

The Wildfowl Trust

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<i>Co-opted Members</i>	Mrs. P. Clifford	Miss P. Talbot-Ponsonby
	Captain P. A. Fergusson-	The Hon. Vincent Weir
	Cunninghame	

Invited to attend meetings ex-officio Miss K. M. P. Burton, H.M.I. (*Assessor for the Department of Education and Science*)

<i>Finance Committee</i>	Michael Crichton, O.B.E. (<i>Chairman</i>)	G. A. J. Jamieson
	C. Braby	E. G. Kleinwort
	J. O. Death	Peter Scott, C.B.E., D.S.C., LL.D.
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<i>Scientific Advisory Committee</i>	Professor G. M. Hughes (<i>Chairman</i>)	R. C. Homes
	Professor A. J. Cain	Sir Julian Huxley, F.R.S.
	Dr. Bruce Campbell	Dr. D. Lack, F.R.S.
	R. K. Cornwallis	Professor C. W. Ottaway
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	Dr. J. H. Crook	Dr. G. W. Storey
	Dr. G. M. Dunnet	Professor W. H. Thorpe, F.R.S.
	Dr. J. G. Harrison	Major-General C. B. Wainwright, C.B.
	Professor R. A. Hinde	Professor E. W. Yemm

Trust Activities, Developments and Finance, 1968

Meetings

The Officers, Council and Committees of the Trust as at 31st December 1968 are listed on page 165. The Council met on 11th January, 12th March, 13th July and 28th November; the Finance Committee on 12th March, 27th June and 7th November; and the Scientific Advisory Committee on 21st March. All meetings were at the headquarters of the Nature Conservancy, except that of 13th July which was at Slimbridge.

The 20th Annual General Meeting was held at the Royal Society of Arts, London, on May 14th. The Annual Dinner was at the Hyde Park Hotel on the same day. The Hon. Director presided and the speakers were Sir Paul Chambers, Colin Mackay and Alan Melville.

Amendments to Rules

The full Minutes of the Annual General Meeting are circulated separately to Members. It is thought appropriate, however, to note here changes in the Rules that were passed.

16th May 1967 — Rule 16(i). Delete the words: "A Secretary".

14th May 1968 — Rule 3. Amend last four lines to read: "Provided that nothing contained in these rules shall prevent the payment in good faith of remuneration (including provisions of pensions and superannuation and life insurance benefit) to any officer or servant of the Trust or to any Member thereof in return for services actually rendered to the Trust".

— Rule 5(4)(iv). Amend first line to read: "Up to 31st May 1968 the Council shall have power to elect as Junior Compounded Members . . ."

Membership

Membership increased by 339 over 1967. Thus:

	1967	1968
Life Members	317	345
Full Members	4581	5054
Associate Members	1643	1606
Parish Members	254	237
Junior Compounded Members	13	13
Gosling Members	751	642
Corporate Members	99	100
Contributors	32	32
	7690	8029

There was continued interest in the Swan Supporter scheme and the number of supporters increased from 135 to 158. Of the adopted swans 72% returned in the course of the winter. (New swans are allocated to supporters whose swans do not come back.)

Twenty-two members very kindly opened their private collections to fellow members during 1968.

Johnny Morris came to a very well attended Gosling party on 28th December.

It is with regret that the Council learned of the death of 63 members and associates during the year and also of two Council Members — Professor John E. Harris, C.B.E., F.R.S., and Major General C. B. Wainwright, C.B., and a Member of the Scientific Advisory Committee, Mr. R. K. Cornwallis.

Attendances

Although the tropical house, opened at the end of 1967, proved a great attraction, Slimbridge had a slight drop in visitors; Peakirk, however, in spite of the wet summer had a 16% increase making the total for 1968 a record:

	1966	1967	1968
Slimbridge	200231	209243	206903
Peakirk	46514	46181	53602
	246745	255424	260505

Development

A generous legacy made it possible for a much needed administrative block at Slimbridge to be built; by the end of the year this was almost completed. This new block has room for the offices of the International Wildfowl Research Bureau and for an assistant of the World Wildlife Fund. Rooms in the older buildings, previously occupied by administrators, were freed for bedrooms and to provide much needed additional workrooms and museum space.

