment manager is only predicting a modest increase in dividend income levels in the coming year and turbulence in the markets, due to the war in Ukraine and other economic factors, which will continue to affect market values. Due to rising costs, it will be necessary to realise some of the portfolio at certain times during the coming financial year.

At the balance sheet date, the unrestricted reserves were £816,242 (2021: £882,111), including designated funds of £366,323 (2021: £371,051), with £636,474 (2021: £629,995) in restricted funds.

INVESTMENT POLICY AND PERFORMANCE

In 2014, SOC Council appointed Brewin Dolphin as investment managers under their discretionary managed scheme. Under this scheme, Brewin Dolphin is responsible for the investment decisions, guided by SOC's investment policy. Brewin Dolphin continues to manage investments on behalf of the Club. The Hon. Treasurer meets annually with Brewin

FINANCIAL REVIEW (CONT)



Dolphin to review the stocks held on the Club's behalf. Broadly, the Club seeks to support ethical and environmental enterprises and not to invest in anything that conflicts with the SOC's aims and objectives. Brewin Dolphin is entrusted to implement this policy, to the best of its ability, given the complex nature of some investment funds. The performance of investment managers is formally reviewed annually, although a report on the performance of Club investments is received on a quarterly basis.

The SOC is reliant on membership subscriptions, sales, and donations for its activities. Investment assets are held as reserves. The SOC seeks to produce the best financial return within an acceptable level of risk, which is reviewed annually.

The investment objective for the long-term reserves is to generate a return in excess of inflation over the long term, whilst generating an income to support the on-going activities of the Club.

The investment objective for the short-term reserves is to preserve the capital value with a minimum level of risk. Assets should be readily available to meet unanticipated cash flow requirements.

The value of investment holdings at 31 March 2022 was £549,516 (2021: £549,057). Although there was a sharp fall in market values globally in the first quarter of 2022, due to the ongoing conflict in Ukraine and the uncertainty this causes, there had been a steady increase in the value of the SOC portfolio during the nine months prior to this. Therefore, the market value at 31 March 2022 is slightly higher than a year ago. The chart below displays the three-year performance of the Club's investments against the benchmark agreed with Brewin Dolphin.

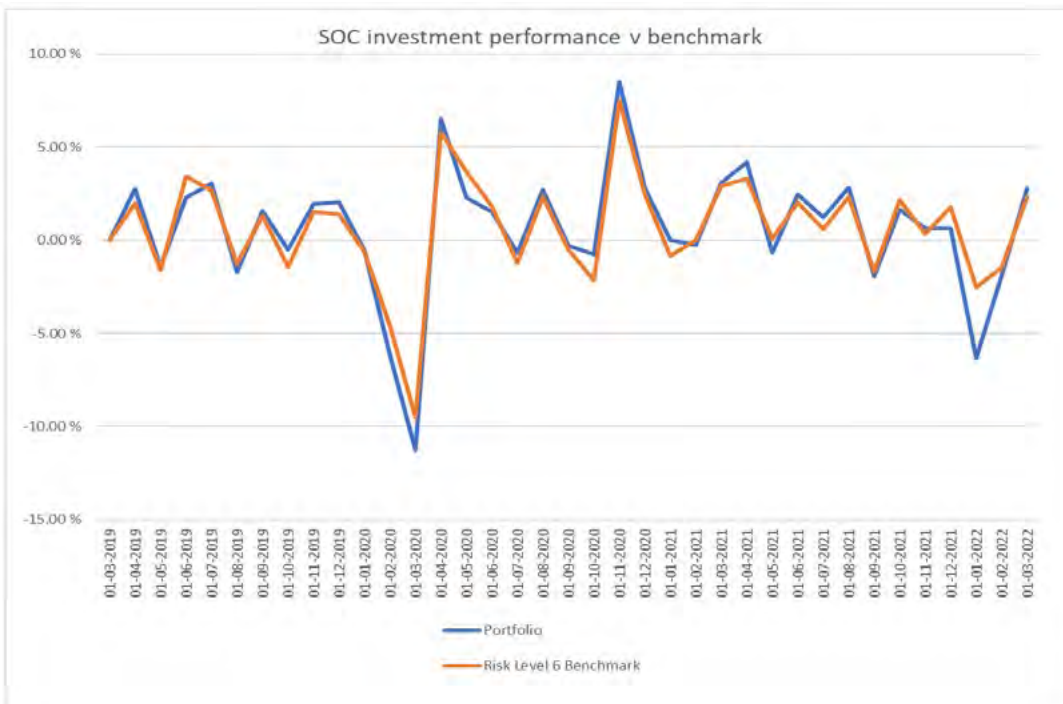


Figure 4. SOC investment performance

FINANCIAL REVIEW (CONT)



RESERVES POLICY

The Club's total funds are comprised of restricted funds and endowments and unrestricted funds.

Restricted funds include the property endowment fund which is held to ensure the existence of a Centre for Ornithology in Scotland and also an endowment fund (of which a proportion is restricted).

Examples of unrestricted funds include our general fund and the proportion of the endowment fund that is not restricted.

Unrestricted Reserves are that part of the Club's unrestricted funds that are freely available to spend on any of our charitable activities. At present, there are no short-term requirements in respect of capital items that cannot be covered by current bank balances.

The funds available for reserves are all unrestricted funds less Fixed Assets (building, furniture etc.) or funds that are "designated" within the unrestricted funds. An example of the latter being the *Birds of Scotland* (BS3) Fund, which is designated specifically to be spent on ornithological publications, as approved by the BS3 Fund Committee.

Based on the definitions above, the Target level of Reserves for the Club is set at £239,979. This is the amount that should be readily available to meet any unanticipated falls in income streams and/or unanticipated expenditure. It is a sum that, at present, would cover eight months of Club expenditure.

