

European Ornithologists' Union

General Meeting of the 15th EOU Congress (Bangor)

Friday 22 August 2025 at 17:00 in lecture theatre PL5,
University of Bangor

Minutes

1) Welcome by the President Alfonso Marzal

The President Alfonso Marzal took the chair and opened the general meeting. He welcomed the delegates to the 15th EOU General Meeting.

2) Attendance

90 delegates attended the General Meeting. Apologies were received from Peter László Pap, Oli Conz and Davide Dominoni.

3) Minutes of the General Meeting of 25th August 2023 (Lund)

The minutes were posted to members on the EOU website noticeboard on 25 July 2025: (<https://eouunion.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/Lund-General-Meeting-2023-Minutes.pdf>)

No matters arising were raised by members. The minutes of the meeting were approved unanimously.

4) Election of new Council members and officers, headed by Jan-Åke Nilsson (Past-President)

Council Officers - Péter László Pap (Romania) becomes new EOU President. Suvi Ruuskanen (Finland) was elected President-Elect. Alfonso Marzal (Spain) becomes Past President. Dan Chamberlain (Italy) was elected as secretary and Oli Conz (Germany) will continue as treasurer.

The following ordinary council members will continue: Andriy Bokotey (Ukraine), Attila Fülöp (Romania), Ádám Lendvai (Hungary), Josué Martínez de la Puente (Spain), Arianna Passarotto (UK), Kristaps Sokolovskis (Finland), Zsófia Tóth (Sweden), Ülo Väli (Estonia).

The Past President Jan-Åke Nilsson thanked the following council members who are retiring this year: Sanja Barišić (Croatia), Davide Dominoni (UK), Ivan Maggini (Austria), Giulia Masoero (Switzerland), Kevin Matson (Netherlands), Carina Nebel (Finland) and Katarzyna Wojczulanis-Jakubas (Poland).

Reto Spaar & Petra Sumasgutner were elected as auditors.

Candidates for election to fill the Council vacancies: The nomination committee for the Council members consisted of Judith Morales Fernaz (Spain), Antica Čulina and András Liker (Hungary) and was chaired by Past-President Jan-Åke Nilsson (Sweden). Information on candidates for election was sent to members, and was posted on the website noticeboard on 25th July, 2025.

The committee requested the General Meeting to elect seven new ordinary members of Council. The following nine candidates stood for election: Kristina Beck (Germany), Vojtěch Brlík (Czechia), Alejandro Corregidor Castro (Italy), Dmitry Kishkinev (UK), Valentin Kiss (Belgium), Amy Elisabeth Leedale (UK), Jennifer Morinay (UK), Jenő Nagy (Hungary), Martyna Syposz (Poland).

The Past President listed all candidates, providing a brief description of their research interests and where they were based. He then described the voting procedure and ballot papers were handed out to delegates. Voting was undertaken and ballot papers were taken for counting.

The following were elected as new Council Members: Kristina Beck (Germany), Vojtěch Brlík (Czechia), Alejandro Corregidor Castro (Italy), Valentin Kiss (Belgium), Amy Elisabeth Leedale (UK), Jennifer Morinay (UK), Martyna Syposz (Poland).

Jan-Åke Nilsson will retire as a Council Officer, but will remain on council in a mentoring role.

5) Treasurer's Report

The Treasurer's report was presented by Alfonso Marzal on behalf of Treasurer Oliver Conz. Assets at 31/12/2024 were €20343.57. Including the surplus from the Lund conference (c. €15000), and taking into account expenditure for the Bangor conference and other miscellaneous costs, the current balance is estimated at c. €23500. Since the previous conference in Lund, there has been a switch in annual financial reporting from the financial to the calendar year.

The auditors (Reto Spaar and Petra Sumasgutner) formally certified the financial report. The Treasurer's Report was unanimously approved by the delegates.

6) LOC Report

The Chair of the Local Organising Committee (LOC), Mark Mainwaring, presented a brief report on the running of the conference. There were two pre-conference symposia – MLSG and Woodland Birds. Both were very successful and were a good addition to conference.

The format of the main conference generally worked well. There was a total of 430 delegates, of which 400 were paying delegates and the rest volunteers. Mark Mainwaring formally thanked the volunteers and Bangor University staff for their great help.

