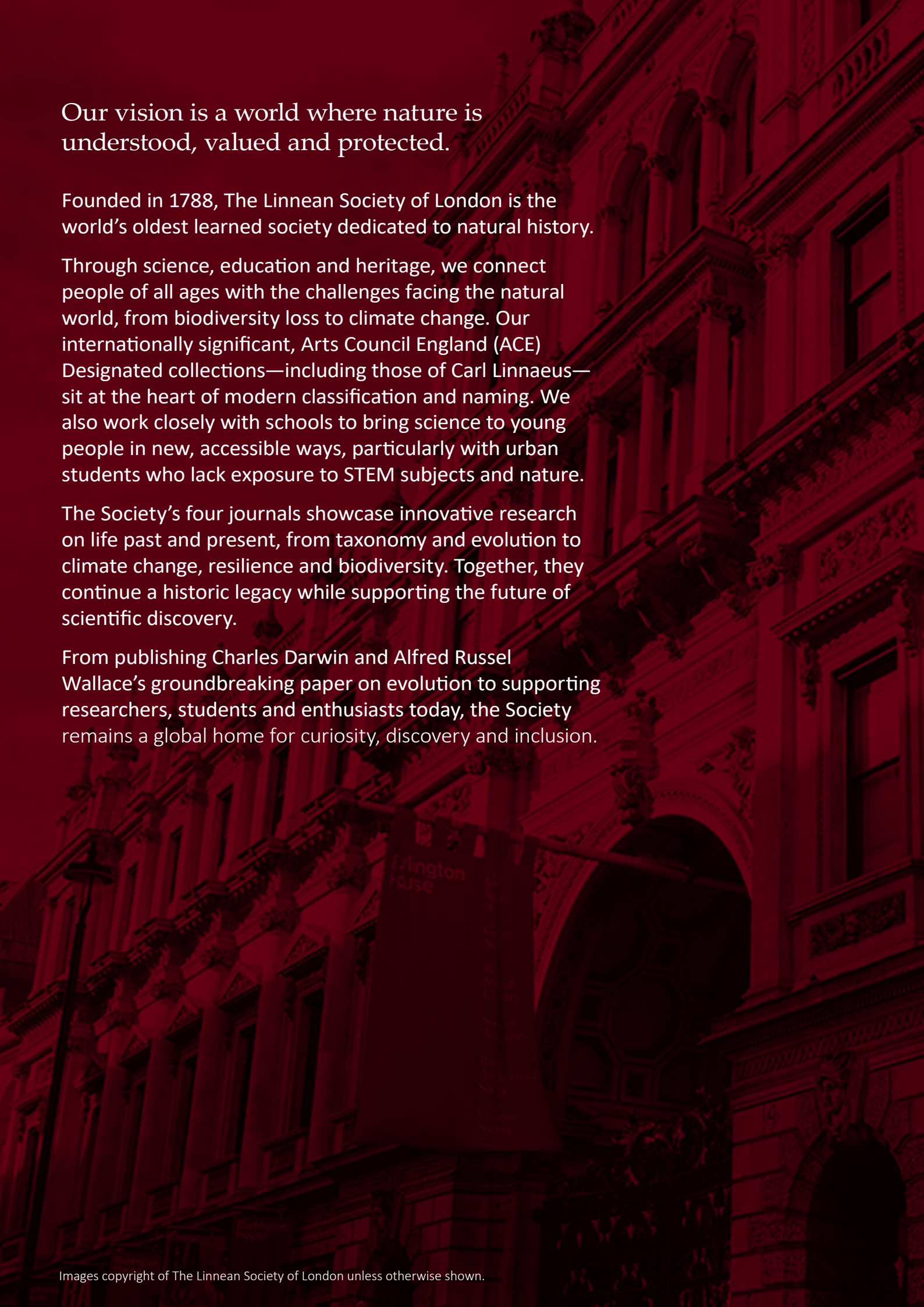


Annual Review 2025

The
LINNEAN
SOCIETY
of London





Our vision is a world where nature is understood, valued and protected.

Founded in 1788, The Linnean Society of London is the world's oldest learned society dedicated to natural history.

Through science, education and heritage, we connect people of all ages with the challenges facing the natural world, from biodiversity loss to climate change. Our internationally significant, Arts Council England (ACE) Designated collections—including those of Carl Linnaeus—sit at the heart of modern classification and naming. We also work closely with schools to bring science to young people in new, accessible ways, particularly with urban students who lack exposure to STEM subjects and nature.

The Society's four journals showcase innovative research on life past and present, from taxonomy and evolution to climate change, resilience and biodiversity. Together, they continue a historic legacy while supporting the future of scientific discovery.

From publishing Charles Darwin and Alfred Russel Wallace's groundbreaking paper on evolution to supporting researchers, students and enthusiasts today, the Society remains a global home for curiosity, discovery and inclusion.

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2025 was a landmark year for the Linnean Society—a year of new beginnings. With the signing of our 999-year lease on New Burlington House, the granting of our new Royal Charter and Bye-Laws and the adoption of our Strategic Plan all by the close of 2024, we could move beyond essentials in 2025. We began delivering long-held projects and exploring new ideas to advance our mission: cultivating a global community working for a world where nature is understood, valued and protected. These foundations were laid during Professor Anjali Goswami's presidency and I feel privileged to take the helm at this time in our history. The Society and I owe her immense gratitude.

Few moments in our 237-year history have brought such change. Our work has never been more important, and it is vital we are equipped to meet our ambitions. When Anjali (PICTURED OPPOSITE, BOTTOM LEFT) handed over the presidency at our Anniversary Meeting in May, she entrusted me with continuing the Society's development as a charity and fulfilling the membership's expectations. In my first President's Lecture I reflected on the need to adapt in response to challenges facing nature, charities and learned societies. Organisations cannot remain fixed in their ways; they must change to meet new demands or risk falling behind.

Our Strategic Plan places greater emphasis on outward impact and benefit to nature and society. We have prioritised four pillars of activity: Membership, Research, Society and Operations. The first three focus on understanding, valuing and protecting the natural world by drawing on the expertise of our Fellowship, enabling vital research and engaging wider society. The fourth ensures the Society has the people, platforms and resources to deliver this work. Strong progress has been made in putting this plan into practice, led by our exceptional staff and journal Editors-in-Chief and supported by many Fellows contributing through committees, events and activities. I must also acknowledge Priya Nithianandan, our Head of Finance, who died suddenly in May 2025. Priya (PICTURED OPPOSITE, TOP LEFT) was one of our longest-serving colleagues and a deeply respected member of staff who is greatly missed. Our staff, led by CEO Professor Gail Cardew, deserve recognition for carrying forward major projects with determination during a period marked by loss and change.

Guided by our new Bye-Laws, 2025 also saw the embedding of new governance processes and development of Standing Orders to support them. There were minor teething problems, but only one amendment to the Bye-Laws—to enable rolling membership fees, approved at the Anniversary Meeting. I am particularly pleased with the work of the new Fellowship Committee, chaired by Fiona McWilliams, which has strengthened scrutiny of applications and created a clear way for Fellows to contribute their views directly.

To deliver our mission, we must involve people with diverse expertise, perspectives and needs, making the Society a forum for all voices. Progress is evident through global participation, new faces at New Burlington House and growing Fellowship applications. I am excited and honoured to lead the Linnean Society forward, building on the achievements of the past and inspiring a future where nature is cherished and protected worldwide.

Dr Mark Watson





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Over the past year, our community has shown remarkable resilience, professionalism and care. In May, right before the Anniversary Meeting, we faced profound loss with the sudden and unexpected passing of our much-loved Head of Finance, Priya Nithianandan. Priya was a thoughtful presence in the life of the Society, and we continue to feel his absence deeply.

Against this backdrop of loss and change, it is a testament to the commitment of our staff, Trustees, volunteers and wider membership that progress against our 2025 strategic targets has remained strong. While the year demanded flexibility and mutual support, it also demonstrated the depth of talent and shared purpose across the organisation.

Our work on fundraising and membership development necessarily focused on strengthening internal systems and processes, rather than outward promotion and acquisition. This foundational work may be less visible, but it is vital. By investing in infrastructure and improving how we operate behind the scenes, we are building a more sustainable and resilient platform for future activity.

In the first half of the year, we completed the migration of our online collections from CoSector to the Preservica digital platform. This substantial project culminated in the relaunch of Linnean Online, opening up our collections in new and more accessible ways. It marks a significant milestone in our commitment to sharing knowledge and widening access to our remarkable resources.

Meanwhile, our medals and awards were slightly reshaped, with the Linnean Medal now to be awarded in duplicate, one for excellence in research and the other recognising the protection of nature. This was also the first year (2025–2026 cycle) that the awards for PhDs—the Irene Manton Prize and the John C. Marsden Medal—were organised through the journals, with the Editors-in-Chief (EICs) selecting the recipients from impressive papers based on PhDs published during the year. The new process ran smoothly, and our EICs are delighted with this additional avenue to encourage submissions from early career researchers.

Onsite, a low-cost refresh of the shop, combined with an expanded merchandise range, helped us surpass our budget target. We also introduced a ticket charge for in-person lectures and have been pleased with the outcome: no-shows have fallen significantly, income has increased, and attendance remains strong, with major lectures selling out. Our exhibitions continue to thrive, with *Naturalists' Notebooks* achieving the highest attendance to date and a lively, sold-out workshop programme attracting new audiences.

Towards the end of the year, we were delighted to co-host the Green Careers Conference with the British Ecological Society (BES). The event welcomed around 70 attendees and generated highly positive feedback. Engagement on LinkedIn following the conference was particularly strong, extending the reach of the event well beyond those in the room and reinforcing our role in supporting emerging talent across the natural sciences.

Finally, our Education Team exceeded their target for school workshops, and bookings for 2026 are already encouraging, with many repeat visits.

In a year that tested us in many ways, these achievements reflect a community that is dedicated, adaptable and united in purpose. Thank you for your continued support and commitment.

Professor Gail Cardew



Membership



We are a membership organisation. Our members are advocates for nature around the globe. We will grow, diversify and support our membership to expand their capacity to work in support of our mission.

In 2025, the Linnean Society celebrated the impact of collective curiosity and expertise. Our diverse, global membership drives research, sparks debate and inspires discovery. Through lectures, publications and workshops, they bring our collections and history vividly to life, while collaborations foster innovative approaches to conservation and natural history. From groundbreaking research to prestigious honours, our community shows how shared passion and knowledge can transform understanding, influence policy and ignite a worldwide conversation about the natural world.

Growing Our Membership

The Society's membership is a truly diverse and interdisciplinary community of like-minded people, all united in their love of nature and natural history. In March 2025, following the recommendations of the 2024 Membership Review by Culture Consultants, Pru Shackley was appointed to the new position of Head of Membership and Development. This role has full operational and strategic responsibility for the membership and the organisation's development activities. This includes supporting the Fellowship Committee, who had their first full year of operation in 2025, overseeing the updated Fellowship application process which launched at the end of 2024.