RISK MANAGEMENT

Council maintains a comprehensive register (initiated in 2015/16) of the various risks that the Club needs to manage. In 2018/19, the Strategy Group, a subset of Council, undertook a review of the Risk Register and reported to Council that changes to the Club's governance structure had resulted in a strengthening of risk management processes and an enhanced awareness of legislative requirements affecting the organisation generally.

The Strategy Group was able to reconvene in early 2022, and once again has undertaken a review of the Risk Register. Further work has been carried out on documenting mitigation of those risks that the Group has assessed to be of the highest combinations of impact and likelihood. Strategy Group reported to Council that these higher risks are currently being managed appropriately and that reviews will be conducted annually, with the updated Risk Register being reported to Council for discussion and approval.

FINANCIAL REVIEW (CONT)



Examples of risks identified include:

Risk	Potential effect	Mitigated by
Personal safety of staff while working alone (at Waterston House or elsewhere)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potential harm to individuals and consequent impact on abilities to work as planned • Breach of Health & Safety regulations 	There is a lone working policy for anyone who is doing this. Staff rotas in place to limit occasions when this happens.
Inadequate public liability insurance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potential for Club to be sued • Costs and other resources involved in any case • Reputational implications 	Public liability insurance cover is in place and is reviewed annually
Loss of key funding: e.g. from declining membership, sales, etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inability to maintain current range of outputs • Inability to achieve objectives to desired standards • Club 'recession'; reduction in reserves ultimately unsustainable; longer-term trend towards insolvency 	Income levels reported to Management Committee and Council regularly. Membership subs reviewed by Finance Committee every two years and approved by Council. Sales of goods etc monitored by Management Committee.
Phishing/hacking/malware attack on bank/WorldPay account logins, website or Twitter/Facebook accounts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial exposure, implications • Reputational damage • Costs of rectifying damage 	Firewalls in place. Staff awareness and training. Use of restricted logins.



OUR FUTURE PLANS

Last year's Annual Report noted that the Club's Strategic Planning Group, comprising six Trustees, would reconvene during 2022 to progress forward plans that were necessarily delayed during the previous two years. The group, now known as the Strategy Group and intended to be a continuing part of our committee structure, meets quarterly. Its findings and advice are presented to Council for approval and development as appropriate.

Forward strategic priorities include further development and delivery of the Club's communications strategy, review of our Risk Register, strategic financial planning and more annual business planning in the context of the Club's overall Strategy. The SOC is involved in an ever-growing number of exciting and valuable initiatives – we need to ensure that we have the resources and capacity across the organization to continue to deliver these imaginatively and effectively.

Initiatives focusing on members, and potential members, from younger age groups are a priority in 2022. At a national level, SOC's partnership delivery with BTO of a weekend Scottish Bird Camp for 10-16 year-olds and winter online events for the same age group will be highlights. More locally, branches are offering mentoring opportunities for young birders and promoting the involvement of young naturalists in their meetings and events. In the longer term, we are keen to pursue shared ideas with BTO Scotland towards supporting and developing branches' interests in supporting members' skills development, both in response to demand and to promote involvement in identifying and contributing more data to national records and monitoring projects.

The Club will continue to deliver high quality communications in many formats. Maintaining social media outputs will be of ongoing importance, connecting with many members and raising awareness of SOC and Scottish birds among others. Podcasts are an ever more popular platform, which the Club can exploit, again fostering interest, entertainment and awareness as listener numbers increase. All this is alongside the traditional production of papers and reports in written form, epitomised by our high quality and popular quarterly journal *Scottish Birds*.

Everyone is aware of climate change and ways in which weather patterns and the ecology of our land and seas is impacting upon the future of our wildlife, whether that be in the form of local gains or national losses. Many members will have personal experience of changes to our bird life over recent decades, or even just over recent years. The acute effects of diseases such as avian flu can also be included as part of the current rapid changes we are witness to and affected by. SOC has a role in helping to monitor and learn as much as possible about the impacts of global and national environmental change on our birds. It will inform our strategic and local priorities for research, with others, over the foreseeable future.

Primarily, of course, we want to be a Club, delivering what members want, and want to do. Going forward, we will continue to promote interest, enjoyment, study and recording of birds, be that through art, talks, outings, conferences, training events, special projects or literature. We will be inviting members to share ideas about their current hopes, ideas and expectations from SOC in the 2020s.



STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE & MANAGEMENT

GOVERNING DOCUMENTS

During the reporting period, the SOC operated under the Charity's Constitution as a Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation (SCIO), number SC009859. No changes were made to the document. In light of the COVID-19 restrictions on gatherings, provision was made by the Government in 2020 allowing organisations to hold their Annual General Meetings in the period up to the end of March 2021 online instead of in person, irrespective of such provision in governing documents. In the case of the SOC, there is no such provision in its constitution, resulting in the 2021 AGM, which was convened in November 2021, being replaced by a 'Club Business' session at the virtual annual conference. Plans are afoot to amend the Club's constitution at the next in-person AGM (November 2022) in order to allow for virtual members' meetings in the future.

MEMBERSHIP

Membership of the SOC is open to anyone with an interest in Scottish ornithology and who is in agreement with the objectives of the Club on payment of an annual subscription. Members are entitled to voting rights. Annual subscription rates are set by Council and may be revised at Council's discretion.

We were very sad to lose several well-known figures in the Club during the year, among them SOC Honorary Member, Andrew Macmillan.

APPOINTMENT OF TRUSTEES

Council members are the Trustees and they are responsible for the management of the Club and the safeguarding of its assets. Office bearers and Elected Members are recruited to Council via its Appointments Panel, with a view to cultivating a mix of skills and experiences across a broad range of relevant disciplines. Branch Representatives are appointed via the individual branches at their local AGMs. All The Trustees are elected, appointed or co-opted in accordance with the terms of the Club's constitution.

TRUSTEES' INDUCTION AND TRAINING

New Trustees are often already familiar with the practical work of the SOC but are provided with an induction email, which offers guidance on the roles and responsibilities of being an SOC Trustee. Ongoing support and guidance is provided via the Club Administrator.

ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE

The Trustees meet regularly to oversee the operation of the Club and determine its strategic direction and policies. During the reporting year, all meetings were held via video conference, owing to COVID-19 restrictions. A scheme of delegation and reporting is in place whereby the day-to-day responsibility for operation and administration rests with the staff.

STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE & MANAGEMENT (CONT)

COUNCIL'S RESPONSIBILITIES IN RELATION TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Council is responsible for preparing an annual report and financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

The law applicable to charities in Scotland requires Council to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the Club at the end of the year and of the profit or loss for the year then ended. In preparing those financial statements, Council is 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;
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the Association will continue in business.

Council is responsible for keeping proper accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the Club and to enable it to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005 and Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006 (as amended) and the provisions of the Associations constitution. Council is also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the Club and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

Furthermore, Council is responsible for the maintenance and integrity of the Club and financial information included on the SOC website. Legislation in the United Kingdom governing the preparation and dissemination of financial statements may differ from legislation in other jurisdictions.





THANK YOU

In addition to members of Council (the 'Trustees') and its sub-committees and all those who volunteer their time to run our 15 branches, the Club depends on the support and generosity of all of our members, volunteers and donors.

We are grateful for the legacy left to the Club by long-standing member of SOC Clyde branch, Jean Denney, who passed away in April 2021.

Sincere thanks to members Les Kingstone and Dennis Morrison for their generous donations, and to all SOC supporters who kindly gave during the year using the Donate facility on the website and to individuals and families who choose to take out Life Membership.

We are grateful to Frances Cooper, David Jardine and the Estate of Daphne Peirse-Duncombe for the sizeable natural history book donations to the library/SOC bookshop and to the many other members and non-members who donated books or archive material.

We couldn't run Waterston House without our volunteers who gave of their time during this past year. Thanks to Marjorie & Mike Adams, Trish Burnet, Lesley Creamer, Eileen Henderson, Doreen and James Main, Stan da Prato, Ian Elfick (who sadly passed away July 2022), John Harrison, Margaret Hyne, Stephen Hunter, Tricia McBride, Rebecca Simpson, Jean & Bill Torrance, and Stephen Welch.

The Club's celebrated quarterly journal, Scottish Birds, would not be the much-praised publication that it is without all those individuals, members and non-members alike, who submit research papers, notes, observations, articles and rarity accounts. Thank you also to all the excellent photographers we are so fortunate to have as supporters who allow us the use of their images.

Thanks must also go to the many experts who gave up their time to provide virtual talks to our branches and at our online conferences and youth events:

Winter Talks Programme: Graham Appleton, Andrew Bielinski, Dan Brown, Will Cresswell, Stan da Prato, David Darrell-Lambert, Ben Darvill, Davide Dominoni, David Douglas, Norman Elkins, Edmund Fellowes, Sara Frost, Simon Gillings, Rick Goater, Justin Grant, Les Hatton, Angus Hogg, Kevin Kelly, Alasdair Lemon, Colin Leslie, Mark Lewis, John Love, Hywel Maggs, Scott Mayson, Helen Moncrieff, Mark Newell, Nina O'Hanlon, Rob Patchett, Christy Pototsky, Dan Puplett, Chris Rollie, Stephen Rutt, Darrell Stevens, Ron Summers, Claudia Tapia-Harris, Bruce Taylor, Rick Taylor, Rose Toney, Richard Watt, Stephen Welch, Ewan Weston, Andrew Whitehouse, Mark Wilson, Sorcha Wood.

SOC Annual Conference

Speakers: Debbie Bassett, Lauren Evans, Dr Tom Finch, Kenny Kortland, Mark Pitt, PC Gavin Ross, Dr Jennifer Smart, Yvonne Stephan, Mark Wilson. Support: Stephen Hunter

Scottish Birdwatchers' Conference

Speakers: Daisy Burnell, Martin Cook, Roy Dennis, Colin Moffat, Nina O'Hanlon, Ron Summers, Bob Swann. Local organisers: Richard Somers Cocks, Melvin Morrison. Support: Alison and Frank Ritchie, Ian Francis, Alastair Young

THANK YOU (CONT)

SOC/BTO Youth Events: Ben Darvill, Liza Cole, Charlotte Foster, Fergus Gill, Ciaran Hatsell, Jude Lane, Mark Lewis, Lucy McRobert, Nina O'Hanlon, Gus Routledge, Maggie Sheddan, Paul Stancliffe, Jenny Sturgeon, Ian Thomson, Darren Woodhead and Steve Willis.

SOC members around the country give hundreds of hours each year to monitoring birds as part of organised local and national surveys or as independent observers, submitting information that is vital to bird conservation to their Local Bird Recorders and via BirdTrack. Thank you to all those who continue to get out into the field to undertake this vital monitoring.

For their continued support and collaboration, thank you to: Artmag, BirdLine Scotland, *British Birds* BTO Scotland, East Lothian Life, JNCC, Laurie Campbell- Scottish Natural History Photographer, Mapbox, NatureScot, RSPB Scotland

Thanks to our members who have helped to raise funds for the Club when they do their online shopping. If you're not registered with the scheme, please consider doing so; it takes two minutes, doesn't cost anything, and there are almost 6000 shops that will donate to us for free every time you shop with them! For more information on how Easyfundraising works and how to register, visit www.the-soc.org.uk/support-us/easyfundraising

Finally, for their help with compiling this report, thank you to: Waterston House staff, SOC office bearers, Council and Branch committee officials, Lisa Douglas (Creative Link) and Sandra Boyle (Whitelaw Wells).

This report along with the financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the accounting policies set out in Note 1 to the accounts and comply with the SOC's constitution, the Charities and Trustees Investment (Scotland) Act 2005, the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006 (as amended) and the 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 (FRS102) (effective 1 January 2019).

