CLUB ANNOUNCEMENTS

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The BOC's 2023 Annual Report and Accounts were published in September and have been submitted to the Charity Commission. The document is available to read/download via: https://boc-online.org/wp-content/uploads/BOC.AnnualReviewandAccounts2023.pdf.

As previously announced, the 1009th meeting of the Club was held in conjunction with the Linnean Society of London at Burlington House, Piccadilly, London W1J 0BF, on Monday 6 November 2023. Dr Will Smith (who had recently completed a D.Phil. at Oxford University's Edward Grey Institute) spoke on *Rock Doves and the process of 'extinction by hybridisation'*. The Rock Dove *Columba livia* is the wild form of the feral domestic pigeon and, following widespread hybridisation over many years, pure Rock Doves are now extinct across much of Europe. Will's work has focused on remote sites in Scotland and Ireland with Rock Dove populations that have experienced limited interbreeding with feral pigeons, providing both a case study to investigate the process of 'extinction by hybridisation' and a valuable natural comparison for those who study domestic pigeons in the laboratory.

The 1,012th meeting of the Club was held in conjunction with the Linnean Society of London and at their premises on Monday 20 May 2024. Dr Catherine Sheard, University of Aberdeen, spoke on *What can birds' nests teach us about evolution?* Following an introduction overviewing the diversity of birds' nests and the limitations to our current understanding of the reasons for this, she discussed her recent research in building up a detailed comparative database of nest traits of the world's birds. Analysis of this has been complicated by numerous factors, including within-species variability in nest structure and the non-independence of data points resulting from the varying closeness of species' relationships. At a macro level, it appears that the types and locations of nests that species build do not correlate with climate but, to some extent, do so with both body size and an index of flight ability. Focusing down more closely on subgroups such as passerines permitted certain conclusions, e.g. that cup-nesting species that nest in colder places build bigger nests, but were unsuccessful in wider attempts to explain bird diversity in terms of the structure of the nests they build.

The Avian Odyssey held on 21 September 2024 at the Natural History Museum, London, in conjunction with the regional bird clubs, and in association with and in support of the Natural History Museum's exhibition *Birds: brilliant and bizarre* was universally considered an outstanding success, covering in detail the many challenges facing birdlife worldwide. The YouTube recording is available: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ohl_dRJm3Eo&t=261s.

The Club is delighted to welcome Laura Vaughan-Hirsch as a trustee. Laura has an extensive background in biology education including a broad involvement in conservation and ecology. Since 2023 she has been White Stork Project Manager at the Knepp Wildland Foundation about which she spoke to the Club at its 1,011th meeting on 25 March 2024 (see https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dsY-XU221sg).

Chris Storey, Chairman

BOOK REVIEW

Flint, P. & Richardson, C. 2024. *The birds of Cyprus: an annotated checklist*. BOC Checklist no. 28. British Ornithologists' Club, Tring. 524 pp, 32 plates with 65 colour photos and two colour maps; three black-and-white illustrations. UK£45 from the Natural History Book Service (http://www.nhbs.com).

Annual recording and publication of reports covering the status of birds on the island of Cyprus have been ongoing for more than 65 years. Over that period substantial changes in the status of many species occurring on the island have occurred, affecting especially the migrants for which the island is renowned. It has been more than 30 years since the second edition of this checklist appeared in 1992, so given the increase in birdwatching activity on the island, this third edition is both overdue and very welcome. Published records up to mid-March 2023 are considered here, with a few significant records as late as April 2024 included in an addendum.

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The book's layout is much as one would expect. Introductory chapters cover history, geology, geography, climate, vegetation, and environmental changes and impacts. An overview of the avifauna provides broad outlines of the breeding birds, migration, changes in status, and conservation.

