

BTO ARCHIVES ACCESS POLICY

1. Introduction

The purpose of the BTO Archives is to collect, preserve, and make available its collection of unique ornithological material. This includes the physical and electronic output of BTO studies, personal papers and correspondence relating to key figures in ornithology, photographic materials and information about the Trust's own history.

BTO is committed to providing access to its archive collections to anyone conducting ornithological research. Our community includes BTO staff from all departments, BTO members, students, visiting researchers, and members of the global ornithological community.

2. Scope of policy

This document is intended to outline how access to the BTO Archives is provided, both on-site and remotely, as well as any restrictions that apply.

3. On-site access

The BTO Archives are located at the Trust's Headquarters in Thetford. As space is limited access to archival material is by appointment only: appointments can be made by email or by telephone using the contact details in section 7 of this document.

Access will normally be provided during the Archives opening times of 9am-5pm Monday-Friday.

Visitors will be asked to complete a registration form and to provide evidence of their identity.

All visitors are required to abide by the guidelines for handling BTO Archives collections, a copy of which is displayed on the Archives research desk.

4. Remote access

We recognise that not all our researchers will be able to visit us in person and we welcome enquiries by email post, or telephone. We provide a standard enquiry service free of charge and anticipate being able to dedicate around thirty minutes to each enquiry. For more detailed enquiries we recommend researchers make an appointment to visit us in person.

The BTO Archives collection is currently catalogued as part of the Chris Mead Library catalogue available online. An archival cataloguing project began in July 2022 and further information will be posted to the BTO website in due course.

We endeavour to provide access to as much material as possible online through ongoing digitisation projects, blogs etc. We also regularly highlight material from the Archives in the BTO membership magazine *BTO News* and on our social media platforms.

5. Restrictions on access

Although we do our best to make our archive collections available there may be some restrictions placed on materials. This is usually due to comply with legislation such as the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) or for preservation reasons in the case of fragile items. Researchers will be advised if this applies to any material they are requesting, and alternative methods of access e.g. surrogate copies will be provided wherever possible.

6. Reproduction and copyright

Researchers are permitted to take digital photographs of archival material free of charge, subject to copyright conditions, for the purposes of non-commercial use and private research. Permission for other uses may be granted following discussion. Copying and scanning services are available upon request, subject to copyright and assessment of the condition of materials. Researchers will be required to complete a copyright declaration form for any type of reproduction.

7. How we process your data

Visitors to the BTO Archives will be asked to complete a registration form and researchers requesting copies of archival material will be asked to complete a copyright declaration form. Information provided in these forms will be processed in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and will only be used for the specified purpose. Forms will be retained for seven years in order to fulfil regulatory requirements and will subsequently be destroyed.

8. Contact details

Address: The Archivist, British Trust for Ornithology, The Nunnery, Thetford IP24 2PU

Tel: +44 (0)1842 750050

Email: archives@bto.org

Website: <https://www.bto.org/about-bto/library/bto-archives>

9. Review and approval

This policy was adopted by BTO Archives in August 2022 and last reviewed in January 2025. It is due for review every two years or earlier if circumstances require.

Document control			
Version	Author	Date	Changes
0.1	BTO Archivist	03/03/2022	Initial draft
0.2	BTO Archivist	11/03/2022	Minor revisions
0.3	BTO Archivist	30/05/2023	Minor revisions
0.4	BTO Archivist	20/01/2025	Policy reviewed
0.5	BTO Archivist	13/10/2025	Minor revisions