We are delighted to report that in 2025 we welcomed 164 new Fellows, 85 new Associates and 134 new Student Associates, making 383 new members in total. While there were several defaulters and resignations, the total number of members 2025 was 3,256.

Collaborating with Our Community

One of our central strategic priorities is to actively engage our members across the full scope of our work. Whether through events, workshops, or contributions in print and online, we warmly invite them to share their expertise and insights. In doing so, we seek to cultivate a vibrant, collaborative community—one that not only embraces emerging research, but also champions new fields of inquiry and welcomes new voices.

Throughout much of 2025, we gathered self-reported data across our activities to ensure we are fostering contributions from a diverse range of voices and perspectives. This process has enabled us to reaffirm and strengthen the central role our membership plays in shaping and enriching our work. Across our events, over 40% of speakers were members of the Society, sharing their own paths of study with a global audience, like the popular evening lecture by Mike Gunton FLS of the BBC's Natural History Unit, 'An Insider's Guide to the Secrets of Making a Wildlife Blockbuster'. Or the Linnean Lens talk by Leah Demitriou FLS looking at Richard Owen's private scrapbook—an intriguing and intimate glimpse into the mind of the man behind the term 'dinosaur'.

This also extends to the written word. Around 60% of articles in our membership publication, *The Linnean*, are written by members. John van Wyhe FLS explored Thomas Henry Huxley's life and research, marking his bicentenary and highlighting how our view of historical figures evolves. Elaine Charwat FLS investigated how buildings and bird-window collisions affect German bird populations—and shared how some simple solutions, like subtle dotted grids on larger windows, are already showing promising results.

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: Gardener, historian and author Advolly Richmond was welcomed as a Fellow in September at the President's Lecture; Three issues of *The Linnean* featuring the research of our membership, investigating nature, the history of science and our collections; Mike Gunton FLS, pictured on the left next to our Vice-Patron Sir David Attenborough OM FRS, gave an extremely popular lecture on the work of the BBC Natural History Unit in November (Credit: Mike Gunton/BBC).



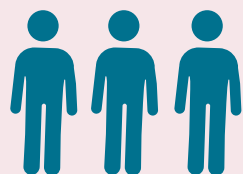




Fellows
↑ 164



Student Associates
↑ 134



Associates
↑ 85

=

383

New Members



Celebrating and Connecting New Members

In 2025 three popular welcoming ceremonies were held to bring together and celebrate 52 recently joined Fellows. The first welcomed 20 new members before the fully booked Anniversary Meeting and AGM on Thursday 22 May. In September at an oversubscribed President's Lecture, 23 Fellows were formally inducted by the President before he gave an insightful talk on the history and evolution of the Society. Finally in December, nine more Fellows were admitted before another sold-out event—the annual Founder's Day lecture by our much-admired Fellow, Jenny Uglow, on the fascinating Gilbert White.

Spotlighting the Success of Our Membership

We celebrate the extraordinary breadth of expertise within our international membership—spanning continents, disciplines and fields of discovery—and we are proud to recognise the remarkable achievements of our members.

In March, Martyn Rix FLS received the 2025 Victoria Medal of Honour from the Royal Horticultural Society, one of the highest distinctions in British horticulture. In August, John Koprowski FLS was elected President of the American Society of Mammalogists. Vivek Menon FLS was chosen by IUCN Members to chair the IUCN Species Survival Commission, and Anjali Goswami PLS (President: 2022–2025) was appointed Chief Scientific Advisor to the UK's Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra).

These honours reflect not only individual excellence, but the global impact and influence of our membership.

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP: President Dr Mark Watson greeted new Fellow Yusuf Samsudin at one of the year's Welcoming Ceremonies; We were thrilled when wildlife conservationist Vivek Menon FLS was elected to chair the IUCN Species Survival Commission in October; In March we received the news that HRH The Princess Royal had accepted patronage of the Society after HM The Queen's passing in 2022 (the Society's previous Patron).

New Membership Category: Honorary FLS

The new membership category of Honorary Fellow (Hon FLS) was established in May 2025 following the Society's revised Charter and Bye-Laws becoming operational in November 2024. Honorary Fellows were previously known as Fellows *honoris causa* (HonFLS) for British subjects, or Foreign Members (FMLS) for non-British subjects.

Following this update, Council requested an in-depth review into the process and eligibility for Honorary Fellows to ensure that it was clear, equitable and fit for a modern learned society. As a result, the purpose of Honorary Fellowship is now to thank individuals for their contributions to the work of the Linnean Society and its mission. This is distinct from Medals and Awards which may be awarded for contribution to the field of natural history, but where there is not necessarily any link to the Society. Existing Honorary Fellows will continue to be recognised as such, regardless of when they were appointed and the selection criteria used.

Royal Patron

We were thrilled in early 2025 when HRH The Princess Royal accepted Patronage of the Linnean Society, having been a member in an honorary capacity since 2007 during Carl Linnaeus' Tercentenary. A champion of science and youth engagement with nature, The Princess Royal's support was warmly welcomed by then-President Professor Anjali Goswami as a powerful boost to the Society's mission of fostering a global community that values and protects the natural world.

Vice-Patrons

The Society's revised Charter and Bye-Laws also established the role of Vice-Patron, previously known as Honorary Members (HonMLS), in a change that sought to bring greater clarity to their role within the life and work of the Society. Council may invite persons who champion and support the object of the Society to accept the role of Vice-Patron of the Society.

Currently there are five Vice-Patrons:

HM King Carl XVI Gustaf of Sweden
HIM The Emperor Emeritus of Japan

HIH The Prince Hitachi of Japan
Baroness Young of Old Scone
Sir David F. Attenborough OM FRS

In Remembrance

Finally, we respectfully remember those members whose deaths were reported to our Council throughout the year:

Fellows

Professor John Allen
Mr Ronald Baxter
Dr Alan Brafield
Dr Michael Darby
Mr Kenneth Davison
Professor Patrick Denny
Professor Joseph Ewusie
Professor Richard Fortey OBE
Mr Mathew Frith
Mr Cyril Giles

Dr Jeremy Holloway
Dr U. Kya
Professor David Landon
Professor Maurice Moss
Mr Alexander Muir
Mr Ian Phelps
Professor Yeleswarapu Sarma
Dr Alan Silverside
Lt Col Colin Watkins

Honorary Fellow

Professor Jean Leclercq

Associate

Mr George Sowerby



Research

We are an international resource and hub for the study of the natural world. We will leverage our collections and other assets to promote and enable research and action for nature.

Throughout the year, the Society amplified its global impact, making collections, archives and research more accessible than ever. Our journals continue to publish with purpose, not only advancing high-quality science but also nurturing authors and early career researchers. Digital platforms expanded, with treasures like the Percy Sladen archive and women's correspondence networks opened up for new scholarship. Away from New Burlington House, our grant schemes offer support for research in the field and in the lab. Together, these initiatives position the Society as a dynamic hub, bridging historic legacy with bold, future-focused natural history research.

Publishing with Purpose: Trusted, Inclusive Science for a Global Community

Our Journals

The journals of the Linnean Society are more than just an income source—they represent a key part of our work to support the natural history community. Our authors, reviewers and Editorial Boards are part of our community, and through our Editorial Office and wider Engagement Team, we aim to promote the work of that community, and particularly support those at the start of their career.

Our Editors-in-Chief are a key part of this, providing leadership for their journals, supporting and enabling their Editorial Boards. We are indebted to each of them for their hard work to grow their journals, while also ensuring that through our peer-review process, we provide useful feedback and proper scrutiny of the work submitted to us.

In 2025, we saw a significant increase in the number of papers submitted to our journals. Each of our hybrid journals was able to publish more high-quality, peer-reviewed papers than in 2024.

The *Zoological Journal of the Linnean Society* in particular, led by Editor-in-Chief Jeff Streicher, saw an unprecedented number of submissions. Many papers published in the journal also gained significant scientific and general attention. One paper on the extinct baleen whale species *Janjucetus dullardi* gained an altmetric score of over 3,000.

These growing submissions put extra pressure on our Associate Editors, who play a vital role in reviewing papers. However, the team across our journals managed the extra workload admirably, with all journals maintaining good submission-to-publication timelines. Feedback from our publisher's author satisfaction survey was good across the journals, with all of them achieving an average score of at least 8 out of 10. Thank you to all of our Associate Editors and Reviewers, who volunteer their time to support the journals and their peers in this way.

Our special issues in progress during the year included the highly popular 'Mobilising Natural History Collections in the Global South', guest edited by Iroro Tanshi, who also delivered a Lunchtime Lecture for the Society on her own research.

The *Evolutionary Journal of the Linnean Society*, led by Julia Day, continued to publish papers from its special issues on speciation, adaptive radiation and evolution on islands.

The *Botanical Journal of the Linnean Society*, led by Steven Dodsworth, prepared a special issue from the Conference of Young Botanists, as part of its supporting early career botanists.

OPPOSITE: Our aim is always to support the research published in our journals, be it through lectures and day meetings, via our blog series The Paper Trail or in our membership publication, *The Linnean*. In 2025 our online Lunchtime Lecture series authors showcased the research from several papers, such as this one about *Anolis* lizards in the Andes, from the *Evolutionary Journal of the Linnean Society* (Credit: James T. Stroud).



Our support for a community of early career researchers was continued through our lunchtime lectures based on papers across the journals. From the *Evolutionary Journal*, 'The Andes are a driver of physiological diversity in *Anolis* lizards', from the *Zoological Journal* 'Ecomorphological correlates of inner ear shape in Australian limb-reduced skinks (Scincidae: Sphenomorphini)' and from the *Biological Journal*, 'Bat Foraging: Where and how they do it'. Meanwhile *Zoological Journal* author and Editorial Board Member Neil Gostling FLS was part of our Pint of Science event in May.

As part of our wider events programme, we held a *Biological Journal of the Linnean Society* Day Meeting on 'Organismal Resilience in a Rapidly Changing World', which brought together a global panel of speakers, who will be contributing papers to the special issue in 2026. As well as a huge thanks to the Special Issue Guest Editor, Zac Cheviron, and the *Biological Journal's* EiC Karen Sears, we are grateful to the Company of Biologists and OUP for their support for the event.

The Paper Trail

This year we launched The Paper Trail, a blog series that presents potentially complex scientific research in a more accessible way to a wider audience. For example, in July, a blog based on the *Botanical Journal's* paper 'Opportunities and limits of image-based plant stress phenotyping: detecting plant salt stress status using machine learning techniques' uncovered how machine learning can be used to spot salt stress in plants, revolutionising how we farm amidst rising sea levels.

Blogs are written by both paper authors and guest bloggers from a global community, many of whom are early career researchers wanting to develop their science communication skills. The Paper Trail has helped improve the visibility of the journals and enabled the original papers to be shared with several hundred people who may not otherwise have come across the research. Paper authors have been incredibly pleased with the outcome, with many commenting on the collaborative and positive experience. One author wrote, 'I really love The Paper Trail and all the stories posted from your journals. I think it is great scientific outreach.'