The bulk of the work comprises the individual species accounts. Each account includes local names, subspecies, distribution away from Cyprus, and a detailed review of status on the island. With so many species occurring principally as migrants, many accounts are dominated by details of arrivals / departures, peak movements and the like. However, there are also discussions of the wider ecology of species that breed on the island, with the endemic taxa in particular treated in greater detail. The insights presented within an optional comment section are frequently of special interest, with brief discussions of the reasons for the timing of migration, significant differences in status between spring and autumn, or the suspected reasons for significant changes in overall status. With so many migrants passing through the island, links to climate change or wholesale changes in populations on the European mainland and further afield are all too frequently implicated. Where merited, especially for the endemic species and subspecies, there is a discussion of taxonomic treatment. Summary totals for specimens held in museums around the world are also included.

A selection of attractive colour photos depicts various species, along with some of the more popular birding sites. There are four appendices, one of which presents biometric data from birds ringed in Cyprus and another is a birdwatching guide covering the sites of greatest interest.

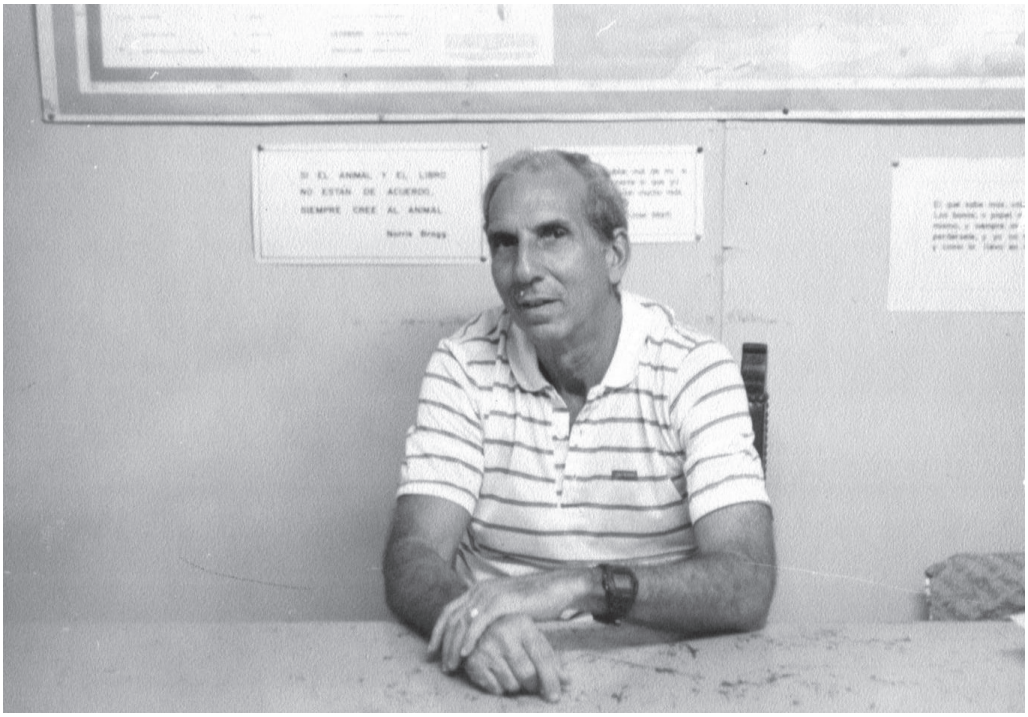
Overall, this is a comprehensive summary of current knowledge of the status of birds on the island of Cyprus. Anyone planning a visit, or with an interest in the island's avifauna, will surely want to have a copy.

Chris Bradshaw

OBITUARY

Orlando H. Garrido, 1931–2024

The outstanding Cuban naturalist Orlando Garrido, who passed away on 24 June 2024 at the age of 93, was an illustrious researcher, who served as guide to several generations of Cuban naturalists, ornithologists, herpetologists, ichthyologists and entomologists. His name is synonymous with Cuba and science, and he was foremost among the naturalists who inspired younger generations to study nature. A true legend, José Orlando Hilarión Ángel de Jesús Garrido was born on 1 March 1931, in La Habana. A charismatic man, he



Orlando Garrido at the National Museum of Natural History of Cuba, La Habana (photographer unknown)