In April 1968 the Trust was able to take into its lease the 11 acre field, which had for long served as its car park. Improvements were immediately put in hand to enable it to accommodate coaches, to take vehicles in wet weather and to operate satisfactorily on busy days. Arrangements for free parking for members were instituted and in the autumn trees and shrubs to provide shade and enhance the appearance were planted.

Possession of this field also provided a site for improved arrangements for quarantining wildfowl imported from overseas. By the end of the year two new quarantine pens were completed and construction of a second pair was in progress.

Work was started by the Youth Hostel Association, with the help of a generous grant from the Carnegie (U.K.) Trust, on the building of a Youth Hostel for Field Studies at the Patch, Slimbridge, on a site provided by the Trust. The Trust's educational facilities as well as two well equipped work rooms at the Hostel will be available to field study groups.

An anonymous donation earmarked for improvements to the Waterfowl Gardens at Peakirk was received and allocated for a new entrance building and shop planned for construction in the summer of 1969. The pair of cottages at Peakirk donated by Mrs. Annie Williams were converted to a house for the curator with a bachelor's flat alongside.

Welney

Thanks to the generosity of many kind benefactors, both in this country and the U.S.A., the Trust was able to repay in July the interest free loan made by Arthur Guinness, Son & Co. (Park Royal) Ltd. for the establishment of the Welney Wildfowl Refuge in the Great Ouse Washes, Norfolk. By the end of the year the Trust owned 399 acres, had control of the shooting over a further 100 acres and had agreed the purchase of another 38 acres with the help of an interest free bridging loan generously advanced by Mr. Ernest Kleinwort. A cottage near the reserve was bought for modernisation as a house for the warden.

Finance

During the year £16,729, accumulated in the General Reserve Fund, mostly from legacies and donations, was spent on the new office block and on improvements to the car park. An additional £6,314 of capital expenditure was charged to the Income and Expenditure Account. This together with continued rises in costs produced an excess of expenditure over income of £3,210. Detailed accounts have already been circulated to Members, but an abbreviated set, covering both 1967 and 1968, is given at p. 168.

Although the Trust has always been fortunate in finding benefactors to finance new ventures and activities, it has never been able to expand as fast as it ought. The Council therefore decided to mount a campaign with a target of £325,000 to raise funds for further developments at Slimbridge, Peakirk and Welney and also for the establishment of new wildfowl collections and reserves in areas beyond easy reach of its existing sites. A firm of professional fund-raisers was employed and by 31st December 1968 a grossed up total of £57,000 over the term of the covenants had been raised.

It was clear that even if future expenditure on development were to be limited to the amount available from donations and legacies, increased income would be needed to cover inevitable rises in running costs. The Council therefore decided to institute new admission charges to Slimbridge and Peakirk on 1st January 1969 and to submit proposals to the 1969 Annual General Meeting for increases in the rates of subscription for members.

C. E. H. SPARROW

Terms of Membership (as from 1st January 1970)

LIFE MEMBERS	A single payment of £100. Entitled to all the privileges of Full Membership (see below).
FULL MEMBERS	£3 a year. Entitled to free entry to the Enclosures and observation hides at Slimbridge and Peakirk, with one free guest, and to a free copy of WILDFOWL and bulletins.
ASSOCIATE MEMBERS	£1 10s. a year. Entitled to free entry to Enclosures and hides, and to a free copy of bulletins.
GOSLING MEMBERS (under 18)	12/6d. a year. Entitled to the same privileges as Associate Members. A leaflet obtainable at Slimbridge or Peakirk gives details of a scheme of grading of Goslings, with appropriate distinguishing marks, and promotion by recognition tests.
CORPORATE MEMBERS	£1 a year. Limited to educational establishments, youth clubs, and bodies which are members of the Council for Nature. Receive a free copy of WILDFOWL and bulletins. Free entry for one adult per each ten members of a party.