Supporting Scientific Discovery Through Targeted Grants

LinneSys: Systematics Research Fund

The Linnean Society and Systematics Association collaborate to support the LinnéSys: Systematics Research Fund with £41,000 annually used to fuel discovery in taxonomy and systematics, backing small-scale projects up to £1,500. Supporting fieldwork, equipment access, specimen preparation, publications and education initiatives, it empowers researchers while strengthening the foundations of biodiversity knowledge that, by extension, informs citizen science worldwide.

In 2025, LinnéSys supported 40 projects worldwide awarded from a total fund of £40,618, with the Society contributing £33,618. Projects span uncovering hidden diversity in *Ituglanis amazonicus*, revising the snake *Tantilla melanocephala*, and resolving blue monkey beetle cryptic species. Without clear classification and naming, species vanish unnoticed, ecosystems unravel silently and conservation becomes guesswork. Taxonomy provides the essential map of biodiversity—without it, we cannot truly measure, manage or prevent further loss.

Other Grants

The Anne Sleep Award, established by Mrs Ivy Sleep in honour of Dr Anne Sleep FLS, provides up to £3,000 biennially to support outstanding early career researchers conducting biological research between the UK and the Middle or Far East.

In 2025 this was awarded to Dr Shahina A. Ghazanfar FLS for a project studying and recording plants along the Hijrah path. The Hijrah (622 CE), marking the start of the Islamic calendar, was the Prophet Muhammad's journey from Mecca to Yathrib (Medina) across a diverse ecological landscape. While some studies of vegetation exist for western Saudi Arabia, no research has comprehensively documented the plants along the Hijrah route or explored their historical and cultural uses. With the path opening to tourism in November 2025 and expected to welcome thousands of pilgrims annually, this project will systematically record plant species along the route using transect surveys, document their traditional and medicinal uses, and link identified species to their historical significance, contributing to regional ecology and ethnobotany.

The Appleyard Fund, established in 1968, offers grants up to £2,000 for botany or zoology research. Available to Fellows and Associates not in full-time biology employment, it supports project expenses.

Awarded to Dr Jeanne Yetchom Fondjo, this project will revise the poorly known, flightless grasshopper genus *Mazaesa* in Cameroon, where recent molecular data suggest hidden species diversity. Researchers will collect specimens, examine morphology and sequence multiple genetic markers. Phylogenetic relationships and species boundaries will be determined using molecular delimitation methods (ABGD, ASAP, bGMYC) alongside morphological analysis, with data being made available on public databases. The project aims to discover new species, map where they live, build a DNA reference library and clarify the taxonomy of these grasshoppers. The results will help inform biodiversity conservation, enhance identification tools and provide genomic resources for future studies.

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP: The *Biological Journal of the Linnean Society*'s symposium on 'Organismal Resilience in a Rapidly Changing World' fostered much discussion around climate change—how living things survive under pressure, how they adapted in the past, and whether they can keep up with what's coming next; One project from within our LinnéSys Systematics Research Fund is untangling a cryptic species of blue monkey beetle (Credit: Nick Helme); The Paper Trail blog series looked at salt stress in plants via a paper in the *Botanical Journal of the Linnean Society*. Bees see UV flower patterns invisible to humans and now chroma ratios are allowing scientists to spot the stress signals plants have been broadcasting all along (Credit: Pixabay).

Linnean Society Collections: Preserving the Past, Shaping Future Discovery

Our Collections: Digital Access, Global Reach

In 2023, we set out to transform how our digitised collections are preserved and shared. While our journals remain a trusted home for original research, our collections—hosted on Linnean Online—represent an extraordinary and free to access research resource in their own right. But as our digital ambitions grew, it became clear that our previous platform could no longer support both the collections and an expanding digital archive. So, in November 2023, we chose a new digital preservation partner: Preservica.

What followed in 2024 was a monumental effort. More than 61,000 records—containing nearly 220,000 images—were carefully reviewed, cleaned and enhanced. Metadata was refined and expanded, creating a richer, more powerful dataset designed to improve discoverability and user experience.

In early 2025, Digital Assets Manager Andrea Deneau collaborated closely with developers to migrate and rigorously test the collections in their new digital home. By the end of March, the new platform went live, and the results have been encouraging. The system is not only versatile, but ready to grow alongside our expanding digital archives. In just nine months, the platform has welcomed over 1,000 users each month—more than three-quarters joining us from outside the UK—demonstrating its truly global reach. It has been a strong investment in the future of accessible, sustainable research.

Opening the Archive: Powering New Research

From within our Collected Archives, a range of collections were catalogued and made fully accessible through our archive catalogue. These include collections for members, such as D. H. Scott and Rina Scott (ref: SEO), and for organisations, including the Selborne Society and the Gilbert White Archive (ref: SS), with detailed descriptions now available for the first time.

The Collected Archives also hold significant material on nature conservation. In February, the IUCN and Richard Fitter (ref: FIT) archives were catalogued and uploaded, followed in October by the archives of the Council for Nature (ref: CFN), expertly catalogued by Project Archivist Alex Milne. In total, approximately 1,395 new records were added to the catalogue, opening up exciting new possibilities for research and greatly improving accessibility to these invaluable archives. Since going live, we have already received numerous requests from researchers to consult this material in person, demonstrating the immediate impact of this work.

Unlocking the Percy Sladen Archive

Through the Percy Sladen Memorial Fund, we appointed Project Archivist Becky Darnill in August to catalogue the Percy Sladen archive held at the Society. Percy Sladen (1849–1900) was a Fellow and Zoological Secretary of the Society, and a marine biologist who studied echinoderms, famously detailing a landmark account of the starfishes collected on the HMS *Challenger* expedition (1872–1876). The Percy Sladen Memorial Fund was set up by his wife Constance Sladen—one of the first female Fellows admitted to the Society—in 1904.

Sorting and appraisal of the extensive Sladen material (77 boxes and three volumes) was the initial step. A hierarchical arrangement was made, organising it into distinct areas including foundational documents, governance papers and grant applications. Listing and collating the material is underway, with a view to transferring it to a catalogue, making the collection globally accessible for the first time. This will have potential research applications in not just zoology, but in geology, archaeology and early studies in anthropology.

Strengthening Partnerships: Championing Collections, Collaboration and Community

In 2025, our Head of Collections Dr Isabelle Charmantier became part of the advisory board for the Natural History Humanities programme as part of the ‘Collections-Connections-Communities’ research

initiative at the University of Cambridge. As part of this, we participated in a popular panel discussion at the British Society for the History of Science conference, looking at natural history humanities, presenting to a packed-out room on the role of the Linnean Society collections and their benefit to the programme.

Other collections-based networking included Librarian Will Beharrell attending the European Horticultural Libraries (EBHL) annual meeting in Paris, and Assistant Archivist Christina McCulloch representing the Society at the Places, Plants and People Archives Network meetings throughout the year. These groups offer a terrific way to share knowledge, grow and adapt to changes in the academic research environment.

Linnaeus Link

The Linnaeus Link Project is an international collaboration devoted to the work of our namesake, the 18th-century naturalist-physician, Carl Linnaeus (1707–1778). The aim has been to provide a comprehensive bibliography of Linnaean-interest publications, reflecting the diverse output of contemporary scholarship, and the holdings of major research collections world-wide. It has been recognised by the International Association for Plant Taxonomy (IAPT) and the International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature (ICZN).

After much discussion, it was decided by common agreement between the 24 Linnaeus Link partners that the Linnaeus Link Union Catalogue—an online union catalogue of Linnaean material held in repositories globally—would be closed at the end of June 2025, although the group is keen to continue as a network.

Librarian Will Beharrell continued work on the bibliography of Linnaean works, first started by Basil Soulsby (who headed up the Natural History Museum’s General Library) in the early 1900s. The result was an online digest published at the end of the year entitled ‘The Year’s Work in Linnaean Studies’. Plans are also being put in place to have an annual Linnaeus Link lecture, hosted by the Linnean Society.

From Archive to Analysis: Haludar’s Art Revealed

Several botanical and zoological illustrations by the Bengali artist Haludar, from the Francis Buchanan-Hamilton collection, were sent to the Kelvin Centre for Conservation in Glasgow for image analyses (including stereomicroscopy and infrared reflectography). This is forming part of scientific illustrator Claire Banks’ PhD thesis ‘Company Drawings of Natural History: The evolution of techniques and materials c. 1790–1820’. We are looking forward to finding out more information about the illustrations, and the 18th- and 19th-century pigments used.

Student Placements, Fresh Perspectives

Each year, the Society offers research placements, fostering connections with early career scholars while uncovering fresh insights into our collections. In 2025, we welcomed London Singletary, a Master’s student in History at King’s College London. London’s work transcribing and indexing the Society’s Council Minutes has been invaluable, as, for the first time, these records will be fully searchable, opening them up to wider scholarly use. He also examined the travel diary of the Society’s founder, James Edward Smith, tracing his Grand Tour of Europe in the late 18th century and identifying differences between published and unpublished versions. Blogs and articles based on London’s research will be shared in 2026.

Meanwhile, as part of a student placement with UCL, Emily O’Connor has been cataloguing the notebooks of William Keble Martin, author of *Concise British Flora in Colour* (1969). Her work records plant species, localities and observation dates, offering insight into Martin’s fieldwork. Once complete, the catalogue will be fully searchable by name, location and date, greatly enhancing access for researchers and the public. This is an ongoing project, with completion anticipated in 2026.

AdoptLINN: Conserving Treasures for Tomorrow

Our AdoptLINN conservation scheme supported the care of some remarkable items in 2025, including the largest project: the oil portrait of botanist Nathaniel Ward displayed in our Meeting Room. Measuring 141 x 110.5 cm, the painting had yellowed and darkened from over 150 years of Piccadilly soot, with additional splashes and smears from a 2008 ceiling leak. Conservator Amanda Paulley meticulously cleaned the portrait using smoke sponge brushing and petroleum spirit, retouching only damaged areas with sympathetic colours before applying a light varnish. The transformation was dramatic, and this work was generously supported by Keith Salvesen FLS.

The scheme also preserved one of our most striking books, John Gould's *A monograph of the Ramphastidae, or family of toucans* (1834) (BELOW). This heavy double folio had a detached spine and boards after nearly two centuries of use. Conservator Janet Ashdown rebuilt the spine, added a linen hinge for reinforcement, and recovered it in matching leather, ensuring the book is ready for another 200 years.

Overall, AdoptLINN raised £4,240 (including Gift Aid) via 15 gifts from eight donors. Nearly 39% was given for general conservation, allowing the Collections Team to select items for care in the donors' names, directly supporting the long-term conservation of our treasures.



