

Election at the virtual EOU conference in Giessen 2022

On Friday 17 December 2021, the Nominating Committee, consisting of Jenny Gill, Leonida Fusani and Zoltan Barta and chaired by Barbara Helm, has met online and has nominated the following candidates, whose application statements are summarized below.

Candidates

Nominated as President-Elect:

Peter L. Pap, Romania

Here I wish to express my willingness to apply for future EOU presidency. For the elections in Giessen (2022), I will be prepared to stand for President-Elect, so that I would automatically become President 4 years later. I feel motivated to apply for such an honoured position to promote the activity of the organization and to strengthen the connection among ornithologists between the countries. As a deep-rooted East-European ornithologist I consider that I have a lot to add to the visibility of the Eastern-European ornithology, which is much needed for such a European wide society, such as the European Ornithologists' Union. I have gathered much experience on the EOU in many years of council work, and I have hosted the most recent EOU conference as head local organizer (in 2019 in Cluj-Napoca). As an academic who started his early career working for NGOs in bird conservation, I have good connections and understanding of ornithologists working on both, basic and applied science. In case I will be elected I wish to act towards increasing the visibility of the organization, promoting young scientists, involving the organization in bird conservation actions and helping the organization to run the next congresses across Europe.

I have been fascinated by ornithology since I was child, starting my early career with observing birds, then organizing ringing camps across Romania in order to better understand the patterns observed in phenology of bird migration. I continued by studying the breeding ecology, physiology and host-parasite interactions of several bird species, such as the barn swallow and the house sparrow. Later, after I successfully defended my PhD thesis at the University of Debrecen, Hungary, I turned my attention to comparative analyses, working on topics such as the ecomorphology of bird feathers and plumage, and the factors underpinning the variance in physiology across species. Over the years I founded a research group and became Professor at my host institute, the Babes-Bolyai University from Cluj Napoca, Romania, where a new generation was trained in ornithology, animal ecology and evolutionary biology. With intense team working we published our research results in around 60 papers and in prestigious international journals, such as the Functional Ecology, Evolution, Proceedings of the Royal Society, Oecologia or Journal of Avian Biology.

Nominated as Secretary:

Dan Chamberlain, Italy / UK

I hereby candidate myself for the post of Secretary of the European Ornithologists' Union. I have been involved in ornithological research for 30 years, during which I have been fortunate to work on

a wide range of projects with a broad spectrum of collaborators from many different backgrounds and countries. I am English, but I have lived in Italy for twelve years and have dual nationality. I am currently a Full Professor in Ecology at the University of Turin where I continue to develop collaborative research links across Europe and beyond. I thus think my varied background gives me a very good perspective on the different challenges faced by scientists in different countries.

I have always been a great supporter of the European Ornithologists' Union. Since the inception of the EOU Conference, I have missed only two (the first and third), and I have been active at the others, through organizing symposia, giving presentations and participating in other activities (e.g. RTDs, Q&A sessions). I was also co-organizer of the EOU Fledglings meeting in Turin in 2018. I therefore have an in-depth understanding of the EOU and of the needs of its members.

The EOU has made great strides in acting as a forum for the presentation of leading European ornithological research, primarily through its conferences. However, I believe that the Union has great potential to develop further in a way that helps ornithologists throughout Europe – in particular the next generation of researchers. If I am fortunate enough to be elected as Secretary, I would take the role forward by developing our profile and our ornithological community through various communication channels, in particular social media. More broadly, I would support an extension of the EOU's role and activities in promoting and enhancing European ornithological research.

Nominated as candidates for ordinary council member:

Sanja Barišić, Croatia

Researcher in Ornithology, Croatian Academy of Sciences and Arts

I earned my PhD degree (2015) from the University of Zagreb. My doctoral thesis was on breeding biology and habitat selection of the Black-headed Bunting. Since my graduation, I have been working at the Institute of Ornithology, Croatian Academy of Sciences and Arts, apart from a short period when I worked in the private sector (ornithologist at the "Oikon ltd"). I co-authored two key documents related to Croatian ornithology: *The Red Data Book of Birds of Croatia* and *Croatian Bird Migration Atlas*, as well as 16 research papers. I participate in longitudinal studies in Croatia on the Black-headed Bunting, the European Roller and the Ural Owl, as well as in studies of several other species. I have actively taken part in bird ringing since 2002 and am currently the head of the *Croatian Bird Rarities Committee*.