Approved by Council on 11 November 2022

and signed on its behalf by Ruth Briggs (President)



REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

Charity name: Scottish Ornithologists' Club (known as 'SOC')

Charity Registration number: SC009859

Registered office & operational address

Waterston House
Aberlady
East Lothian EH32 0PY

Office bearers

President: Dr Ian Bainbridge (to February 2022), Ruth Briggs (co-opted from March 2022)

Vice-President *Birding and Science*: Jeremy Wilson

Vice-President *Management and Infrastructure*: Lesley Creamer

Secretary: David Lindgren

Treasurer: Andrew Thorpe (to May 2021), Rich Kerr (co-opted from June 2021)

Office bearers are also members of Council

Council-elected members elected at AGM (year elected/re-elected/co-opted):

Will Cresswell (2020)

Hannah Lemon (2021-co-opted)

Chris Wernham (2019)

Elected at branch AGMs:

Ayrshire – David Rackham

Borders – Neil Stratton

Caithness – Nina O'Hanlon

Central Scotland – Rick Goater

Clyde – Zul Bhatia

Dumfries – Alex Banwell

Fife – Elizabeth Irwin

Highland – Pete Gordon

Lothian – Richard Leslie

Moray – Richard Somers Cocks

North-East Scotland – Alan Knox

Orkney – Helen Aiton

Stewartry – Jeremy Brock

Tayside – Rachael Wilbourn

West Galloway – Geoff Sheppard

Honorary Presidents

Roy Dennis MBE

Honorary members

Dave Allan

Ian Andrews

Stan da Prato

Iain Gibson

Mike Harris

Angus Hogg

Andrew Macmillan (passed away
December 2021)

Vicky McLellan

Ron Summers



REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION (CONT)

Independent examiner

Louise Presslie CA
Whitelaw Wells Chartered Accountants
9 Ainslie Place
Edinburgh EH3 6AT

Solicitors

Morton Fraser LLP
Quartermile Two
2 Lister Square
Edinburgh EH3 9GL

Bankers

Royal Bank of Scotland
Edinburgh West End Office (C) Branch
142-144 Princes Street
Edinburgh EH2 4EQ

Investment advisors

Brewin Dolphin Ltd
Sixth Floor, Atria One
144 Morrison St
Edinburgh EH3 8BR

Staff

Club Administrator: Wendy Hicks
Development Officer: Jane Allison
Birding and Science Officer: Mark Lewis (from June 2021)
Finance Officer: Mairead Lyons
Membership Officer & Website Editor: Kathryn Cox
Art Exhibitions Coordinator: Laura Gressani
Librarian and Communications Officer: Rosie Filipiak
Waterson House Visitor Experience Officer: Shenaz Khimji
Contract Bird ID Skills Trainer: Scott Paterson



CLUB COMMITTEES

Management Committee

Chair and Vice-President *Management and Infrastructure* – Lesley Creamer, Secretary – David Lindgren, Treasurer – Rich Kerr, Library Chair – Alan Knox (ex officio), members – Ian Bainbridge (President, ex officio, until November 2021). Fiona McLean, Anne Sinclair

Finance Committee

Chair and Treasurer – Rich Kerr, members – Alex Banwell, David Lindgren, Mairead Lyons (Finance Officer, ex officio)

Birding and Science Committee

Chair and Vice-President *Birding and Science* – Prof Jeremy Wilson, members – Ian Andrews, Ian Bainbridge (President, ex officio, until November 2021), Rob Fray (SBRC), Mark Lewis (Birding and Science Officer, ex officio), Bob McGowan (Birds of Scotland Fund), Ron Summers (Research and Surveys Committee), Mike Thornton (Scottish Raptor Study Group), Chris Wernham

Scottish Birds Editorial Committee

Coordinating Editor and Chair – Harry Scott, Editor: Peer-reviewed papers – Stan da Prato (assisted by Ian Bainbridge, Mick Marquiss, Clive McKay, Will Miles and Bob Swann), Editors: News & Articles – Andrew Barker, Harry Scott and Mark Wilkinson, Maps & Graphs – Ian Andrews, Book Reviews – Nick Picozzi, Proof-readers: Ed Austin, Dr J Frank and Bridget Khursheed, Indexer: Jean Torrance

REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION (CONT)

Library Committee

Chair – Alan Knox, Archivist – Ian Elfick (passed away July 2022), members – David Clugston, Lesley Creamer, Rosie Filipiak (Librarian, ex officio), John Law, Bob McGowan

Research and Surveys Committee

Chair – Colin Corse, members – Mike Bell, Raymond Duncan, Bob Furness, Les Hatton, Ron Summers

Scottish Birds Records Committee (SBRC)

Chair – Mark Lewis, Secretary – Chris McInerny (non-voting), Bob McGowan (Museum Consultant – non-voting), members – Jim Dickson, Rob Fray, David Pullan, Chris Rodger, David Steel, Mark Warren

SBRC Scottish List Subcommittee

David Clugston, Ron Forrester, Angus Hogg, Bob McGowan, Chris McInerny, Roger Riddington

Strategy Group

Chair and President (until November 2021) – Ian Bainbridge, Elizabeth Irwin, Treasurer – Rich Kerr, Secretary – David Lindgren, Chris Wernham, Vice-President *Birding and Science* – Prof Jeremy Wilson

The Birds of Scotland Fund Committee

Co-Chairs – Bob McGowan and Chris McInerny, members – Will Cresswell (SOC Council), Jeremy Wilson (Vice-President *Birding and Science*)

BRANCH COMMITTEES

Ayrshire Chair – Brian Lennox, Vice-Chair – Andy Shand, Secretary – Anne Dick, Treasurer – John Drummond, members – Roger Hissett, Norman Lawrie, David Rackham, Tony Scott, Jim Thomson