Linnean Society Medals and Awards 2025

Through its medals and awards, the Linnean Society has long recognised individuals who have made outstanding contributions to understanding the natural world. We were honoured to welcome our 2025 medal and award recipients:

AWARD	RECIPIENT
Linnean Medal <i>For services to science</i>	Professor David Macdonald CBE , University of Oxford, UK
Darwin–Wallace Medal <i>Awarded to a person or group who have made major advances in evolutionary science</i>	Professor Trudy Mackay FRS , Clemson University, USA
Bicentenary Medal <i>Awarded to an early career scientist, in recognition of excellent research in the natural sciences</i>	Dr Joanne Littlefair , University College London, UK
Irene Manton Prize <i>For the best doctoral thesis in botany in a UK university</i>	Jamie B. Thompson , University of Bath, UK
John C. Marsden Medal <i>For the best doctoral thesis in biology in a UK university</i>	Jamie C. Weir , University of Edinburgh, UK
John Spedan Lewis Emerging Leader Award <i>For an initiative with notable positive impact for the UK natural environment (in partnership with the John Spedan Lewis Nature Fund)</i>	Megan Gimber , People’s Trust for Endangered Species, UK
H. H. Bloomer Award <i>Awarded to an amateur naturalist for an important contribution to the knowledge of natural history</i>	Aasheesh Pittie , Indian BIRDS, India
Jill Smythies Award <i>A medal and £1,000 to a botanical artist for outstanding, diagnostically relevant, published illustrations</i>	Hyewoo Shin , Smithsonian Environmental Research Center, South Korea

Medal and Award Revisions

In line with our new strategy to broaden engagement, we are updating our awards portfolio to reflect a wider range of disciplines and contributions.

The **Linnean Medal** is now aligned with our mission ‘to cultivate a global community working for a world where nature is understood, valued and protected’. There are now two Linnean Medals:

- (1)** The Linnean Medal for significant and sustained advances in the understanding of nature. This includes academic research into any relevant branch, including science, history and the humanities.
- (2)** The Linnean Medal for significant and sustained dedication to the protection of nature. This includes conservation, communication, education and advocacy.

The **Darwin–Wallace Medal**, awarded for evolutionary biology, will be awarded triennially.

For early career researchers, the **Irene Manton Prize** and **John C. Marsden Medal** will now recognise PhD-led papers published in the Society’s journals. Four prizes of £500 will be awarded annually, selected by the journal Editors-in-Chief.

These changes took effect following the Anniversary Meeting on 22 May 2025, with the revised awards to be presented in May 2026.

Our Medal and Award Recipients



BACK ROW (LEFT TO RIGHT): Jamie B. Thompson (Irene Manton Prize); Megan Gimber (John Spedan Lewis Emerging Leader Award); Jamie C. Weir (John C. Marsden Medal).

FRONT ROW (LEFT TO RIGHT): Professor David Macdonald CBE (Linnean Medal); Professor Trudy Mackay FRS (Darwin–Wallace Medal); Dr Hyewoo Shin (Jill Smythies Award); Dr Joanne Littlefair (Bicentenary Award); Kiran Katikaneni on behalf of Aasheesh Pittie (H. H. Bloomer Award). (Aasheesh Pittie pictured right. Credit: Samuel Sukumar.)



Society

A group of people, likely at a conference or meeting, are shown in a blue-tinted photograph. In the foreground, a man with glasses and a mustache is looking down at a small object in his hand. Next to him, a woman with curly hair is smiling and looking towards the right. In the background, another woman with glasses is visible, looking towards the camera. The setting appears to be an indoor space with bookshelves or display cases in the background.

We will motivate people to take positive action, because protecting the natural world requires the involvement of the whole of society.

One of our major aims for 2025 was to encourage people to care for the natural world by making science and history open and engaging. Our free exhibitions invited visitors to pause, reflect and discover the stories behind both people and objects—revealing curiosity, creativity and the human effort needed for scientific discovery. By lending items and offering tours, talks and workshops, we welcomed students, researchers and families to our Piccadilly home. In person and online, speakers shared research and untold stories in clear, accessible ways, helping more people connect with the natural world. These activities and more deliver on our lease commitments, opening our building further and advancing an ambitious decade-long programme of expanded public engagement and access.

Collections in Action: From Exhibitions to Global Engagement

Exhibitions: From Notebooks to Wunderkammers

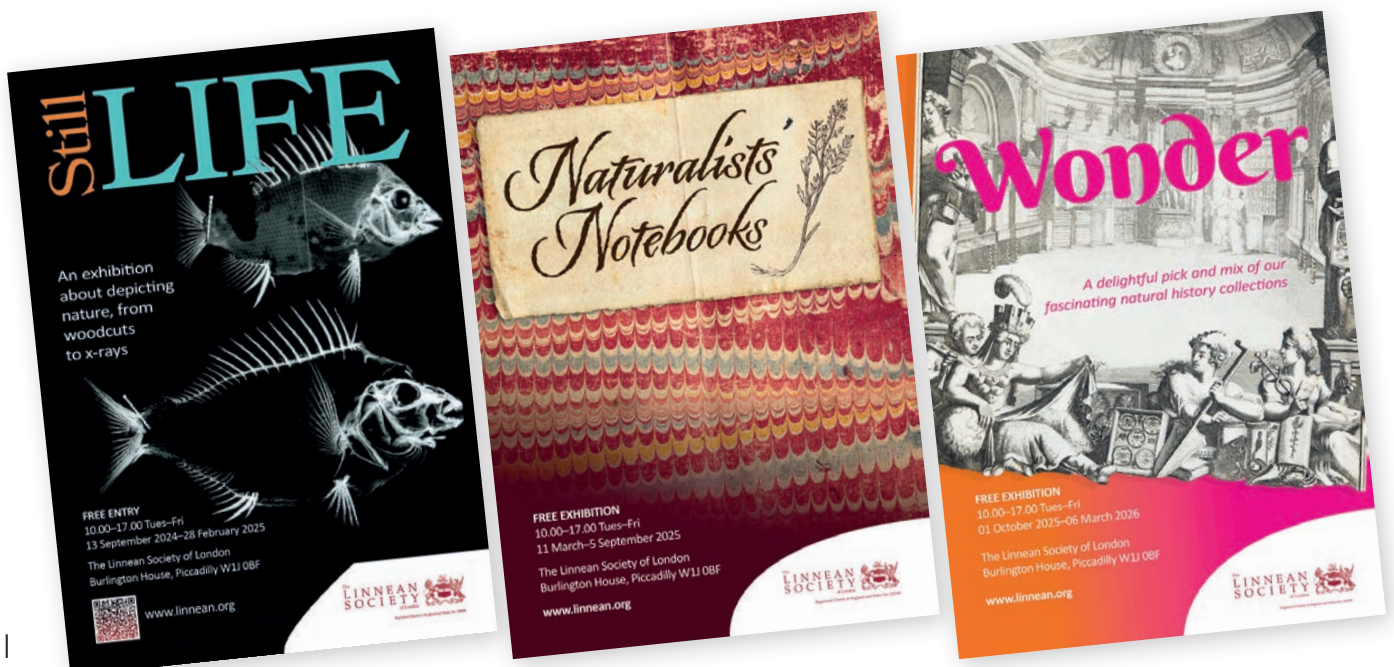
Our exhibitions have become a major draw, inviting visitors to explore the richness of the Society's collections. In 2025, we hosted three compelling displays.

Still Life: Depicting Nature from Woodcuts to X-Rays ran from September 2024 to February 2025, attracting 1,270 visitors with its intriguing evolution of imagery—drawings, woodblocks, paintings, photographs, nature prints and more—in scientific study.

Naturalists' Notebooks, curated by Dr Isabelle Charmantier, ran from March to September 2025 and celebrated the humble yet vital notebook. From handmade journals to luxurious volumes, the exhibition highlighted how notebooks have shaped the work of celebrated thinkers past and present. Featuring additional personal volumes from current Fellows, it became our most popular exhibition to date, drawing 2,798 visitors.

The year concluded with *Wonder*, inspired by the classic cabinet of curiosity or Wunderkammer. Curated by Andrea Deneau, it offered a playful 'pick and mix' of our collections, captivating audiences until March 2026.

Altogether, our exhibitions welcomed nearly 5,000 visitors, offering engaging journeys through art, science, history and, best of all, curiosity. An enticing programme of events was also devised for each, with workshops on creating cyanotypes and notebook-making, lectures with experts onsite and online and curator-led tours.





Collections on Tour

Alongside our own exhibitions, wherever possible the Society is happy to loan items for display elsewhere. We were delighted to be a part of the British Library's exhibition *Unearthed: The Power of Gardening* (2 May–10 August 2025), which explored the transformative, enriching and sometimes radical power of gardening in Britain and the impact it has on people, communities and the environment. The Society loaned several items: an 18th-century seed packet of New Zealand flax from Norfolk Island, Charles Darwin's vasculum (a receptacle for collecting plant specimens) and the portrait of an enslaved man at the foot of a breadfruit tree by Antiguan artist John Tyley.

Discovering Natural History on Piccadilly

In 2025, our **Private Tours** programme flourished, welcoming a wide range of visiting groups and strengthening valuable connections. Among our guests were the Swedish Linnaeus Society—who also met with us to explore future collaborations—the London Appreciation Society, the Gardens Trust and the Beatrix Potter Society, for whom Archivist Liz McGow curated a special display of archival treasures. Altogether, we delivered 34 private tours to 240 visitors, sharing the depth of our collections while generating vital income to support our work.

Our popular **Treasures Tours** continued to captivate the public, offering rare access to our 'strong room' in small, intimate groups led by our expert Collections Team. Frequently selling out well in advance, we hosted 12 tours in 2025—including two exclusively for members—welcoming 135 visitors.

Inspiring the next generation with **Educational Tours** remains central to our mission. We hosted 176 students from institutions across the UK and abroad, including Fordham University, Florida State University, Rikkyo School in England, Seoul National University and UCL. From A-level groups to archival specialists, students explored exhibitions, encountered original materials and even tried their hand at nature journaling.

Beyond New Burlington House

We love taking the Society 'on the road' to share our collections and research more widely. Throughout the year, Isabelle Charmantier gave a lecture for the Selborne Society at their education centre in London's Perivale Woods, exploring 'Naming Nature: Carl Linnaeus and the Linnean Society of London'. Will Beharrell spoke at the Royal Society's Libraries of Science conference about 'The Linnean Society Library: Two centuries of continuity and change', alongside historian Anna Marie Roos and Emma Laws from Exeter Cathedral, later joining a lively panel discussion. Nearly 160 people attended the event, both in person and online. Meanwhile, Archivist Liz McGow presented a virtual lecture for the CNRS International Emerging Actions WOMNH 19 in Uppsala, Sweden, examining 'Writing Science in the 19th century: British women's correspondence networks'. She highlighted the remarkable letters of women around our founder, Sir James Edward Smith, revealing the often-overlooked networks shaping science and natural history. These outreach activities help to bring our collections and history to life.