When I started thinking of how I can contribute to the EOU, the following came into my mind: Because of my background, coming from a lower-income country that modestly invests in scientific research, I feel my obligation is to represent some of the difficulties scientists of similar backgrounds face. I think the EOU should try to promote the value of often neglected descriptive studies. I feel there are at least two reasons for this. Scientists, especially young ones, coming from the communities where the scientific research is under-funded, rarely have enough resources and mentorship to conduct high-end, sophisticated, experimental studies that need to be well funded and often require assistants or collaborators. As a result, many don't feel confident enough to participate in international scientific conferences. That doesn't mean that they, especially when they

are just starting, cannot make valuable contributions to avian research. From my experience, it is very hard to publish “just” descriptive studies in respected journals and these studies are often considered less valuable. On the other hand, again from my experience, when I want to look up some of the fundamental information on particular species, like basic breeding biology, I am often surprised how little is available, even for some of the well-studied bird species. At the next conference or fledglings meeting, it would thus be beneficial to include a session dedicated to descriptive studies.

Davide Dominoni, UK / Italy

Lecturer in Urban Ecology, University of Glasgow

I hereby want to express my excitement about the opportunity to become a council member of the EOU. I am passionate about ornithological science and I appreciate the value of the EOU in spreading the passion for birds among young ornithologists, breaking the barriers of nationality, gender and social and cultural backgrounds. EOU conferences are amazing events where it is easy to network, be inspired by ornithological science done across Europe, and open new horizons for scientific collaborations and working opportunities.

I have been involved with the EOU since the second year of my PhD, when I have organised a symposium on urban ecology at the EOU meeting in Riga, Latvia, 2011. I have also organised a symposium in 2015 in Badajoz, Spain and have chaired oral presentation sessions (Turku 2017 and Cluj-Napoca 2019). Next to acting for European ornithology, I have also been highly involved globally with the activities at the IOC. For example, I'm organising a symposium at the IOC in Durban (2022) about Urban Ecology in the Global South, to encourage researchers from traditionally overlooked countries to broadcast their research on urban birds. I have also gotten involved in other EOU/IOC related activities, such as the URBICON initiative on urban ecology. With this application, I wish to bring my commitment one step forward by becoming council member, actively engaging with running conferences as well as with other activities of the Union.

As a council member, I think I can contribute in different ways. First, I am truly motivated to support early career researchers, which may include for instance assessing talks for students' prizes, reviewing applications for travel grants, and generally offering any kind of support that ECRs may seek. Second, I am quite active on social media, especially on Twitter, where I post through my own account as well as from the account of my research group in Glasgow. I think social media, and particularly Twitter, offer a great opportunity to broadcast the excellent research presented during EOU meetings and attract new members and sponsors. Last but not least, I would also commit to seek funds to support collaborations between European ornithologists. My research is highly collaborative, and I firmly believe that collaborations are a unique opportunity to advance science while overcoming cultural barriers. This is for me an even more important issue now that I reside and work in the UK while remaining truly European at heart.

Crinan Jarrett, UK, onto Switzerland

Completing PhD in Glasgow, starting Postdoc at the Swiss Ornithological Institute

My first experience of the EOU was at the conference in Turku in 2017, which I attended as an undergraduate. Despite being at a much earlier career phase than most attendees, throughout the conference I felt included, engaged, and truly inspired. Since then, I have further connected with the European ornithological community by pursuing a PhD at the University of Glasgow, training as a bird ringer with the BTO and collaborating on projects with ornithologists from around the world. I have developed a keen interest in connecting European and African ornithological research, thanks to extensive fieldwork in Cameroon and Equatorial Guinea.

I have always been a proactive person, and so becoming a EOU Council Member is a natural step for me towards embedding myself in, and contributing to, European ornithology. I will bring a young and global perspective to the table, as well as dedication to link research, conservation and communities in Scotland, Europe and Africa.

According to the foundation of the EOU, birds know no boundaries and so neither should ornithology. Following this idea, the EOU has already created a diverse and vibrant community that spans countries, professions, cultures and ages. My vision is to continue this important mission, especially on two fronts: first, I am interested in connecting further with the younger sector of the ornithological community, by working with the brilliant EOU fledglings and other young groups concerned with biodiversity, environment, and climate. Second, in a world determined to put up more barriers, I think it is more important than ever for the EOU to reach out globally. My work so far has taught me that the interests of European and African ornithology are greatly aligned (and indeed birds fly between us!), and so I am determined to bring these communities closer together to share ideas, knowledge and energy.