Borders Chair – Martin Moncrieff, Secretary – Neil Stratton, Treasurer – Richard Jackson, members – Tom Brewis (to December), David Parkinson, Malcolm Ross, Harry Urquhart

Caithness Chair – Donald Omand, Vice-Chair – Julian Smith, Secretary – Nina O'Hanlon, Treasurer – Eric Maughan

Central Scotland Chair – Rick Goater, Treasurer/Secretary – Neil Bielby, members – Roger Gooch, Chris Pendlebury (ex-officio, Upper Forth Recorder), Roger Stewart, Danni Thompson (co-opted October 2021), Billy Thomson (co-opted October 2021), Ken Wilkinson

Clyde Chair – Zul Bhatia, Secretary – Ian Fulton, Treasurer – Liz Parsons, members – Emma Anderson, Rebecca Dickson, Iain Gibson, Fiona McLean, Sandy McNeil, David Palmar, Andrew Russell, Kevin Sinclair, Donald Wilson, Toby Wilson

Dumfries Chair – John Riddet, Secretary/Treasurer – Alex Banwell, members – Christine Dudgeon, Edmund Fellowes, Heather Stevenson, Robin Thomson, Andrew Turney

REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION (CONT)

Fife Chair – Elizabeth Irwin, Secretary – Caroline Gordon, Treasurer – John Irwin, members – Rob Armstrong, David Heeley, Andrew Riches

Highland Chair – Carol Miller, Secretary – Mary Galloway, Treasurer – Alister Clunas, members – Jonathan Clarke, Peter Gordon, Alex Joss, Tony Laidler, Bob McMillan, Al McNee, John Poyner (ex officio as Recorder), Susan Seright

Lothian Chair – Richard Leslie, Secretary – David Parmee, Treasurer – Stephen Hunter, members – Gillian Herbert (to February 2022), Hilary Maxfield, Gill Parmee, Mike Thornton

Moray Chair – David Law, Secretary – Alison Ritchie, Treasurer – Frank Ritchie, members – Martin Cook, Sarah Law, Melvin Morrison, Richard Somers Cocks, Alastair Young

North-East Scotland Chair – Alan Knox, Secretary – John Wills, Treasurer – Bill Craigie, Members – Hugh Addlesee, Ian Broadbent (ex officio as Recorder), Mark Lewis, Mark Sullivan

Orkney Chair – Colin Corse, Secretary/Vice-Chair/Treasurer – Helen Aiton

Stewartry Chair – Jeremy Brock, Vice-Chair – Mark Pollitt, Joint Treasurer – Leslie Fortune, Secretary/Joint Treasurer – Joan Howie, members – Graham Smith, Val Smith

Tayside Chair – Anne Reid, Treasurer – Stuart Will, Secretary – Rachael Wilbourn, members – Jon Cook, Ron Downing, Maria O'Neill, Mike Sedakat

West Galloway Chair – David McGhie, Vice-Chair – Alan Johnstone, Secretary/Treasurer – Geoff Sheppard, members – Sandra Alder, Jean Sheppard

LOCAL BIRD RECORDERS

Angus and Dundee – Jon Cook; Argyll – Jim Dickson, Assistant – Malcolm Chattwood; Ayrshire – Fraser Simpson, Assistant – Angus Hogg; Borders – David Parkinson and Martin Moncrieff; Caithness – Sinclair Manson; Clyde – Iain Gibson (passed away October 2022), Assistant – Val Wilson; Clyde Islands – Bernard Zonfrillo; Dumfries and Galloway – Paul N Collin; Fair Isle – David Parnaby (to May 2021) then Rob Fray; Fife – Graham Sparshott; Forth (Upper) – Chris Pendlebury, Assistant – Neil Bielby; Highland – John Poyner; Isle of May – Iain English; Lothian – Stephen Welch; Moray and Nairn – Martin Cook; North-East Scotland – Ian Broadbent; Orkney – Russ Neave and Emma Neave-Webb (to January 2022), then Jim Williams; Outer Hebrides – Yvonne Benting; Perth and Kinross – Scott Paterson (to December 2021) then vacant; Shetland – Rob Fray



INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT TO THE COUNCIL MEMBERS

YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2022

I report on the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2022 set out on pages 50 to 63.

Respective responsibilities of the Council members and the Independent Examiner

As described in the Council members' Report, the Council members are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements in accordance with the terms of the Charities and Trustees Investment (Scotland) Act 2005 and the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006 (as amended). The Club's Trustees consider that the audit requirements of Regulation 10(1) (a) to (c) of the Accounts Regulations do not apply. It is my responsibility to examine the financial statements as required under section 44(1) (c) of the Act and to state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

BASIS OF INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT

My examination was carried out in accordance with Regulation 11 of The Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006 (as amended). An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the Club and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts and seek explanations from you as Council members concerning such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently I do not express an audit opinion on the view given by the accounts.

Independent examiner's statement

In the course of my examination, no matter has come to my attention:

- 1) Which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements:
 - To keep accounting records in accordance with Section 44 (1) (a) of The Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005 and Regulation 4 of the 2006 Accounts Regulations (as amended); and
 - To prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with Regulation 8 of the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006 (as amended) have not been met; or
- 2) to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Louise Presslie C.A.
Whitelaw Wells Chartered Accountants
9 Ainslie Place
Edinburgh EH3 6AT

Date: 11 November 2022




STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES



For the year ended 31 March 2022

	Notes	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	2022 Total £	2021 Total £
INCOME AND ENDOWMENTS FROM:					
Donations & legacies	2	179,468	-	179,468	134,594
Charitable Activities	3	83,355	-	83,355	58,313
Other trading activities	4	80	-	80	-
Investment income	5	11,652	-	11,652	13,718
Other income – sale of assets		100	-	100	-
Total income		<u>274,655</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>274,655</u>	<u>206,625</u>
EXPENDITURE ON:					
Raising Funds	7	28,223	2,277	30,500	18,423
Charitable activities	7	320,713	-	320,713	197,010
Total expenditure		<u>348,936</u>	<u>2,277</u>	<u>351,213</u>	<u>215,433</u>
NET (LOSS) BEFORE GAINS AND LOSSES ON INVESTMENTS					
		(74,281)	(2,277)	(76,558)	(8,808)
Net gain on investments	9	8,412	8,756	17,168	110,812
NET MOVEMENT IN FUNDS		<u>(65,869)</u>	<u>6,479</u>	<u>(59,390)</u>	<u>102,004</u>
Total funds brought forward		<u>882,111</u>	<u>629,995</u>	<u>1,512,106</u>	<u>1,410,102</u>
TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD		<u><u>816,242</u></u>	<u><u>636,474</u></u>	<u><u>1,452,716</u></u>	<u><u>1,512,106</u></u>

The notes on pages 52 to 63 form part of these financial statements.