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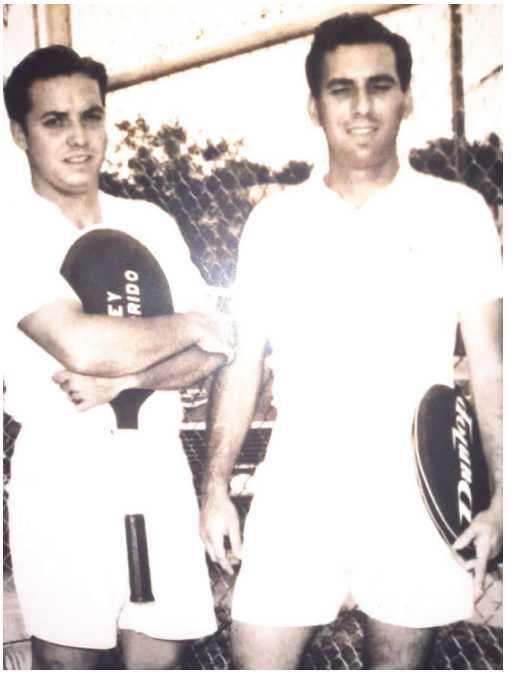
learned to read and write when he was seven years old; but graduated as a B.Sc. in 1948. Thereafter, he studied for a year at Havana Business Academy, where he learned typing and some English. He attended the University of Habana for a year before accepting a scholarship to the University of Miami, where he had an offer to join the tennis team. Between 1952 and 1956 he studied Natural Sciences and Business Administration, learning English, French, Portuguese and Italian in the process.

Orlando's introduction to sport was intercollegiate and interclub baseball, but from the age of 14 he was dedicated to tennis, twice becoming Cuba's national youth champion (under 18s), three-time junior champion (under 21s) and seven times senior champion in singles and doubles, the first in 1952 and the last in 1965. He also became a junior champion in Florida and during his four years he played in the University of Miami tennis team he broke the national record for most consecutive intercollegiate victories. During 1956–61 he was a fixture on the international tennis circuit, playing six times at Wimbledon, where in 1956 he reached the last 16 in the mixed doubles and the semi-finals of the main competition (but he retired to go and play in Germany). In both singles and doubles Orlando played against many Wimbledon champions.



Orlando (right) and his younger brother, Reynaldo Garrido, in their tennis days (photographer unknown)

Orlando played in ten Davis Cups. His best performance was in Montreal in 1959, with his younger brother Reynaldo (also Cuban national champion) as captain; they finally lost to Australia (eventual winners that year), whose team included the reigning Wimbledon champion Neale Frazer, Rod Laver, winner of two Grand Slams, and Roy Emerson, who held the then record for most Grand Slams. The same year his brother won the Canada Open, and Orlando reached the finals in singles and doubles. Over the years he beat the number one players of many countries, as well as several players ranked in the top ten from the USA and Australia. His sporting prowess was recognised in his absentia in 2002 'at the Hall of Fame of Cuban tennis' where he was awarded a plaque that he was able to collect only in 2004. In total Orlando visited 63 countries, 57 as a tennis player and six as a biologist.

According to Orlando he had three profiles: athlete, scientist and singer. The famous Cuban baritone Ramón Calzadilla, who was fond of snails and butterflies, nicknamed him 'the repentant baritone' (Orlando knew more than 100 zarzuelas, operettas and old songs). His family used to call him Caruso (in reference to Enrico Caruso the famous operatic tenor) and he really enjoyed to perform for friends and visitors alike.

His vocation for biology started in third grade, when his parents told him that they would buy him chickens in return for academic success. In time, he became the first in Cuba to raise laying hens (learning about it while he was in Dallas, Texas, during a tennis competition) and, based on crosses for several years, he obtained a domestic breed of chickens with a naked neck that laid as many eggs as the 'Leghorn' (average 250 eggs/year), dark eggs like 'creoles', and were immune to smallpox, but surprisingly nobody showed any interest in his results at the time.

In 1948 he started to make his first insect collection. Before entering the university, Orlando used to meet a group of prestigious Cuban zoologists in a coffee shop in Vedado, La Habana, every Friday night, which increased his knowledge and passion for nature.