Money was raised through sponsorships that helped to keep the registration fee as low as possible. This included brief exhibitor presentations, usually given after plenaries. Sponsorship was also obtained for the drinks reception at the Fledglings event. Mark Mainwaring thanked all sponsors.

Alfonso Marzal thanked all organizers and volunteers.

7) Report from the Chair of the Scientific Program Committee

The chair of the Scientific Programme Committee (SPC) Andreas Nord presented a brief report on the work of the scientific program. There were 17 members of the SCP from 15 countries (though one had to drop out) whose job was to nominate and select plenaries, select symposia, and assess submitted abstracts. On average, 42 abstracts were reviewed per SPC member. Andreas Nord thanked all SPC members.

There were 16 symposium proposals (of which 12 were selected) and 358 abstract submissions, mainly selected on the basis of scientific excellence (all received at least 3 independent reviews). Presentations were mostly submitted close to the deadline – there was a marked peak just before the first deadline, then another just before closing of the extended deadline.

In total there were:

303 presentations (55 withdrew)

7 plenaries

127 posters

109 orals

12 symposia (12 keynote + 48 presentations)

23 poster pitches

The female:male ratio was 49:51%.

8) Fledglings Report

Zsófia Tóth, organizer of the EOU Fledglings, thanked the LOC for their support. The Fledglings' event was very successful.

The 4th Fledglings Meeting was held in Prague, March 2024. There were 103 participants, 4 plenaries, a round table with 6 experienced researchers, 40 talks, 50 posters and a SORTEE meeting. It was the best attended Fledglings' Meeting so far and was in fact over-subscribed (c. 30-40 people remained on the waiting list because there

was not enough capacity for more delegates). Zsófia Tóth thanked the local organizing team of the 4th Fledglings Meeting.

The next meeting will be in Gdansk, Poland (date to be decided) and will be organized by Kristin Piening.

9) Report of the Council

The President presented a report of EOU activities over the last two years on behalf of Council. The Fledglings' Meeting and special interest groups continue to be successful additions to the EOU's activities (see above).

Communications from the EOU continue to improve, in particular in terms of social media presence both on Bluesky and Facebook. The President gave a summary of activity on the EOU website and social media. A big increase in communications on social media, especially of job opportunities, has been achieved.

The meeting was asked to raise any pertinent issues not dealt with elsewhere on the agenda.

Barbara Helm thanked Mark Mainwaring and the Local Organizing Committee. She added that she missed the philosophy of the EOU being inclusive. The banquet should be open to everyone. More generally, costs should be weighted in terms of wealthy and poor countries in the future. Alfonso Marzal responded that these issues have been discussed during the 1st council meeting and they will be taken into account in the future.

Jennifer Morinay pointed out that no childcare was provided at the conference. This should be considered in the future, either by providing it, or subsidizing those who need child care by reducing the conference fee.

Fabio Marcolin noted that very many ECRs had their talk on the last day in the afternoon. Future conferences should seek to balance the programme better in terms of the mix between ECRs and more established presenters. This is especially important, because ECRs are potentially participating in their first international conference.

Oskars Keiss suggested that it would be better to end the conference with a plenary rather than the General Meeting as this would more likely increase the number of participants.

Council will circulate a questionnaire amongst delegates to get their opinions on the current conference, and how to improve things for the next meeting. This will be sent shortly after the end of the conference.

The Council Report was formally approved.

10) Future Conference Locations

Alfonso Marzal presented previous conference locations, and noted that there are some countries that have never held the conference, and others not for some time. For some countries, especially for ECRs, it is a big challenge to attend the EOU Conference. Given that the two previous conferences have been held in expensive locations, expressions of interest (Eols) are especially encouraged from eastern and southern Europe. Eols should be sent to the Secretary (dan.chamberlain99@gmail.com) by 15th October (maximum 2 pages).

Council will consider financial backing from the EOU to cover financial risks at the next conference (e.g. commit to underwrite any potential losses up to a maximum amount) which should encourage greater interest.

11) AOB

Jan-Åke Nilsson thanked Alfonso Marzal for his 4-year period as President.

Alfonso Marzal thanked everyone for supporting him in his four-year term, and gave particular thanks to Susi Jenni-Eiermann, Barbara Helm and Jan-Åke Nilsson.

12) Transition of new President

Péter László Pap was formally welcomed as the new EOU president.

13) Closure

Alfonso Marzal formally closed the conference.

The meeting was closed at 18:30.