Ivan Maggini, Austria

Scientific Coordinator of the Austrian Ornithological Centre, Vienna

My application as Council member of the EOU is motivated by perceiving two main challenges for scientists these days. On one hand, communicating science to the wider public is becoming increasingly important, but is not always achieved successfully. The EOU, together with other scientific organizations, will have to continue making steps towards the accessibility of the scientific outputs to the general public. The second challenge is to make the most efficient use of the ever growing amount of data collected by scientists, both in the context of basic and applied research. With my involvement in EURING and the Migratory Landbird Study Group (MLSG) I understand that international networking and interdisciplinarity are the most powerful way to achieve this, and the EOU is one of the most important avenue to promote these aspects. I will happily contribute to pursue the aim of dealing with these challenges if elected into the EOU Council!

My own main research focus is on the ecophysiology of bird migration. Birds evolved morphological and physiological adaptations that allow them to perform large-scale movements through a variety of different habitats, under sometimes very challenging conditions, such as e.g. during the crossing of seas or deserts. It is also becoming increasingly clear that the strategies adopted by different species, or populations within species, are highly variable, depending on the characteristics of their itinerary. The aim of my research is to identify the physiological limitations that contribute to shaping and differentiating migration strategies. In the long run, knowing such limitations will help

understand whether migratory birds are flexible enough to deal with changing environments and/or climate.

Giulia Masoero, Italy, Curie in Canada, onto UK

Marie Skłodowska-Curie fellow in Canada, then onto the University of Aberdeen

The EOU meeting in Giessen will be my fourth EOU meeting. I started in 2015 in Badajoz, a very fun conference, and since then I have been always positively impressed by the diversity of disciplines and of people that participate in these meetings. People from different career stages and backgrounds can interact in a friendly environment and share their research and interests. By taking an active position in the EOU Council, I will be able to actively contribute to the organization of the next meetings. As a junior postdoc, it is important to me to share scientific knowledge, information about Master, PhD or other work opportunities in the field and support the next generation of ornithologists, and to achieve that I will work closely with the EOU Fledglings.

My own career in ecology was driven by my childhood love for birds and natural sciences. Currently, my research interests combine behaviour, population dynamics and evolution, and I use long term datasets to investigate a species' ecology and life history. My Bachelor and Master theses at the University of Turin, Italy, involved ornithological research (sand martin and alpine nesting birds). In 2020, I defended my PhD on the food-hoarding behaviour of an avian predator at the University of Turku, Finland. Despite leaving Italy in 2017 to pursue my PhD, I am an active board member of the Italian Ornithological Society (CISO - Centro Italiano Studi Ornitologici) and I am collaborating with researchers in Italian institutions. At the beginning of 2021, I was awarded a Marie Skłodowska-Curie Global fellowship taking part first at the University of Ottawa, Canada (with Julien Martin) and then bringing me back to Europe, at the University of Aberdeen, UK, to work with Pierre Bize. This fellowship also entails an additional collaboration with the Vogelwarte in Switzerland for the data collection and part of the data analysis. The project aims to explain the recent changes in Alpine swift body size and investigate the short- and long-term effects of these changes. In addition, I am actively participating in the academic community as an associate editor of *Avocetta - Journal of Ornithology* (since 2019), and in communicating science using social media.

Kevin Matson, Netherlands

Associate Professor, Wildlife Ecology and Conservation, Wageningen

Kevin's vision for the EOU: In my opinion, the best academic societies are those that, through their meetings, publications, and other outlets, offer welcoming and engaging spaces that promote the exchange of fresh ideas. Fresh ideas invigorate societies, their members, and their related fields of research. Fresh ideas can even stimulate the public to "think along" with a society. These fresh ideas can come from anyone, from anywhere. Some people have no problems finding their voice and sharing their ideas, but others need more support and encouragement. I think societies like the EOU, which tend to be run by the former, have a responsibility to make space for the latter. The EOU clearly makes efforts along these lines, for example, by offering travel stipends to help early-career researchers attend EOU Congresses. Other efforts aimed at more generally at cultivating a diverse

and inclusive society are also in place, for example, attempts to ensure geographic (and thus economic) diversity among Congress-hosting counties. While I greatly appreciate all of these efforts that the EOU makes, these efforts do not seem to be very formalized in the EOU's statutes and have only a limited visibility on the EOU's website. Thus, I would challenge the EOU via its Council and Officers to take the next steps. Other societies can be great sources of inspiration. For me, that means looking to the Society for Integrative and Comparative Biology (SICB), which I have always found to be extremely welcoming to young scholars. SICB's website highlights the Society's efforts to broaden participation and its commitment to diversity, equity, inclusion, and justice. At its annual meeting, the Beer & Brains event is a subsidized mixer that promotes networking between early-career researchers and their not-so-early-career counterparts. The American Society of Naturalists (ASN) and its Diversity Committee are also very explicit about the mission and values, and the Committee even created the Society's Inclusiveness, Diversity, Equity, and Access (IDEA) Award. The Association of Field Ornithologists (AFO) makes its AFO Café, billed as an "informal science conversations about birds, their habitats, and field biology", completely open to general public via its YouTube channel. These are just a few examples. I'm sure that the EOU's Officers, Council, and membership-at-large could come up with many stimulating options. So, in a nutshell my vision is this: Let's keep talking about the type of organization that we want to be. Let's continue to formalize our conclusions and share these with the wider world. Let's take further action to ensure all voices have access. Ultimately, let's keep working to foster the freshest ideas in ornithology.

