

BTO ARCHIVES COLLECTION POLICY

1. Introduction

The BTO Archives is the place of deposit for the physical and electronic outputs from BTO studies, together with organizational records dating from the Trust's foundation in 1933 to the present day. The collection has also been augmented by the gift of notebooks, personal papers and photographic materials relating to key ornithological figures.

The purpose of the BTO Archives is to collect, preserve, and make available this collection of unique ornithological material.

2. Scope of the collection

Our collecting focuses upon the following areas:

- Survey material and data from studies carried out by the BTO
- BTO governance and administrative records
- Personal papers and notebooks of prominent figures in the history of British and Irish ornithology
- Photographic material (with an emphasis on material from early bird photographers)

We will accept the following types of material:

- Paper archives (including notebooks and diaries)
- Maps and plans
- Drawings and engravings
- Photographic negatives, slides, and prints
- Audio-visual and computer media
- Some artefacts

We will only acquire copies and transcripts if the originals are not available, and the material is of sufficient importance to our collections.

Our collection policy is deliberately flexible in order to allow potential acquisitions to be judged on an individual basis.

3. Methods of acquisition

Material originating from the BTO will be transferred periodically by arrangement with individual departments.

Material from external sources will be acquired by donation or loan. Long-term loans will be considered but donations are always preferred to ensure continued preservation and availability for research.

BTO Archives will not normally purchase any material, except in exceptional circumstances.

4. Selection and de-accessioning

Institutional records will be selected for permanent preservation in the BTO Archives based on their financial, legal, administrative, or research value.

We will work with donors of external material to ensure that only materials worthy of permanent preservation will be selected and acquired. Duplicate materials or those not deserving permanent preservation will be returned to the donor or destroyed in a secure manner, depending on the donor's wishes.

We will endeavour to help donors find the most suitable home for their collections and may direct materials to another repository if more appropriate.

The wishes of donors in terms of confidentiality and copyright will be agreed in advance.

5. Our responsibilities

Accessions will be listed upon receipt and notice of major new acquisitions will be made public at the earliest opportunity. Records will be sorted, catalogued, and indexed in due course.

We have an obligation to store, preserve, and make accessible the collections in our care. We aim to care for these in accordance with the professional standards *BS 4971:2017 Conservation and care of archive and library collections* and *Benchmarks in Collections Care*.

6. Review and approval

This policy was adopted by BTO Archives in August 2022 and last reviewed in January 2025. It is due for review every two years or earlier if circumstances require.

Document control			
Version	Author	Date	Changes
0.1	BTO Archivist	09/03/2022	Initial draft
0.2	BTO Archivist	11/03/2022	Minor revisions
0.3	BTO Archivist	30/05/2023	Minor revisions
0.4	BTO Archivist	20/01/2025	Policy reviewed