THE WILDFOWL TRUST, SLIMBRIDGE, GLOUCESTER
INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT FOR THE YEARS ENDED 31st DECEMBER 1967 and 1968

EXPENDITURE	1967 £	1968 £	INCOME	1967 £	1968 £
To General Expenses			By General Income:—		
Salaries and Superannuation, Administrative Staff	7504	10040	Subscriptions	12121	12247
Rent, Rates, Water Rates and Insurance	2092	1600	Donations	4102	705
General administration expenses	4083	5813	Income Tax repaid on covenants	2240	2267
Maintenance, including hostel	2792	3441	Interest received	1398	1819
Printing, including bulletins, stationery	2167	2968			
Loan Interest, Bank Charges	241	185			
Advertising	5824	7354			
	<u>24703</u>	<u>31401</u>		<u>19861</u>	<u>17038</u>
New Grounds and Peakirk:—			New Grounds and Peakirk:—		
Salaries, Wages and Superannuation	17519	19083	Takings	53993	59767
Purchases of Wildfowl	2550	1550	Sale of Surplus Wildfowl	3617	3083
Food for Wildfowl	6971	7569	Restaurant	1834	2181
Maintenance, Fuel etc.	5002	7360			
Transport, Mechanical Equipment, Travel	1834	2191			
Miscellaneous	761	758			
	<u>34637</u>	<u>38511</u>		<u>59444</u>	<u>65031</u>
Gate Houses:—			Gate Houses:—		
Salaries, Wages and Superannuation	4894	6484	Sales	36889	38666
Miscellaneous	1980	2266	Less: Purchases (with stocks adjusted)	26441	27019
	<u>6874</u>	<u>8750</u>		<u>10448</u>	<u>11647</u>
Research and Conservation:—			Research and Conservation:—		
Salaries and Superannuation	15283	16831	The Natural Environment Research Council Grant	15901	17129
Miscellaneous Research expenditure	4609	4797	Donations	772	996
Printing 'Wildfowl'	2819	2622	Other Receipts	1849	2358
Management and Upkeep of refuges and ringing stations	7166	6461			
	<u>29877</u>	<u>30711</u>		<u>18522</u>	<u>20483</u>
Educational:—			Educational:—		
Salaries and Superannuation	1273	2255	County Council Grants	275	275
Miscellaneous	492	688			
	<u>1765</u>	<u>2943</u>			
Capital Expenditure:—					
Development	6363	5140			
Equipment	1962	1174			
	<u>8325</u>	<u>6314</u>			
Written off Buildings	100	100			
Surplus for year, carried down	2781	—			
	<u>£109062</u>	<u>£118730</u>		<u>£109062</u>	<u>£118730</u>
To Deficit for year, brought down	—	3210	By Balance at end of year	1022	1003
Transfer to Accumulated Fund	2800	—	Surplus for year, brought down	2781	—
Balance, carried forward to next year	1003	—	Transfer to Accumulated Fund	—	2207
	<u>£3803</u>	<u>£3210</u>		<u>£3803</u>	<u>£3210</u>

THE WILDFOWL TRUST, SLIMBRIDGE, GLOUCESTER
BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31st DECEMBER 1968

1967	LIABILITIES	£	£		1967	ASSETS	£	£
47100	Accumulated Fund		47100			Fixed Assets		
1003	Income and Expenditure Account		—		12099	Freehold and Leasehold Properties at Cost or Valuation (less depreciation)		13179
<u>48103</u>			<u>47100</u>			Assets, at Valuation, 31st December 1968		
	Special Fund:—				8209	Transport and other equipment	9175	
3420	Specific Projects	18723			10920	Wildfowl	11000	
—	Life Membership	1022			19129			20175
10964	General Reserve	686			31228			<u>33354</u>
	Special Reserve (after transfer of £2,207 to Accumulated Fund and £1,000 to General Reserve Fund)	4293			21884	Special Funds, represented by:—		
7500						Investment at Cost and cash on deposit		24724
<u>21884</u>			<u>24724</u>			Current Assets:—		
1366	Mortgage on Freehold Property		1350		7505	Gate House and Other Stocks	8563	
	Current Liabilities				7576	Sundry Debtors and Payments in advance	7813	
19032	Sundry Creditors and Accrued Charges	16901			46192	Cash	8660	
24000	Unsecured Loans	2876			61273			25036
<u>43032</u>			<u>19777</u>			Fund Raising Campaign:—		
					—	Campaign Expenses to date less Covenants and other donations received		9837
<u>£114385</u>			<u>£92951</u>		<u>£114385</u>			<u>£92951</u>

We have examined the above Balance Sheet of The Wildfowl Trust dated 31st December 1968, together with the accompanying Income and Expenditure Account and find them to be in accordance with the Books and Vouchers produced to us and the explanations given to us.

STROUD, GLOUCESTERSHIRE.
14th April 1969.