Hidden Stories, New Research

Our Treasure of the Month blog series offers an exploratory dip into some of the lesser-known items within our collections. Overseen by Archivist Liz McGow, each blog is written by a curator or member of the Linnean Society team. Ten 'Treasures' were produced throughout the year, with highlights including the notebooks of amateur botanist Dorothy Chapman (1877–1974), complete with newspaper cuttings, dried flowers and photographs, and a 1782 pub bill outlining dinner for Carl Linnaeus' son at the King's Arms, Kew Green, during his travels to England.

OPPOSITE (TOP TO BOTTOM): The stunning notebook of amateur botanist Dorothy Chapman featured in both our Treasure of the Month blog series and our very popular exhibition, *Naturalists' Notebooks*; We welcomed many visitors on guided tours (some specifically tailored by theme) in 2025, including students from Seoul University, shown here with our Head of Collections Isabelle Charmantier.





Collections were also highlighted in *The Linnean*, with so many of our members being part of, and interested in, the museum and curatorial community. Henry Noltie FLS explored a botanical manuscript from the collections (MS/620), uncovering stunning, lesser-studied illustrations by the 19th-century Indian artist Manu Lal. And Sarah Bilston FLS examined the rise of Britain's early conservation movement through the newly-catalogued archives of the Selborne Society—one of the country's oldest environmental organisations—tracing its origins amid the pressures of rapid industrial and urban growth.

From Nature to Knowledge: Imaginative Events for Every Audience

Under the guidance of Anna Perman, and managed by Katie Lau and Scarlet Forrester, our public events programme continued to broaden the Society's reach. Attracting new audiences and raising awareness of our work, it also provided members with meaningful opportunities to meet, connect and exchange ideas across disciplines.

In 2025, the team ran a remarkable 91 events—despite just 1.5 staff dedicated primarily to events—showing an extraordinary effort. Sixty-seven in-person events welcomed 3,253 attendees to our building or nature walks, while 22 online and two hybrid events reached 2,914 people, demonstrating broad interest.

Our in-person events foster connections across fields, attracting influencers and leaders to the Society. Scientific talks covered tiger genetics, citrus fruits, the natural history of the dodo and climate modelling. Alongside these were sessions on communicating nature through documentaries, art and music, and the history of studying nature, culminating in the Founder's Day lecture by Jenny Uglow FLS.

We are grateful to attendees for feedback, which has helped to guide improvements and often praises our venue and speakers. Of the 334 people who responded, events scored 4.6 out of 5. Highlights of what people valued about our events include:

- 'Challenging perceptions and stimulating critical thinking around conservation orthodoxy.' (*James Bullock, Conservation and Rewilding in a Changing Climate*)
- 'The speaker was a natural storyteller which really helped to convey her messages and engage the audience.' (*Rosa Vasquez, The Spirit of the Rainforest*)
- 'Opened my eyes to museum displays which I have seen for decades without seeing the bias in them.' (*Jack Ashby, Nature's Memory: Behind the Scenes at the World's Natural History Museums*)
- 'I always enjoy the Linnean Society's lectures. Because I live in the United States, I can only attend by video. Please keep doing them.' (*Irora Tanshi, Bat Foraging: Where and How They Do It*)

A Collective Effort: Strength Through Collaboration

Partnerships form a key part of this aim. This year, we were part of London Craft Week with the artist Tess Newall and furniture designer Alfred Newall. We also delivered a policy lecture on misinformation with the Systematics Association. Other partners included the British Ornithologists' Club, Pint of Science and the BES. For Open House, we coordinated with our neighbours across Burlington Courtyard, opening on the same day—on that one day alone we welcomed 1,171 people to the Society.

In collaboration with India Cole at Queen Mary University, our day meeting '(Re)Discovering Natural History Collections' brought together 75 attendees working with natural history archives and collections, and explored the research being undertaken, as well as innovative ways to communicate about collections, including smells and individual stories.

OPPOSITE (TOP TO BOTTOM): Our collections continually offer new areas of study—in our May 2025 issue of *The Linnean*, Henry Noltie FLS took a closer look at some of the stunning paintings by Indian artist Manu Lal held by the Society; Also in May, the ever-popular Pint of Science was hosted by the Society—an evening of science, laughs and songs. Neil Gostling FLS spoke about new insights into dodo taxonomy with his talk 'No Laughs Were Harmed in the Extinction of This Bird' and comedian and songwriter Helen Arney presented 'Voice of an Angle', a stand up set about 'natural history, actual history and an introduction to some of the most underestimated women in science'.

Life Through a Linnean Lens

Our online Linnean Lens talks continue to bring the Linnean Society's collections to a global audience. Highlights of 2025 included historian Sachiko Kusakawa's Linnean Lens lecture on Leonard Fuchs's *Historia Stirpium* (1542), which attracted 203 online attendees and over 10,000 YouTube views. Equally popular was volunteer John Abbott's live demonstration on 'How to conserve 18th- and 19th-century paper', engaging 225 viewers with practical insights. These digital events offer expert-led, in-depth explorations that make our historic collections accessible and captivating to audiences worldwide.

Lunchtime Lectures: Natural History That Connects and Inspires

This year's Lunchtime Lectures brought natural history vividly to life, welcoming 1,200 attendees to an inspiring programme of 11 diverse talks. From the genetic analysis of *E. coli* in our food systems to woodland management and the colonial history of the okapi, the series explored science, history and conservation across an impressively wide spectrum of ideas and perspectives.

We were proud to host speakers from every stage of academia—early career researchers, PhD candidates, doctors and activists—each offering compelling global perspectives on the challenges and possibilities shaping our natural world today.

Our most popular lunchtime event, drawing more than 170 guests, featured Dr Iroro Tanshi, whose captivating lecture explored the foraging behaviours of African bats and showcased her groundbreaking research in collaboration with the *Zoological Journal of the Linnean Society*.

With another exciting programme ahead, we look forward to continuing to make natural history accessible, dynamic and deeply relevant to a growing, loyal audience.

Bringing in New Audiences

Our workshops and nature walks are essential gateways for first-time visitors to the Society. This year's nine workshops—spanning botanical art, embroidery, knitting, cyanotype printing, lino-printing and notebook-making—brought together people united by nature, creativity and craft. Our nine nature walks engaged those eager for the outdoors, including staff-led bat walks in April and September, an insect walk with Connor Butler FLS, and a nature walk and zine-making workshop with blogger Zabby.

Amplifying Perspectives Across Nature, Science and History

As mentioned in 'Membership', this year (and for the first time), we gathered self-reported data from our speakers, bloggers and contributors to *The Linnean* to ensure our programme reflects a rich mix of voices. The findings have shown that:

- 19% of *The Linnean* contributors and 26% of event contributors were under 35
- 34% of contributors came from outside academia
- 48% identified as female, 43% as male and 9% as non-binary
- 27% identified as being from non-white backgrounds

OPPOSITE (TOP TO BOTTOM): Our popular Lunchtime Lecture series played host to a terrific variety of topics, including a look into the colonial history of the okapi, a rainforest enigma whose story weaves together Indigenous knowledge, scientific breakthroughs and modern conservation (Credit: Shutterstock.com/RalphLear3); Dr Iroro Tanshi, who rediscovered the rare short-tailed roundleaf bat in Nigeria's Afi Mountain Wildlife Sanctuary in 2016, gave a fantastic talk on bat foraging behaviour (Credit: Iroro Tanshi).



Growing Connections: Our Education Programme Inspiring Science and Nature Engagement

Inspiring 1,100 Students Through Hands-On Science

This year we trialled our Evolution workshop for KS2, offering it free to schools for a limited period to refine and perfect the activities. Students explored Charles Darwin's work, the evolutionary tree and his connection to the Linnean Society, before presenting their findings on a 'new species' in a peer-reviewed style—just as naturalists did in Darwin's day.

Over the year, around 1,100 students from 33 schools attended our onsite workshops on Classification and Evolution. While most schools came from the London area, we were thrilled to welcome one school all the way from Devon. Online sessions were fewer (five workshops) but helped reach additional learners beyond the onsite programme.

To make the workshops even more accessible, we also trialled taking them directly into schools. These sessions can help accommodate students with additional or behavioural needs, or for schools unable to visit the Society, ensuring that the excitement of hands-on science reaches every learner.

Our Local Nature: Supporting the Next Generation of Nature Leaders

Since its launch in 2020, the Our Local Nature grant scheme has awarded nearly £30,000 to 49 projects, empowering young people across the country to take practical action for nature. This year was no different, with £6,000 awarded to help young people bring their projects to life. Demand for this youth-led scheme was exceptional: 412 applications were submitted for the 2025–2026 cycle, reflecting the scale of young people's commitment to environmental action. Ayesha Meredith-Lewis shortlisted a fantastic range of proposals—from enhancing bat habitats in Cumbria to creating a wellbeing garden in Birmingham—for consideration by our Youth Panel.

Fourteen students aged 16–18 applied to join the Youth Panel; seven were selected and, with support from the Society, led the grant-making process themselves. Together, they awarded funding to seven projects, directing resources to initiatives they believe will make a tangible difference in their communities.

The Cheer Up Squad, for example, had received £775 earlier in the year to deliver 'Growing Hope', providing plant-growing kits to 50 children aged 3–10 following hospital treatment. Young volunteers assembled and distributed the kits, promoting sustainability by repurposing recyclable materials as watering devices—nurturing both environmental awareness and recovery through hands-on engagement with nature. Movingly, one parent noted: 'It takes my son some time to get out of bed after coming home from the hospital. Now, he checks his plant first thing every morning. It's been such a small but powerful change.'

Inspired by the dedication of young project leaders, we were thrilled this December to secure funding from the Mayor of London's Green Roots Fund, enabling Our Local Nature to support projects along London's waterways from 2026.

Nature Network

This was the first year of Nature Network, a nature engagement project targeting 11–14-year-olds (KS3 students) across North and West London. Thanks to funding from John Lyon's Charity, we have been able to recruit a dedicated Project Manager and offer the scheme at minimal cost to eligible schools.

With the aim of inspiring young people into potentially studying science and natural history at higher education, the project is also about diversifying audiences using natural spaces and recognising the health benefits of spending time in nature. We ran sessions at five schools across the autumn term, often tying science and art together, engaging with a total of 89 students. Even the most unassuming corners of a school site can be home to a range of biodiversity—in one Ealing school we caught badgers on a trail camera!

Though recruiting participating schools was less successful than anticipated, 100% of teachers and school staff reported a positive outcome. One science teacher shared a list of noticeable benefits for their students:

‘Students making a ‘connection with nature’ and their own lives. Some have really just sat outside and paid attention to things around them. That nature and ‘science’ can be artistic. Increased awareness of different species around their community.’

We were successfully awarded a second year of funding and hope to build on everything we’ve learned in 2026.

Green Careers Conference

Building on the success of our 2024 conference, the Society, in partnership with the BES, hosted another event celebrating careers in the natural world. We welcomed over 70 students and career changers to our Green Careers Conference, offering talks from professionals sharing their own journeys—including Tony Day from The Volunteer Charity and Jamila Brown from JB Impact Agency—alongside CV clinics and interview workshops (SEE PICTURE BELOW). Attendees were able to connect with experts in a personal and relaxed setting, gaining practical advice and the confidence to explore their own pathways.

