

BTO LIBRARY COLLECTIONS POLICY

1. Introduction

The Chris Mead Library at the headquarters of the British Trust for Ornithology in Thetford contains one of the finest collections of books on birds and the science of ornithology anywhere in the world. The Library is a repository for ornithological knowledge, adding to and enhancing BTO's reputation as the place to go for information on birds and ornithology.

2. Purpose of the Collections Policy

The purpose of this document is to set out the principles which guide the management and development of BTO's Chris Mead Library.

3. Scope of policy

Unless otherwise stated, this policy refers to the lending and reference collections in the Chris Mead Library. Materials in the BTO Archives are covered by a separate policy.

4. Development of the Library Collections

BTO seeks to maintain a comprehensive, relevant, and up-to-date collection of ornithological literature. Its focus lies in the following areas:

- British and Irish ornithology
- County and local materials such as bird reports
- The ornithology of the Western Palaearctic, Africa, and the rest of the world
- Ornithological and other relevant scientific journals

Due to demand materials are acquired primarily in print. However, we also have a small but growing collection of eBooks and digital/electronic materials.

The Library also holds a special collection of rare ornithological books.

5. Acquisition of materials

Purchase

Materials are selected and purchased by the BTO Archivist in consultation with the Head of Communications and other relevant staff.

Exchanges

Several journals are received in exchange for BTO journals. The Library is also a participant in the Library of Congress Duplicate Materials Exchange Program (DMEP) and receives a small number of books by exchange.

Complimentary materials

Some titles are received on a complimentary basis.

Donations

BTO is keen to fill gaps in its collections and welcomes offers of donations of books within the areas outlined in section 4. Potential acquisitions are considered on a case-by-case basis. Donations which do not fill gaps in the Library catalogue may be accepted with the intention of second-hand sale to raise funds for BTO work.

Bird Reports are kindly donated by county and local Bird Clubs and Societies.

Reviews

A significant amount of material is received as a copy for review and deposited in the Library at the end of the review process. We welcome contact from publishers regarding new works that fit within the subject areas specified in section 4, but regret that it is not possible for us to review unsolicited works.

BTO Publications

At least one copy of all publications produced by BTO are lodged in the Library.

6. Cataloguing and classification

Materials acquired by the Library will be recorded in the online Library Catalogue. All materials are described according to internationally agreed metadata standards for bibliographic description, currently *Anglo-American Cataloguing Rules (AACR2; second edition)*.

Items held in the Library are normally assigned a shelfmark based on the Dewey Decimal Classification system.

7. Retention and disposal of materials

The Library undertakes periodic review of its collections, and titles may be de-selected and removed from the current holdings. If future potential use is identified these may be moved into on-site storage. Items with no expected future use will be disposed of.

Disposal of de-selected materials

Items withdrawn from the Library collections will be disposed of as sustainably as possible. Books may be sold or auctioned with the intention of raising funds to support BTO's work or sent for recycling.

The Library reserves the right to dispose of any donations no longer required as it deems most appropriate.

Replacement of missing or damaged materials

The Library will seek to replace missing or damaged materials by acquiring a replacement through purchase or donation. Items on loan are the responsibility of the borrower, who will be responsible for any replacement or maintenance costs incurred.

8. Review and approval

This policy was approved by BTO Chris Mead Library 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	03/03/2022	Initial draft
0.2	BTO Archivist	25/08/2022	Minor revisions
0.3	BTO Archivist	30/05/2023	Minor revisions
0.4	BTO Archivist	20/01/2025	Policy reviewed