S. J. DUDBRIDGE & SONS
Chartered Accountants

1968 Breeding Season: Slimbridge

Some 900 birds of 98 different kinds have been bred. The old breeding female Magpie Goose died, but now her free-winged stock have commenced nesting and have built quite different nests from those of the pinioned birds. These built piles of herbage on the ground similar to swans, but the full-winged birds made several nests in the tops of pollarded willows and even on top of the Guinness Aviary. The full-winged birds comprised two females and a male, and although a large number of eggs were laid, very few were fertile. The Crested Screamers nested and reared two young. Among the whistling ducks, Cuban, Fulvous, White-faced and both forms of Red-billed were reared in considerable numbers. Of the swans, Black, Black-necked, Bewick's and Trumpeter were reared. The Hawaiian Geese hatched 30 young, 25 were reared. Among the ducks, only one sitting of Bronzewing eggs was obtained, and although four of these were fertile, none hatched. What is even sadder is that during the winter two of the potential breeding females have died.

The first breeding of the Rosy Flamingos in Britain is described elsewhere (p. 163). The most interesting other new species to lay was the Falkland Flightless Steamer Duck and out of her five eggs, four were hatched under a bantam. Although the ducklings appeared quite vigorous on hatching, we were unable to

get them to feed and in four days all were lost. Other new species to be reared at Slimbridge were Maned Geese and Pelew Island Grey Duck. A Hooded Merganser appeared on the Rushy Pen pond with six young, five of her own and one Mandarin. It is sad to relate that she reared the Mandarin but lost her own young within a week. After a number of years, we again bred the Hawaiian Duck, now possibly the world's rarest wildfowl. Thirteen of these were added to the collection.

We had hoped that the Tropical House would have helped the Pygmy Geese to commence breeding in captivity, but they showed no sign of nesting. Odd eggs were laid therein by the Hottentot Teal and also by the White-backed Duck but neither really completed a clutch, and no eggs hatched. As there were perhaps too many duck for the limited water space, we removed the Eyton's and Spotted Whistling Duck from the House, merely leaving the Javan Whistling Duck, the African and Indian Pygmy Geese and the Hottentot Teal. Whilst unfortunately the ducks have not taken as well as one would have hoped to these new surroundings, always assuming that breeding is the measure of ideal conditions, one must add that the *Amazilia* Humming Bird built a nest and laid, although the eggs were infertile.

S. T. JOHNSTONE

1968 Breeding Season — Peakirk

The season was regrettably poor and got off to a bad start when the female Black-necked Swan deserted her nest in the middle of a snow storm at the end of February. This was followed until Easter by generally cold conditions with little natural cover available for the birds; during this period a number of eggs were taken by rooks and carrion crows. Much of the remainder of the season was badly affected by extremely wet weather, and heavy flooding took place in the Gar-

dens on several occasions. A very severe rain storm occurred on the night of 10th July and part of the Rearing Ground was under water, with the tragic loss of some twenty ducklings. As a general result of the weather, total figures for 'species laid' and 'young reared' are both well down on previous years. More notable of the young reared during the season were Fulvous Whistling Duck, Red-breasted Goose, Falcated Teal and Australian Wood Duck.

P. B. VARDY

Conservation, Research and Education

International wildfowl conservation received a set-back when events in Czechoslovakia interfered with the large-scale conference arranged for September in Leningrad. Although it was held, delegates from the West did not attend. However, it is understood that the massive documentation prepared will still be published. For reasons of work pressure Dr. Luc Hoffmann indicated that he wished to retire from the Directorship of the International Wildfowl Research Bureau. At the I.W.R.B. meeting in Morges, Switzerland, in September, Dr. Matthews was elected to be the new Director. The post is an honorary one and he will continue as Director of Research to the Trust. Our Council approved the appointment and undertook to provide office accommodation and facilities at Slimbridge from the beginning of 1969 (p. 94).

An important event was the inspection, by members of a Visiting Group of the Nature Conservancy, of the research work and facilities of the Trust. A distinguished group of scientists led by Professor V. C. Wynne-Edwards (now Chairman of the Natural Environment Research Council) carried out a searching survey with a view to recommending what financial support should be forthcoming from N.E.R.C. at the end of their present quinquennial grant in March 1971. Their recommendations were such that it is probable that ten year contracts will be entered into with respect to the wildfowl counts, the ringing programme and the general direction of the research effort. Other studies will be required to seek short term grants in the usual way in competition with Universities and other bodies. This was a welcome indication of continued confidence in the quality of our research and its relevance to nature conservation.