Our library came alive with exhibitors from institutions such as the London Wildlife Trust (LWT), Zoological Society of London (ZSL), the Royal Entomological Society (RES) and Royal Parks, giving participants the chance to discover training and work opportunities while asking questions freely.

In October, the Society further expanded its reach at the ZSL Careers Event, engaging over 250 attendees and inspiring young people to pursue careers in nature, conservation, communication and the history of science.



Amphibians, Fungi and Festival-Goers

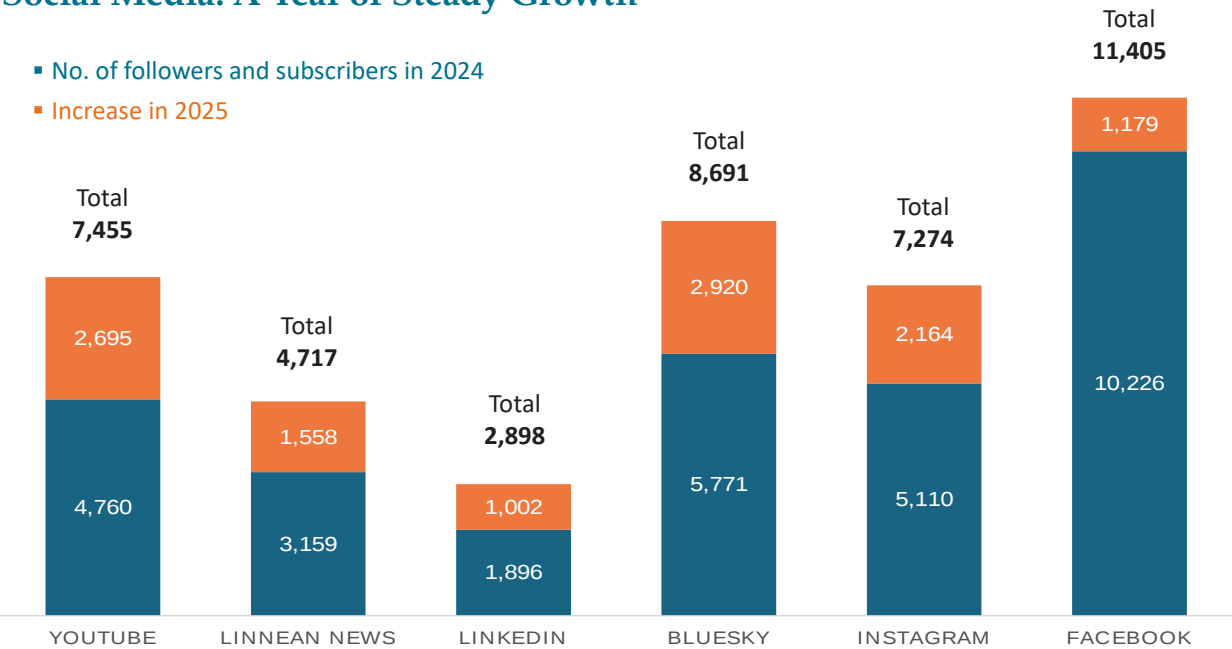
In June 2025 the Society ran a stall for the first time in the Science Futures area at **Glastonbury Festival**. The area focuses on science communication and environmental awareness, with our stall located within the Futurarium, a large marquee that hosts five different organisations each year. Engagement Officer Scarlet Forrester and Journal Officer Georgia Cowie designed, built and ran several interactive activities while disseminating information about the Society and its aims for the full five days of the festival.

The main attraction? ‘Toad in the Hole’, a carnival-style game encouraging visitors to launch hand-made frog beanbags through holes in a board with the aim of educating them on amphibian conservation. Holes were coloured red or green, representing active threats to global amphibian populations and some real-world measures to protect them, respectively. The game was a huge success, with many people returning later in the day to talk more about our work and have another go. Many visitors didn’t know about the threats faced by amphibians, and our game allowed them to learn specifics without feeling daunted, before directing them towards related charities they could support. Over 500 visitors engaged with our stand, with nearly 100 sign-ups to Linnean News. We also made several lasting connections with other scientific bodies, including the Daphne Jackson Trust, University of London, ADAS entomology research and the BBC Natural History Unit.

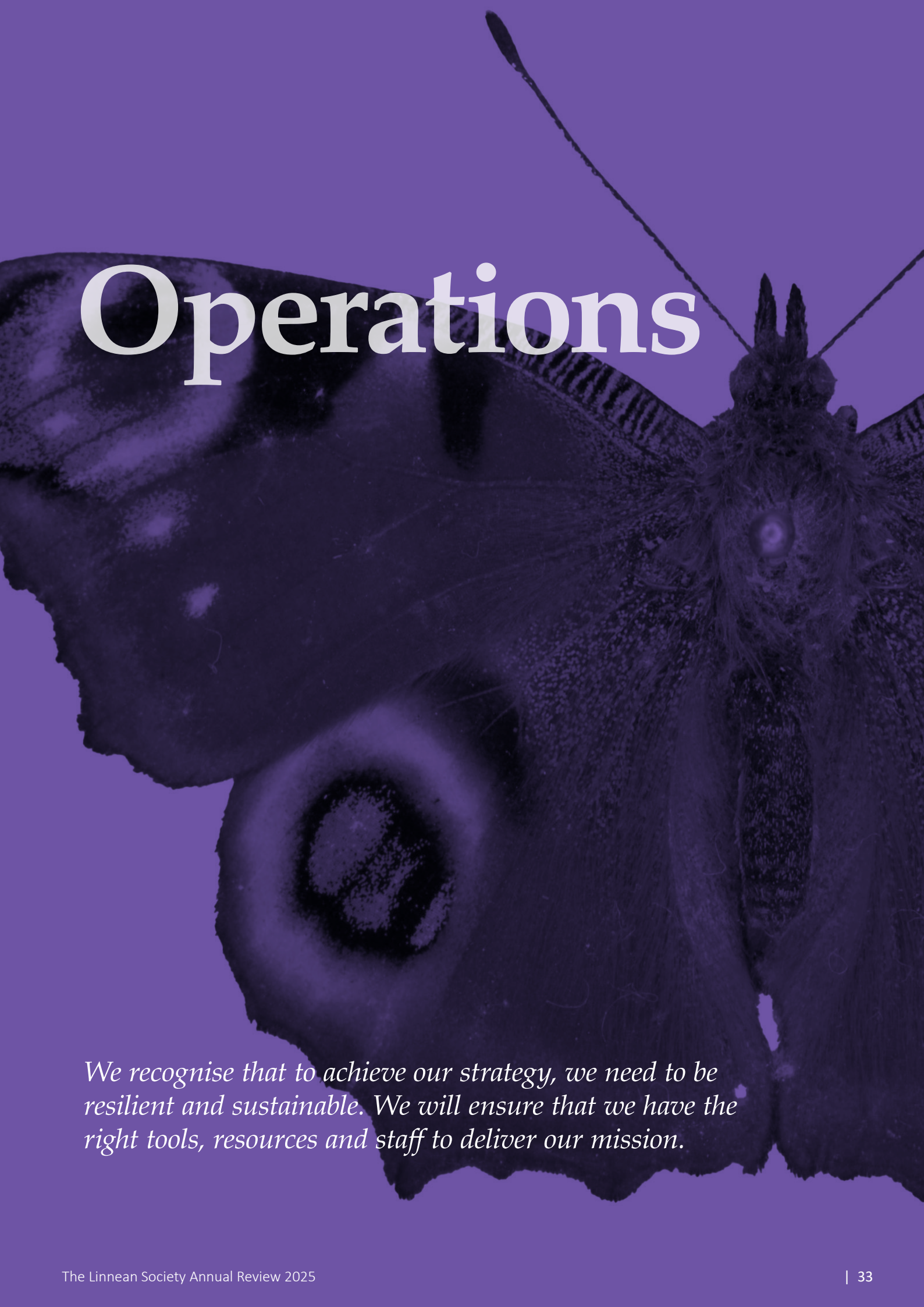
The Education Team was delighted to be invited to take part in the 2025 **All Things Fungi Festival** at the Chiddinglye Estate in East Grinstead. Across two lively days, Ayesha Meredith-Lewis, Scarlet Forrester and Georgia Cowie hosted an interactive stall titled ‘Fungi Fling’—a hands-on game that challenged visitors to ‘forage’ for mushrooms and test their species-spotting skills.

Participants identified which mushrooms were edible, with those correctly choosing safe, non-toxic species earning higher points. The sharpest forager of the day took home a special prize pack of Society goodies! Designed to highlight the importance of accurate mushroom identification, the game sparked curiosity, conversation and plenty of friendly competition. More than 380 people stopped by, deepening their knowledge of species identification and discovering more about the Society.

Social Media: A Year of Steady Growth



This year, more people chose to follow our work online, and that steady growth has been genuinely encouraging. It means more people are reading, watching and staying connected with what we do. Behind each number is someone who has taken an interest in our work, and that growing community matters.



Operations

We recognise that to achieve our strategy, we need to be resilient and sustainable. We will ensure that we have the right tools, resources and staff to deliver our mission.

In 2025, New Burlington House thrived as a hub for visitors, events and merchandise. Thoughtful pricing, new shop displays and digital initiatives helped share our collections widely, while print-on-demand and licensing opened fresh ways for people to engage. Behind the scenes, staff training and building improvements strengthened the Society for the future.

Under the terms of our lease with the government, we are obliged to report on any substantial improvements to the building, beyond general maintenance. There were no such improvements to the Linnean Society building in 2025.

Hosting, Engaging, Sustaining: Room Hire and Events

Room Hire

Overseen by Operations Assistant Tatiana Franco, room hire at New Burlington House continued to attract strong engagement in a very competitive market. Set around an attractive historic courtyard and neighbouring the Royal Academy of Arts and other Learned Societies, the venue welcomed 2,636 guests across 96 bookings, including 13 new client groups.

Room hire generated £24,052 achieving around 89% of the projected target. While slightly below expectations, the volume of bookings and new partnerships demonstrates sustained demand and provides a solid foundation for repeat business and future income growth in this prestigious Piccadilly setting.

Events

At the beginning of 2025, we introduced a small charge for in-person lectures at New Burlington House, with members enjoying a 20% discount, while online lectures and broadcasts remained free. This change, supported by members in a 2024 survey, has helped to cover rising costs and building improvements such as new AV in the Meeting Room and new emergency lighting.

Charges were already being applied to other types of events, including Treasures Tours, day meetings, education sessions and nature walks. Collectively, these generated £28,192, achieving 123% of the year's proposed target. This income not only supported the smooth running of our programme but also allowed us to maintain free online offerings, reaching audiences far beyond our walls. The modest charges drastically reduced the number of no-shows, helping us to plan the organisation of the events on the night more effectively.