BALANCE SHEET



As at 31 March 2022

	Notes	£	2022 £	£	2021 £
FIXED ASSETS					
Tangible assets	8		826,055		835,860
Investments	9		549,516		549,057
			<hr/>		<hr/>
			1,375,571		1,384,917
CURRENT ASSETS					
Stock		9,143		10,454	
Debtors	10	21,466		22,185	
Cash at bank and in hand		73,310		100,984	
			<hr/>	<hr/>	
			103,919		133,623
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	11	(26,774)		(6,434)	
			<hr/>	<hr/>	
NET CURRENT ASSETS			77,145		127,189
			<hr/>		<hr/>
NET ASSETS			1,452,716		1,512,106
			<hr/> <hr/>		<hr/> <hr/>
FUNDS					
Unrestricted funds	12		816,242		882,111
Restricted funds	12		636,474		629,995
			<hr/>		<hr/>
			1,452,716		1,512,106
			<hr/> <hr/>		<hr/> <hr/>

The financial statements were approved by Council on 11 November 2022

And signed on their behalf by Ruth Briggs (President)

The notes on pages 52 to 63 form part of these financial statements

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES



For the year to 31 March 2022

1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES

Accounting conventions

The accounts have been prepared under the historical cost convention with items recognised at cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant notes to the accounts. The accounts have been prepared in accordance with the Charities and Trustees Investment (Scotland) Act 2005, the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006 (as amended), the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS102) (effective 1 January 2019) 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 (FRS102) (effective 1 January 2019).

The Club has taken advantage of the exemption from the requirement to prepare a Statement of Cash Flows as permitted under FRS 102 and the Charities FRS 102 SORP. The Scottish Ornithologists' Club constitutes a public benefit entity as defined by FRS102. Council considers that there are no material uncertainties about the Club's ability to continue as a going concern. Council's going concern assessment includes the expected impact of COVID-19 to the Club for a period of at least 12 months from the date of signing of these financial statements.

Significant Judgements and Estimates

The preparation of these accounts requires Council to make judgements, estimates and assumptions that affect the application of policies and reported amount of assets, liabilities, income and expenses.

Judgement and estimates are continually evaluated and are based on historical experiences and other factors, including expectation of future events that are believed to be reasonable under the circumstances.

Fixed assets

Fixed assets are included in the balance sheet at cost or at market value at the date of the gift.

Depreciation

Depreciation is charged to write off the cost less estimated residual value of assets on a straight line basis at the following rates:

- heritable properties land	0%
- buildings	1% of building cost each year
- furniture and fittings	20%
- computers and other equipment	33.33%
- solar panels	4% of initial cost each year

Heritable property – land – is not depreciated as it is considered to be increasing in value.

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES (CONT)

For the year to 31 March 2022

Investments

Under the Statement of Recommended Practice, investments are shown at market value. Unrealised gains are recognised in the statement of financial activities in the year in which they arise. Purchases are recorded at cost and disposals at their realised value.

Investment Income

Income from investments is credited in the year in which it is received.

Debtors

Debtor balances are stated at the transaction price less any impairment.

Bank and Cash

These comprise cash and balances with banks which are readily convertible into cash.

Creditors

Creditor balances are recognised where the Club has a present obligation resulting from a past event that will probably result in a transfer of funds to a third party and the amount due to settle the obligation can be measured or estimated readily.

Stock

Stock is stated at the lower of cost and net realisable value.

Income

Grant income is credited in the year to which it relates. Legacies and donations receivable are credited in the statement of financial activities when there is sufficient certainty of their receipt, and the value of incoming resources can be measured with sufficient reliability. Legacies receivable without conditions are credited to unrestricted funds; legacies receivable with the condition that they will be invested, and the income spent for the benefit of the Club are credited to the Endowment Capital Fund and the income from this fund is credited to unrestricted funds. Sales, membership and other income are recognised as the invoiced value of goods and services provided during the period to which they relate. All income is stated net of value added tax.

Expenditure

Expenditure is charged in the period to which it relates. Wherever possible, expenses are attributed directly to the category to which they relate. Where this is not possible expenses are allocated on the basis of time spent by staff on each activity.

Operating leases

Lease payments under operating leases are charged as expenses in the periods in which they are incurred.

Definition of Funds

Unrestricted funds comprise designated funds which have been set aside by the Council to fund specific future projects in the furtherance of the Club's objectives, and the general reserve. Restricted funds are funds which are subject to specific restrictions imposed by the income provider in relation to how the income can be spent.

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES (CONT)

For the year to 31 March 2022

2. DONATION & LEGACIES

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	2022 Total £	2021 Total £
Membership subscriptions	99,397	-	99,397	96,631
Donations – general	35,423	-	35,423	33,467
Legacies	1,000	-	1,000	1,500
Branches: grants	43,648	-	43,648	2,996
	<u>179,468</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>179,468</u>	<u>134,594</u>

Income from donations and legacies was £179,468 (2021: £134,594) of which £179,468 (2021: £134,594) was unrestricted and £Nil (2021: £Nil) was restricted.