In 1961, along with 12 colleagues, he founded the Cuban Museum of Natural Sciences, where he worked as a zoologist, creating the museum's first collections of birds, reptiles and amphibians; and he gave seminars and post-graduate courses in ornithology and herpetology for students from the university. Thereafter he worked at the Institute of Zoology for several years, than at a tourist center now called Marina Hemingway, and in 1986 he rejoined the new National Museum of Natural History of Cuba when it re-opened, where he worked until his 'retirement' in 2001.

Orlando faced several obstacles during his life, but most traumatic was when he was forced to resign as a curator from the national museum in 2001. However, life had to go on and he kept researching from home until the end of his life.

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It is said that behind every great man is a great woman, and this was true of Orlando too. His wife since 1963, Gloria Agüero, worked with Orlando from 1965 to 1969. She travelled to the field with him during some of his early trips and, according to Orlando, in 54 years she never interfered in his professional affairs, enabling him to be entirely devoted to his research. I had the privilege to be his friend and colleague for more than 40 years, and by happy coincidence always lived near him. We liked to visit each other frequently, to chat about new ideas or a new project, including one of his dream research projects on hutias. In later years, he was always talking about the loose ends (*cabos sueltos*) in his research, and several times he regretted that he was not 20 years younger with time to sort out all his unfinished business.

Garrido was a real party animal and he loved to be the centre of attention, mostly chatting and always with a joke. His sense of humour was as legendary as his devotion to natural history; he could have been a comedian. One colleague described Orlando as a kid in an old man's body. He was simply unique. All his work colleagues or students have stories about Orlando and we really were lucky to work with him. With his perpetually shining eyes and ready smile, we all knew he was planning something mischievous. All in all, Orlando loved his life until the last minute, despite that it started to change when his dear wife Gloria died. He missed her very much; she used to tell me that as he got old he became like a small baby for her, trying to take care of him.

Orlando Garrido in later life, with one of the captive hutias he was studying (Arturo Kirkconnell)

Orlando always admired J. Gundlach (keeping a huge portrait of him at home) and the eminent German naturalist's famous motto 'I am a humble servant of Science', a role that Orlando also 'fulfilled'. The Cuban national hero José Martí (1853–95) wrote: 'Who knows more, is worth more. To know is to have. The coin melts, but knowledge does not. Bonds, or paper money, are worth more or less, or nothing, however knowledge is always worth the same, and always a lot. A rich man needs his coins to live, and if they are lost, he no longer has means to live. An educated man lives by his knowledge, and since he carries it within himself it is not lost, and his existence is easy and secure.' Orlando agreed and claimed I am a 'millionaire', because he preserved his father's legacy (his father said the only thing I can leave you is my house and my honesty), and he had the satisfaction of keeping both. But he also remarked that, if during his sporting days, tennis players had been paid as they are now, he would have earned three million dollars.

Orlando's contribution to our knowledge of Cuban biodiversity was unparalleled. Nicknamed the Field Marshal (Mariscal de Campo), he published a total of 305 papers and several books. *Catálogo de las aves de Cuba* (1975), co-authored by Florentino Garcia Montaña, was for decades the 'official' reference for professional ornithologists and students in Cuba. He was also the author of 172 new taxa, among them 21 new subspecies of birds, 91 new taxa of reptiles (47 of them new species), 58 new species of insects and a new species of coral reef fish, *Acanthemblemaria cubana*. In addition, he reported 46 new records of vagrant birds for Cuba and 29 new records for Cuba of fish. He also collected five new species of mammals in Cuba: *Mysateles auritus*, *M. sanfelipensis*, *M. meridionalis*, *M. arboricolus* and *Capromys garridoi*. Orlando could identify a new species of hutia by the shape of its faeces, and he estimated there were several cryptic species in this group awaiting description, but he was unable to publish them. It is hoped that his colleagues will finish this work. A total of 24 new species were dedicated to Orlando to honour his contributions, some of which had been collected by him, including scorpions, snails, insects, lizards and mammals.