Kevin's professional background: I completed my Ph.D. under the supervision of Robert Ricklefs at the University of Missouri, St. Louis (USA). Prior to that I earned my M.S. in Avian Sciences at the University of California, Davis, following a Bachelor in Public Health. My work straddles two disparate biological fields: ecology and immunology. On the one hand, ecology is a science of wildlife, the great outdoors, and rubber-boot-wearing researchers with binoculars around their necks. On the other hand, immunology is a quintessential lab-oriented domain with researchers often donning stereotypic white lab coats. As an "ecological immunologist," I am comfortable in both realms. My work, which investigates how the environment in which animals live shapes their immunological defenses, has taken me to field sites and labs around the world. I have caught, measured, and sampled wild birds on isolated oceanic islands, in the center of a large American city, and in the Dutch countryside. We then process the collected samples in the field or in a basic "field lab." Once secured, the samples are shipped home to be analyzed in well-equipped university laboratories. I have worked to develop analytical methods that stand up to the logistical challenges associated with ornithological research. These challenges include working with diverse species that are often small and difficult to capture once, let alone regularly recapture for follow-up measurements. By advancing available methods, my colleagues and I have begun to expose how the diversity of immune defenses is mirrored by biodiversity itself. Through ecological and evolutionary mechanisms, birds and other animals adapt their defenses to when, where, and how they live.

Jenő Nagy, Hungary

Senior data processing expert, DataExpert Services Kft., Debrecen

I am a researcher with a broad interest. I studied at the University of Debrecen and first became an ecologist (BSc), then a zoologist (MSc). Although I chose biology as my primary field of sciences, I got

close to informatics during my researches. This motivated me to deepen my knowledge in mathematics to acquire a better understanding of the formulae behind the approaches I am using. Thus, after I qualified as a teacher of biology (MSc), I studied mathematics and hence, I successfully became a teacher of mathematics (MSc). My interest focuses on the evolution of life history and behaviour traits in birds and the historical biogeographic patterns in several groups. I study the evolutionary origin of migration in Accipitriformes and Passeriformes. I am also interested in the evolution of nest building and host-parasite arms-races in general. During my work, I am using phylogenetic comparative methods and data on a broad taxonomic range of species. I contribute to the wider scientific community by being the managing editor for *Ornis Hungarica*, a fellow of The Linnean Society, a member of the VIII. Section of Biological Sciences of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, a member of The Cornell Lab of Ornithology and a member of BirdLife Hungary. I would like to extend my contribution under the flag of EOU, specifically, by increasing the visibility of EOU's (and its members') activities, establishing partnership with other communities, professional journals not yet included in its network.

Carina Nebel, Austria / Finland

Postdoc at the University of Turku

I have attended two EOU conferences and must say that it is the best place to network as a young, aspiring scientist. My vision for the EOU is to continue the outstanding work they have done so far and to provide the new generation of dedicated, young ornithologists with networking opportunities. I think that I would be a good fit as a Council Member, representing both Finland – where I currently conduct my postdoc work – and Austria – where I am from.

I am an Evolutionary Ecologist with a strong focus on raptor research. I am specifically interested in research focussing on what drives raptor population dynamics and their movements patterns, and how to protect them from modern, anthropogenic threats. Raptors had already been at the heart of my PhD, which I completed in 2021 at the FitzPatrick Institute of African Ornithology on colour polymorphism in Black Sparrowhawks.

Katarzyna Wojczulanis-Jakubas, Poland

Assistant Professor, Faculty of Biology, University of Gdańsk

I am applying to become a EOU Council member to support a voice of European ornithologists. Originating and working partly in Poland I would like to actively represent this part of Europe, encouraging and supporting Polish ornithologists, to present their research during EOU conferences. Obviously, I would encourage any other ornithologists but I believe that in Poland I would have the strongest influence. Besides, I would like to make stronger the voice of seabird specialists in the EOU as I believe that only a good mixture of species and topics during conferences are truly inspirational for extending our research horizons.

Compiled and communicated on behalf of the Election Committee by Barbara Helm, 31 January 2022