3. INCOMING RESOURCES FROM CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	2022 Total £	2021 Total £
Sale of goods, except art	45,988	-	45,988	12,486
Commission on art sales	18,685	-	18,685	6,683
Conferences and events	8,501	-	8,501	(4,104)
Solar panel Feed-in-tariffs	3,181	-	3,181	3,182
Grants:				
East Lothian Council - COVID-19	7,000	-	7,000	37,000
Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme	-	-	-	3,066
	<u>83,355</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>83,355</u>	<u>58,313</u>

Income from charitable activities was £83,355 (2021: £58,313) of which £83,355 (2021: £58,313) was unrestricted and £Nil (2021: £Nil) was restricted.



NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES (CONT)

For the year to 31 March 2022

4. INCOMING FROM OTHER TRADING ACTIVITIES

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	2022 Total £	2021 Total £
Hire of Lecture room	80	-	80	-
	<u>80</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>80</u>	<u>-</u>

Income from other trading activities was £80 (2021: £Nil) of which £80 (2021: £Nil) was unrestricted and £Nil (2021: £Nil) was restricted.

5. INVESTMENT INCOME

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	2022 Total £	2021 Total £
Dividends	11,356	-	11,356	13,534
Interest received	23	-	23	12
Royalties	273	-	273	172
	<u>11,652</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>11,652</u>	<u>13,718</u>

Income from Investments was £11,652 (2021: £13,718) of which £11,652 (2021: £13,718) was unrestricted and £Nil (2021: £Nil) was restricted.

6. STAFF NUMBERS AND COSTS

	2022 Total £	2021 Total £
Wages and salaries	136,268	97,516
Social security costs	5,225	1,722
Pension costs	2,375	1,543
	<u>143,868</u>	<u>100,781</u>
Average number of employees	<u>8</u>	<u>7</u>

There were no employees with emoluments above £60,000.

Members of the editorial team were paid honoraria in lieu of expenses totalling £990 (The Honorary Treasurer and members of the editorial team were paid honoraria totalling 2021: £2,680).

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES (CONT)



For the year to 31 March 2022

7. EXPENSES

	Raising Funds £	Charitable Activities £	Trading £	Governance costs £	Total 2022 £	Total 2021 £
- Staff costs and Honoraria	10,140	124,578	10,140	-	144,858	103,461
- Library	-	756	-	-	756	250
- Subscriptions & publications	1,523	36,548	-	-	38,071	36,231
- Merchandise	-	-	27,822	-	27,822	6,491
- Mailing	1,298	1,298	-	-	2,596	1,530
- Conferences	-	7,957	-	-	7,957	(233)
- Branches	-	49,092	-	-	49,092	7,104
- Administration	379	4,656	379	-	5,414	3,937
- Independent examination	-	-	-	1,800	1,800	1,600
- Legal fees	-	-	-	1,608	1,608	3,426
- Investment manager Fees	-	4,466	-	-	-	4,466
4,410						
- Photocopies	-	2,794	-	-	2,794	2,721
- Council & Committee Expenses	-	-	-	153	153	80
- Depreciation	-	10,699	-	-	10,699	10,461
- Loss on disposal	-	-	-	-	-	4,016
- Promoting the Club	12,694	-	-	-	12,694	4,281
- Research Grants	-	14,109	-	-	14,109	7,978
Premises						
- Insurance	-	8,502	-	-	8,502	7,727
- Utilities	-	2,973	-	-	2,973	3,299
- Maintenance	-	13,639	-	-	13,639	5,366
- Miscellaneous	-	1,210	-	-	1,210	1,297
	<u>30,500</u>	<u>278,811</u>	<u>38,341</u>	<u>3,561</u>	<u>351,213</u>	<u>215,433</u>

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES (CONT)

For the year to 31 March 2022

8. TANGIBLE ASSETS

	Land £	Building £	Furniture & Fittings £	Computers & Equipment £	Solar Panels £	Total £
Cost						
Balance at 13 March 2021	88,125	872,347	586	2,590	22,900	986,548
Additions in year	-	-	-	894	-	894
Balance at 31 March 2022	88,125	872,347	586	3,484	22,900	987,442
Depreciation						
Balance at 31 March 2021	-	139,454	211	1,863	9,160	150,688
Changed in the Year	-	8,724	140	919	916	10,699
Balance at 31 March 2022	-	148,178	351	2,782	10,076	161,387
Net book value						
At 31 March 2022	88,125	724,169	235	702	12,824	826,055
At 31 March 2021	88,125	732,893	375	727	13,740	835,860



NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES (CONT)

For the year to 31 March 2022



8. TANGIBLE ASSETS (CONT)

Library

The Club maintains a library of books and periodicals relating to ornithology. This library has been acquired by purchase and by donation over the lifetime of the Club and is recognised as a significant asset for the study of ornithology in Scotland.

Due to the difficulty in valuing gifts and of ascertaining expenditure in past years, the library is not capitalised in the accounts; it is treated as a heritage asset.

9. INVESTMENTS

	2022	2021
	Total	Total
	£	£
Market value at start of financial year	549,057	448,737
Additions at cost	129,529	73,445
Disposal proceeds	(146,238)	(83,937)
Net gains on revaluation at financial year end	17,168	110,812
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Market value at financial year end	549,516	549,057
	<hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/>
Historical cost as at financial year end	449,046	419,542

All investments are listed on the UK stock exchange.

All investments are carried at their fair value. Investments are all traded in quoted public markets, primarily the London Stock Exchange. The basis of fair value for quoted investments is equivalent to the market value, using the bid price. Asset sales and purchases are recognised at the date of trade at cost (that is their transaction value).

The significance of the financial instruments to the ongoing financial sustainability of the Club is considered in the financial review and investment policy and Council's Annual Report.