By balancing small fees with member discounts and free digital access, 2025 demonstrated how thoughtful event pricing can sustain our activities while keeping the Society's collections, talks and experiences accessible to as many people as possible.

Bringing Our Collections to Life: Inspiring Products, Supporting Our Work

Onsite Shop

With exhibitions driving increased visitor numbers, we transformed our shop space to better capture attention and maximise sales. Despite spatial limitations, Helen Shaw, Jo Macdonald and Leonie Berwick introduced simple yet highly effective display enhancements, creating a more visible and inviting retail area. A bespoke card display was installed, making it easier for visitors to browse and leave with a meaningful memento of their visit (PICTURED OPPOSITE).

A revised second edition of *L: 50 Objects, Stories and Discoveries from the Linnean Society of London* was published at the start of the year, featuring a reflective foreword by Sir David Attenborough OM FRS. Sales remained steady throughout 2025. We expanded our range with new exhibition-linked postcards, individual greetings cards and a Christmas card celebrating the 'at-risk' hedgehog, which proved especially popular. Notebook sales rose significantly following promotion alongside the *Naturalists' Notebooks*



exhibition and online. A limited-edition ‘Naturae’ candle also sold strongly, while new tea towels and a foldable tote bag were designed and prepared for launch in 2026, in response to visitor feedback.

Overall, merchandise generated £10,166—meeting our £10,000 target. This good performance not only demonstrates strong visitor engagement but also provides valuable profit to reinvest in future exhibitions, collections care and public programmes.

Images and Print-on-Demand

Building on our partnership with Magnolia Box (which began in 2023), Leonie Berwick and Andrea Deneau digitised, edited and added metadata for a fresh autumn upload. Promoted via our social media channels, this generated almost £500 in income.

Looking ahead, we also established a new collaboration with Bridgeman Images at the end of 2025. We uploaded 200 high-resolution images for licensing and signed up for the product-on-demand option, offering products from mugs to cushion covers and phone cases. These new opportunities will be actively promoted throughout 2026, helping more people discover and enjoy our collections while supporting the Society’s work.

Supporting People and Strengthening Skills

Throughout the year, staff received training in the following areas: cybersecurity, crisis management, premises (health and safety, risk assessments, evacuation procedure), safeguarding, dementia awareness, digital fundraising and legacies, communications, marketing and social media, evaluation of impact, carbon reduction and first aid. Additionally, the Senior Management Team received training on understanding people and behaviours, establishing effective relationships, emotional intelligence, navigating difficult conversations and conflict resolution.

By supporting staff to develop new skills and deepen their expertise, we strengthen our organisational resilience, improve the quality of our services and ensure that our team is equipped to respond to the evolving needs of the communities we serve.





Financial Review

A summarised review of the Society's 2025 financial narrative and accounts.

The Society's income increased by £357,469 in 2025 to £2,632,979. This was largely due to a significant one-off increase in income from Publications during the year, which is unlikely to be repeated in the future. Our expenditure was up on last year, increasing by £119,785 to £2,008,737 in 2025.

Overall, our surplus of income over expenditure (before movements in investments) in 2025 was £624,242. Without the benefit of donations and legacies, our unrestricted funds surplus would have been £542,557. This metric, which excludes net gains / losses on investments, is the best way to assess the ongoing 'operational' financial performance of the Society but was somewhat inflated this year by the one-off increase in revenue from Publications. At the start of the year, we had expected to be in a modest deficit on an 'operational' basis in 2025 so it is pleasing to have finished well ahead of this expectation.

The value of our investments increased by £420,522 taking the overall net surplus for 2025 to £1,044,764.

Income

As usual, the overwhelming majority of our income came from our scientific research journals. The net contribution of our journals in 2025 was £1,891,382, an increase of £338,160 on 2024. Approximately £275,000 of this increase was due to one-off AI licensing income, which is unlikely to be repeated in future years. Without this one-off benefit, our Publishing income would have been up about 4% over 2024.

At the end of 2025, the total membership of the Society stands at 3,256, compared with 3,055 at the end of 2024. Members' subscriptions contributed £185,086 to our income in 2025. Grants, donations



and legacies play an important role in sustaining our charitable activities and we are most grateful to all those funders and donors who have supported the Society. We benefitted from donations and legacies of £46,408 during the year.

Events yielded a total income of £28,192 in 2025. Income from room hire and catering improved during the year to £30,849. Our in-house shop selling books and other merchandise associated with the Society was enhanced during the year and is making a helpful contribution to our finances. Together with other trading activities, this contributed £10,166 in 2025.

Investments

As a result of buoyant stock market conditions, the value of our investments increased by £420,522 in 2025 to £6,277,044. There has been no change to our investment policy this year, which targets returns over the medium term of at least 2.5% per annum above inflation.

Expenditure

Total expenditure on our charitable activities in 2025 (excluding investment management costs) was £1,975,982. Expenditure on staff salaries, National Insurance and pensions increased during the year to £1,046,060, reflecting cost of living increases for all staff and the impact of some recent senior hires. We provided funding for research projects across the globe of £47,117 (2024: £63,052), making grants to over 40 individuals.

During the year, we used some of our cash funds to pay a further £300,000 of the outstanding deferred consideration for the purchase of the 999-year lease of Burlington House. The outstanding balance owed to the Government is now down to £1.95 million. We no longer pay any rent to occupy our premises, although other costs (such as insurance, rates, maintenance and utilities) remain. We will also need to invest in the building to improve its accessibility, sustainability and efficiency, so there is likely to be material capital expenditure that will be required over the coming years.

Funds

The Society's Total Charity Funds amounted to £12,062,607 at the end of 2025. These funds are split between (a) Permanent Endowments and Restricted Funds and (b) Unrestricted Funds. Endowments and Restricted Funds amount to £3,415,805. Unrestricted Funds amount to £8,646,802, which includes a designated reserve of £5,059,790 to reflect funds already deployed on fixed assets or required to be deployed in the future, including the new lease. This year we have also re-instated the designated fund relating to future costs associated with our premises at Burlington House. We have allocated £500,000 to this fund to cover certain identified (although not yet fully quantified) costs relating to the building, as well as to have some funds available to make matched contributions to funding received from external parties towards future improvements as required.

Outlook

Whilst the Society remains in a relatively healthy financial position, there continue to be significant challenges ahead. We need to grow our income streams, which remain heavily dependent on revenue from our journals, and which are under long-term threat from trends in publishing.

Whilst we continue to manage costs efficiently, we are not immune to inflationary pressures. We are also investing in the future development of the Society with new staff hires, which we expect to increase our income over time, but which will have a cost impact in the short term. There are also likely to be maintenance and other costs for Burlington House that could be significant. The combination of these factors means that we are budgeting to be around break-even on an 'operational' basis in 2026.

Annual Report and Accounts

Further details of the Society's finances are set out in the Annual Report and Accounts 2025, available on the Society's website (www.linnean.org/annualreport).

Summarised Statement of Financial Activities (SOFA)

Income	2025	2024
	£	£
INCOME FROM		
Grants, Donations and Legacies	46,408	74,860
Charitable Activities		
Members' Contributions	185,086	180,886
Safeguarding & Promoting our Heritage Collections	24,844	5,907
Advancing Scientific Knowledge & Understanding	2,139,755	1,740,692
Investments	196,158	235,105
Other Trading Activities	40,728	38,060
TOTAL INCOME	2,632,979	2,275,510

Expenditure

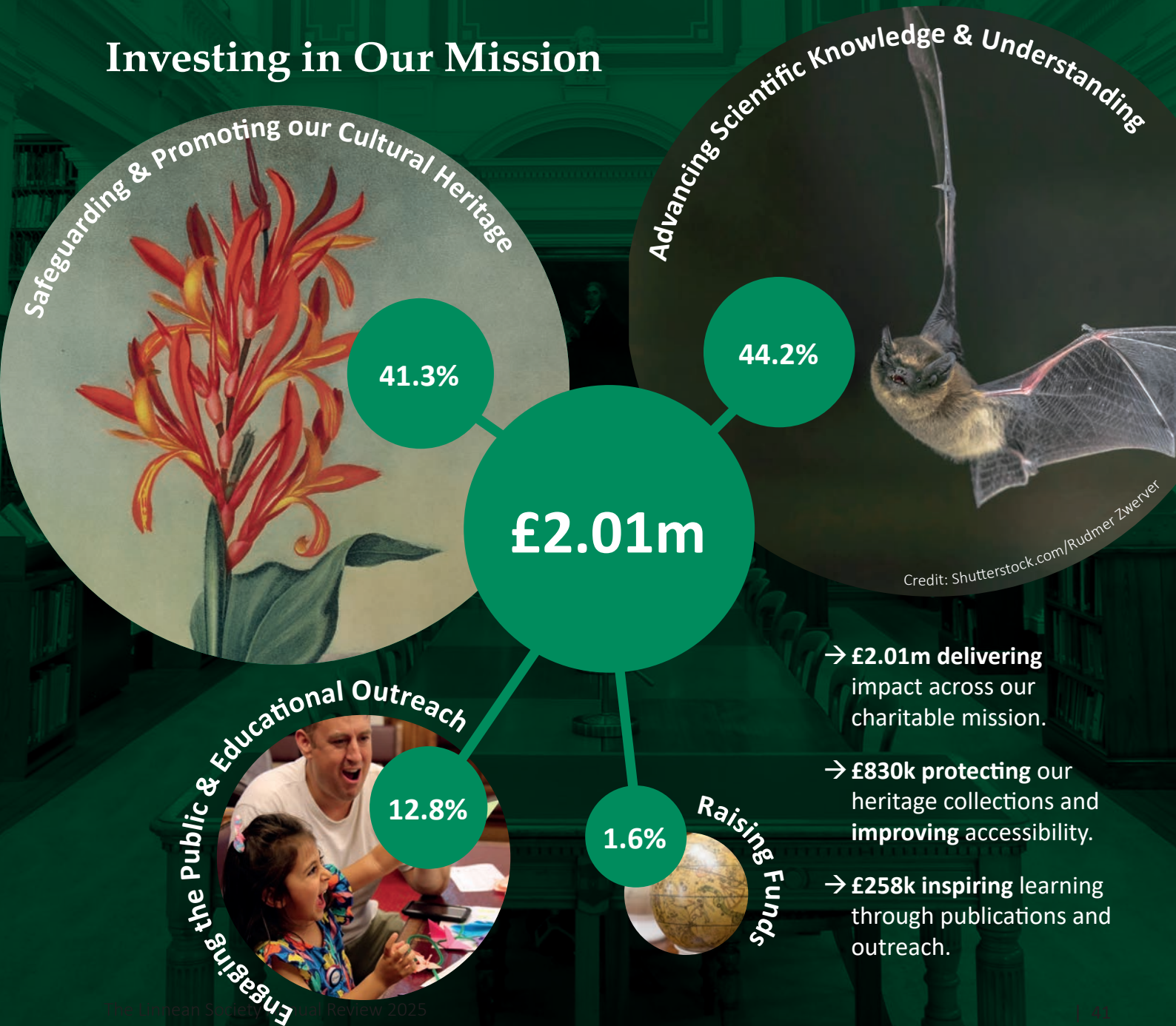
EXPENDITURE ON		
Charitable Activities		
Safeguarding & Promoting our Heritage Collections	829,723	808,594
Advancing Scientific Knowledge & Understanding	888,706	769,384
Engaging the Public & Educational Outreach	257,553	273,640
Raising Funds	32,755	37,334
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	2,008,737	1,888,952