The Trust's long-term research into the populations and ecology of wildfowl continued. Those concerned with censuses and counts, with ringing and migration and with the detailed studies of the wild geese and wild swans at Slimbridge have already been summarised in the 'Current Reports' section (pp. 148 to 160).

The review of Reserves being undertaken by the Nature Conservancy was underpinned, insofar as wetlands were concerned, by massive documentation prepared by Mr. Atkinson-Willes. Threats to wetland habitat were resisted. These arose through development schemes and, particularly in the case of reservoirs, through increased recreational demands.

Where possible compromise was advocated, involving a share-out of available waters between the various interests.

This year saw the coming into force of the revision of the Protection of Birds Act. Two important provisions concerning wildfowl, curtailment of shooting in extreme weather and banning of the sale of dead wild geese, owed much to the efforts of the Trust. Indeed several pages of Hansard were devoted to statements based on our researches into goose numbers and feeding habits.

On our new reserve at the Welney Washes, preliminary surveys of breeding ducks and of the vegetation were made. In addition to the study on the feeding of geese on agricultural land in Scotland (p. 155), a detailed study of the grazing and food preferences of the White-fronted Geese was started by Dr. Owen at Slimbridge. He also helped in the planning and execution of related feeding studies at Bridgwater Bay, Somerset, and on the North Slob, Wexford, Ireland.

Besides writing up a final paper on her long series of experimental investigations into the effects of goose grazing on cereals and grass, Dr. Kear was concerned with the growth and nutrition of young birds. These included the exotic species at Slimbridge and also Tufted Ducks in connection with the Loch Leven research. She was involved in the programme of selective breeding of the Ne-ne and, on a visit to New Zealand, called at the various centres in the U.S.A. and Hawaii, where this species is reared, for discussions on techniques. In New Zealand she was especially concerned with the feeding and other behaviour of the Blue Duck.

The health of the wildfowl in our collections continued to be watched over by Dr. Beer. He carried out post-mortems and advised on curative or prophylactic measures. The pattern of disease over the past ten years was analysed. It is to be hoped that the new services and propagation buildings, now being planned, will reduce the losses, especially amongst downy young.

Orientation tests continued with birds caught at Borough Fen Decoy, and Mr. Ogilvie was involved with the Royal Radar Establishment's investigation on the effects of radar on birds and on its use for identifying them on migration. Dr. Matthews' revised edition of his book *Bird Navigation* was published.

University research was again assisted in various ways, facilities or specimens

being provided for Aberdeen, Bath, Bristol, Cambridge, Cardiff, Durham, Leicester, London, Portsmouth and Stirling. From Bristol University, Dr. Miles left at the end of his post-doctoral year, while Mr. M. Penny began a post-graduate study on wader feeding ecology, working both at Slimbridge and on Aldabra Island in the Indian Ocean. Other post graduate studies were begun by Mr. P. N. Humphreys (Cardiff) on fertility in wildfowl, and by Mr. J. Mattocks (Bath) on the micro-organisms in the goose's gut in relation to digestion.

Courses of lectures were again given at Bristol and Cardiff, from which students came for day courses as did others from Leicester, London, Portsmouth and

Reading. The four-day Teachers' Course was run in April and four one-day courses were also provided. Mr. Jackson took over the administration and organisation of school visits, which numbered 684. The film *Wild Wings* was shown to 122 parties, and 103 lectures were given away from Slimbridge. The usefulness and interest of school party visits to Slimbridge was greatly increased by the introduction of especially compiled 'work sheets' and of lecture sets of slides loaned to the schools prior to the visits.

A set of display boards for the Holden Tower was designed and prepared. The annual Schools Identification Competition took place in March and had the record number of 147 entrants.

Publications in 1968

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- OLNEY, P. J. S. The food and feeding habits of the Pochard. *Biol. Conservation* 1 : 71-76.
- POLLARD, D. F. W. and P. WALTERS-DAVIES. A preliminary study of the feeding of the Greenland White-fronted Goose in Cardiganshire. *Wildfowl* 19 : 108-16.
- RANSOME, R. D. The distribution of the Greater Horse-shoe Bat during hibernation in relation to environmental factors. *J. Zool. Lond.* 154 : 77-112.
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G. V. T. MATTHEWS