The main form of financial risk faced by the Club is that of volatility in equity markets and investment markets due to wider economic conditions, the attitude of the investors to investment risk, and changes in sentiment concerning equities and within particular sectors and sub sectors, particularly as the Club is reliant on the dividend yield in part to finance its work.

The Club has managed the investment risks by retaining expert advisors and operating an investment policy that provides a high degree of diversification of holdings within investment asset classes that are quoted on recognised stock exchange. The Club does not make use of derivatives and other similar complex financial instruments.

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES (CONT)

For the year to 31 March 2022

10. DEBTORS

	2022	2021
	Total	Total
	£	£
Trade debtors	230	135
Other debtors	21,236	22,050
	<u>21,466</u>	<u>22,185</u>

11. CREDITORS: Amounts falling due within one year

	2022	2021
	Total	Total
	£	£
Trade creditors	17,996	1,285
Tax and other social security	2,922	1,550
Accruals	5,856	3,599
	<u>26,774</u>	<u>6,434</u>



NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES (CONT)

For the year to 31 March 2022

12. FUNDS

	Balance at 31 March 2021 £	Income £	Expenses £	Loss/gains on investments £	Transfers £	Balance at 31 March 2022 £
Unrestricted funds						
General Fund	511,060	226,464	(285,246)	-	(2,359)	449,919
Endowment Fund (unrestricted)	275,164	-	(2,188)	8,412	-	281,388
Endowment Fund Research Grant	3,600	-	(2,359)	-	2,359	3,600
<i>Birds of Scotland</i> (BS3) Fund	40,361	71	(11,750)	-	-	28,682
Unrestricted Funds Held by branches	51,926	48,120	(47,393)	-	-	52,653
	<u>882,111</u>	<u>274,655</u>	<u>(348,936)</u>	<u>8,412</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>816,242</u>
Restricted funds						
Property Endowment Fund	334,727	-	-	-	-	334,727
Endowment Fund (restricted)	286,395	-	(2,277)	8,756	-	292,874
Restricted Funds held by branches	8,873	-	-	-	-	8,873
	<u>629,995</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>(2,277)</u>	<u>8,756</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>636,474</u>
Total	<u>1,512,106</u>	<u>274,655</u>	<u>(351,213)</u>	<u>17,168</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>1,452,716</u>

Fund purposes:
Unrestricted Funds:

Endowment Fund which has been established in the past mostly by legacies received, held in investments.

Endowment Fund research grant is a fund put aside by Council each year to provide research and survey grants.

Birds of Scotland Fund is a designated fund for spending on publications.

Other unrestricted funds are held by Branches. Total branch funds include restricted funds listed in Note 13.

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES (CONT)

For the year to 31 March 2022
12. FUNDS
Restricted Funds:

Property Endowment Capital Fund which was established by a donation of property is used to provide and maintain a centre for ornithology in Scotland.

Endowment Fund which has been established previously, mostly by legacies received. A proportion is a capital endowment with conditions allowing only the income to be spent so is listed here in restricted funds, the remaining has been reserved by Council to be spent at their discretion and forms part of the reserves of the Club and list in unrestricted funds

Other restricted funds, received for specific projects, are held by Branches. Total Branch funds include restricted funds listed in Note 13.

	Balance at 31 March 2020 £	Income £	Expenses £	Loss/gains on investments £	Transfers £	Balance at 31 March 2021 £
Unrestricted funds						
General Fund	508,331	200,549	(196,708)	-	(1,112)	511,060
Endowment Fund (unrestricted)	223,027	-	(2,161)	54,298	-	275,164
Endowment Fund Research Grant	3,600	-	(1,112)	-	1,112	3,600
<i>Birds of Scotland</i> (BS3) Fund	47,227	-	(6,866)	-	-	40,361
Unrestricted Funds Held by branches	52,187	6,076	(6,337)	-	-	51,926
	<u>834,372</u>	<u>206,625</u>	<u>(213,184)</u>	<u>54,298</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>882,111</u>
Restricted funds						
Property Endowment Fund	334,727	-	-	-	-	334,727
Endowment Fund (restricted)	232,130	-	(2,249)	56,514	-	286,395
Restricted Funds held by branches	8,873	-	-	-	-	8,873
	<u>575,730</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>(2,249)</u>	<u>56,514</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>629,995</u>
Total	<u>1,410,102</u>	<u>206,625</u>	<u>(215,433)</u>	<u>110,812</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>1,512,106</u>

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES (CONT)

For the year to 31 March 2022

13. FUNDS HELD BY BRANCHES

	2022 £	2021 £
Income:		
Donations	372	20
Sales	1,832	2,462
Bank interest	13	3
Grants	43,648	2,996
Other	2,255	595
	<hr/> 48,120	<hr/> 6,076
Expenditure:		
Room hire	(22)	(60)
Speakers' expenses	(219)	(132)
Publication costs (net of stock revaluation)	(1,539)	(1,909)
Donations / grants	(100)	(4,409)
Other	(45,514)	(512)
	<hr/> 47,394	<hr/> 7,022
Surplus / (Deficit) for the year	<hr/> <hr/> 726	<hr/> <hr/> (946)



NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES (CONT)

For the year to 31 March 2022

14. ANALYSIS OF NET ASSETS AMONG FUNDS

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	2022 £
Balances at 31 March 2022 represented by:			
Tangible assets	491,328	334,727	826,055
Investments	269,263	280,253	549,516
Net current assets	55,651	21,494	77,145
	<u>816,242</u>	<u>636,474</u>	<u>1,452,716</u>

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	2021 £
Balances at 31 March 2021 represented by:			
Tangible assets	501,133	334,727	835,860
Investments	269,038	280,019	549,057
Net current assets	111,940	15,249	127,189
	<u>882,111</u>	<u>629,995</u>	<u>1,512,106</u>

15. RELATED PART TRANSACTIONS

No one individual had control of the Club during the year.

Other than the Honoraria noted in note 6 there have been no further transactions with Council members that require disclosure.



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