SURPLUS (DEFICIT) FOR THE YEAR		
SURPLUS (DEFICIT) BEFORE GAINS (LOSSES) ON INVESTMENTS	624,242	386,558
GAINS (LOSSES) ON INVESTMENTS	420,522	303,777
SURPLUS (DEFICIT)	1,044,764	690,335

Income



Investing in Our Mission



Summarised Balance Sheet

	2025	2024
	£	£
FIXED ASSETS		
Heritage Assets	1,566,950	1,566,950
Tangible Fixed Assets	4,492,840	4,606,977
Investments at Market Value	6,277,044	5,896,090
TOTAL FIXED ASSETS	12,336,834	12,070,017
CURRENT ASSETS		
Debtors	870,125	498,039
Short Term Deposits	2,449,800	2,227,834
Cash at Bank and in Hand	187,221	134,082
TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS	3,507,146	2,859,955
LIABILITIES		
Creditors Due Within One Year	(1,831,373)	(1,662,129)
Creditors Due After One Year	(1,950,000)	(2,250,000)
TOTAL LIABILITIES	(3,781,373)	(3,912,129)
NET ASSETS		
NET ASSETS	12,062,607	11,017,843
FUNDS		
Endowment Funds	921,966	870,187
Restricted Funds	2,493,839	2,404,022
Unrestricted Funds	8,646,802	7,743,634
TOTAL FUNDS	12,062,607	11,017,843

The Society's Summarised Statement of Financial Activities (SOFA) and Balance Sheet are presented here in a simplified format designed to give an overview of the Society's financial situation. These reconcile with the full financial accounts, which were prepared to conform to the Statements of Recommended Practice (SORP – FRS 102). The full financial accounts, and a more detailed Financial Review, are included in the Society's *Annual Report and Accounts 2025*. The *Annual Report and Accounts 2025* can be downloaded from the Society's website (www.linnean.org/annualreport).

OUR TRUSTEES

Officers

Professor Anjali Goswami, President
(retired 22 May 2025)
Dr Mark Watson, President (from 22 May 2025)
Edward Banks, Treasurer

Elected Trustees

Professor Paul Barrett (retired 22 May 2025)
George Bull (from 22 May 2025)
Subhadra Das, Vice President
Dr Linda Davies (from 22 May 2025)
Professor Amy Dickman
Professor Philip Gilmartin (from 22 May 2025)
Dr José F. González-Maya (from 22 May 2025)
Dr Peter Gregory (from 22 May 2025)
Andrea Hart

Fiona McWilliams
Dr Juliano Morimoto (from 22 May 2025)
Professor Michael J. Reiss (retired 22 May 2025)
Professor Stuart West
Dr Heather White

Co-opted Trustees

Dr Isabel Larridon, Vice President
Dr Howard Nelson, Vice President

OUR STAFF TEAM

CEO	Professor Gail Cardew *
Head of Finance	Priya Nithianandan (1991–May 2025) *; Michael Kyriakides (from June 2025) *
Head of Collections	Dr Isabelle Charmantier *
Head of Operations	Helen Shaw *; Josie Macdonald (from April 2025, maternity cover) *
Head of Engagement	Anna Perman *
Head of Membership & Development	Pru Shackley *
Governance Manager	Andrew Swan
Librarian	Will Beharrell
Archivist	Liz McGow
Project Archivist	Alex Milne (2021–February 2025)
Project Archivist (Percy Sladen Memorial Fund)	Rebecca Darnill (from August 2025)
Assistant Archivist	Christina McCulloch (2023–September 2025)
Digital Assets Manager	Andrea Deneau
Conservator	Janet Ashdown
Communications & Events Manager	Padmaparna Ghosh; Katie Lau (from March 2025, maternity cover)
Publications Manager	Leonie Berwick
Education Manager	Ayesha Meredith-Lewis
Engagement Officer	Scarlet Forrester
Journal Editorial Manager	Dr Hassan Rankou
Journal Officer	Georgia Cowie
Operations Assistant	Tatiana Franco
Office Cleaner P/T	Fatima Mendonça

* Senior Management Team

CURATORS, EDITORS AND COMMITTEES 2025

Curators

Fish, Shells & General Zoology	Oliver Crimmen
Insects	Suzanne Ryder
Plants	Dr Mark A. Spencer (2013–April 2025); Jacek Wajer (from April 2025)
Artefacts	Glenn Benson
Honorary Archivist	Gina Douglas

Editors

<i>Biological Journal</i>	Dr Karen Sears
<i>Botanical Journal</i>	Dr Steven Dodsworth
<i>Zoological Journal</i>	Dr Jeffrey Streicher
<i>Evolutionary Journal</i>	Professor Julia J. Day
<i>The Linnean</i>	Leonie Berwick

Committee Chairpersons

Audit	Dr Isabel Larridon (until May 2025); George Bull (from May 2025)
Collections	Dr Mark Watson (until May 2025); Andrea Hart (from May 2025)
Engagement	Dr Howard Nelson (until May 2025); Dr Linda Davies (from May 2025)
Fellowship	Fiona McWilliams
Finance & Risk	The Treasurer
Medals & Awards	Professor Paul Barrett (until May 2025); Professor Phil Gilmartin (from September 2025)
Nominations	The President
Publishing	Professor Stuart West
Remuneration	The Treasurer
Safeguarding	Professor Michael Reiss (until May 2025); Dr Peter Gregory (from May 2025)

The President and Treasurer are *ex officio* members of all Committees, with the exception of the Audit Committee, where the Treasurer is an attendee. The CEO is an invited attendee of all Committees. Staff also attend various Committees, but not as members.

Committee Members

Audit Committee for the 2024 Accounts

Dr Isabel Larridon (Chair)
 Dr Mark Watson
 Dr Heather White
 Fellowship representative, Tim Bush
 Fellowship representative, Professor William Friedman
 Fellowship representative, George Bull (co-opted)
 A representative of Knox Cropper (Auditors)

Audit Committee for the 2025 Accounts

George Bull (Chair)
 Subhadra Das
 Dr Heather White
 Fellowship representative, Karen Goldie-Morrisson
 Fellowship representative, Dave Mitchell
 A representative of Knox Cropper (Auditors)

Collections Committee

Dr Mark Watson (Chair, until May 2025);
Andrea Hart (2015; Chair, from May 2025)
The Honorary Curators
Professor Felix Driver (2023)
Dr Louisiane Ferlier (2023)
Debbie Lane (2020)
Chris Mills (2022)
Dr Chris Saunders (2021)

Engagement Committee

Dr Howard Nelson (Chair, until May 2025);
Dr Linda Davies (Chair, from May 2025)
Lucy Carson-Taylor (2023)
Dr Chiara Ceci (2024)
Sara Abdulla (2024)
James Fulcher (2023)
Fellowship Committee
Fiona McWilliams (Chair)
Professor Amy Dickman (2024)
Fellowship representative, Dr Alexandra Helen-Davey (2024)
Fellowship representative, Jon Dunn (2024)
Fellowship representative, Chadwick Hagan (2024)
Fellowship representative, Dr Ellen Kenchington (2024)

Finance and Risk Committee

The Treasurer (Chair)
Dr Charlotte Grezo (2020–October 2025)
Fiona McWilliams (2023)
Eoin Murray (2023)
Elree Winnett Seelig (2023)

Medals and Awards Committee

Professor Paul Barrett (Chair, until May 2025);
Professor Phil Gilmartin (Chair, from September 2025)
Dr José F. González-Maya (2025)
Professor Kayla King (2022–May 2025)
Dr Sandra Knapp (2022–May 2025)
Dr Juliano Morimoto (2024)
Dr Heather White (2024)

Nominations Committee

The President (Chair)
Professor Phil Gilmartin (2025)
Steph Holt (2022–May 2025)
Dr Sandra Knapp (from August 2025)
Dr Howard Nelson (2022); (May 2025, co-opted for 1 year)
Dr Mark Watson (from May 2024; May 2025, Chair)

Publishing Committee

Professor Stuart West (Chair)
Dr Isabel Larridon (2024)
Professor Alistair Hetherington (2023)
Kathryn Spiller (2024)
Nick Lindsay (2024)
The Editors-in-Chief
Representatives from the publisher, Oxford University Press (OUP)

Remuneration Committee

The Treasurer (Chair)
The President
George Bull (from May 2025)
Dr Mark Watson (from May 2024)

Safeguarding Committee

Professor Michael J. Reiss (Chair, until May 2025);
Dr Peter Gregory (Chair, from May 2025)
Designated Safeguarding Officer
Deputy Designated Safeguarding Officers
CEO

Public Benefit

The Linnean Society contributes to scientific, cultural, economic and social well-being nationally and internationally through a broad programme of activities. Our Arts Council England (ACE)-designated biological collections and historical resources—and our strong focus on biodiversity conservation, sustainability and science outreach—support the care and understanding of our planet. The Society's key contributions to public benefit are:

- Safeguarding and promoting the Society's heritage collections, through cataloguing, conservation and digitisation, improving access to primary information, making collections freely available to view online.
- Advancing and disseminating knowledge through four world-class research journals and providing support and recognition through grant schemes and awards to emerging scientists and naturalists.
- Engaging the public through exhibitions, regular tours of the collections, conferences and free public lectures, while our educational programme, which fuses science, history and art, reaches out to students of all ages and backgrounds, providing resources in schools, in New Burlington House and online.

The Society's activities contribute to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals through support for the natural world, and through unique resources that illuminate environmental and social change. The Society connects academia with a diverse public, informing UK Government policy and promoting the international profile of the UK as a pre-eminent international hub for expertise about the natural world.

Core Values and Strategic Planning

The Society's vision, mission and values are:

Vision: A world where nature is understood, valued and protected

Mission: To cultivate a global community working for a world where nature is understood, valued and protected.

Values:

- We are a diverse community of people united by an active interest in nature, its management and conservation.
- We aim for excellence and integrity in all areas of our activity.
- We use our income and other finances to fulfil our charitable function and declared mission.
- We promote our science to all sectors of society.
- We value diversity and seek to broaden the inclusion of currently under-represented groups.
- We are an expert voice concerning relevant major issues and challenges of our time.



Credit: Jin-Gyu Chang







The Linnean Society of London
Burlington House, Piccadilly,
London W1J 0BF

www.linnean.org

The
LINNEAN
SOCIETY
of London



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