Orlando was a scientific advisor to the Rare Center for Tropical Conservation based in Philadelphia, USA, a Corresponding Fellow of the American Ornithologists' Union, and an Honorary Member of the Cuban Zoological Society and the Linnaean Society of New York.

An amazing human being, open and helpful to everybody, he always gave a friendly hand, although it was not always reciprocated. I always believed that he never received all of the recognition he deserved, which is something that troubles those that worked closely with him.

The last time I saw Orlando was in a park near his house where he used to observe Cuban Blackbird *Ptiloxena atroviolacea* breeding behaviour, just a month before he died. It took him a few seconds to recognise me, but afterwards we talked for a while and before I left, I gave him the biggest hug and kissed him like my father. As I walked away, I told my oldest brother that I felt it would be the last time, and very sadly it was.

It was a blessing to have worked with him for so long, although I feel a twinge of sadness that he could not enjoy the second edition of our field guide to the birds of Cuba, a project of which he was truly proud.

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An unmatched naturalist, Orlando, thank you for bestowing your huge knowledge and enormous legacy. Rest in peace Field Marshal.

Orlando is survived by two sons—Orlando Garrido Jr (60), who is married and lives in Mexico with his wife and two daughters, and Alexander Garrido (54), who lives in Miami.

Arturo Kirkconnell, with help from Orlando Garrido Jr

CORRIGENDUM

In *Bull. Brit. Orn. Cl.* 144: 207, it was suggested by Kit Hustler that the authors (Mandiwana-Neudani *et al*.) of two papers published in 2019 on Afrotropical francolins could be charged with 'nomenclatural harvesting'. However, none of the major components of 'nomenclatural harvesting', namely (1) introduction of new nomina based on (2) studies (usually molecular-phylogenetic) conducted by others and (3) on specimens not studied by the 'harvester/s', is applicable to the studies at issue here. We wish to apologise unreservedly to all four authors, T. Mandiwana-Neudani, R. Bowie, T. Crowe and R. Little, for this assertion, which was unquestionably incorrect and should not have been published.

The Hon. Editor

REFEREES

I am grateful to the following, who have reviewed manuscripts submitted to the Bulletin during the last year (those who refereed more than one manuscript are denoted by an asterisk in parentheses): Norbert Bahr (*), Bas van Balen, Louis Bevier, Shawn Billerman, Murray Bruce, Jennifer Cahill, Terry Chesser, Marco Crozariol (*), Paul Doniol-Valcroze, Robert J. Dowsett, Will Duckworth, Paul Dufour, Guy Dutson, Knut Eisermann, Andy Elliott (*), Paul van Els, Renate van den Elzen, Clem Fisher, Daniel Gibson, Luiz P. Gonzaga, Michel Gosselin, Phil Gregory, Hein van Grouw, Carlos Gussoni, Olivier Hamerlynck, Doug Harebottle, Julian P. Hume, Ulf Johansson, Oliver Komar, Alex Lees, Chris Lyal (*), Manuel Marín, Miguel Marini, Miguel Matta, Gerald Mayr, Jason Mobley, Andre E. Moncrieff, Richard Noske, Fernando Pacheco, Michael Patten, Bob Payne, Irene Pellegrino, Vítor Piacentini, Thane Pratt, Robert Prŷs-Jones (*), Pamela Rasmussen, Frank Rheindt (*), Andy Richford, Phil Round (*), Roger Safford, Manuel Schweizer, Iain Stenhouse, Fernando Costa Straube, Ryan Terrill, Colin Trainor, Andrew Vallely, Paola Velásquez, Philippe Verbelen, David R. Wells, Iain Woxvold and Mark Young.—The Hon. Editor

Friends of the BOC

The BOC has since 2017 become an online organisation without a paying membership, but instead one that aspires to a supportive network of Friends who share its vision of ornithology—see: http://boc-online.org/. Anyone wishing to become a Friend of the BOC and support its development should pay UK£25.00 by standing order or online payment to the BOC bank account:

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Friends receive regular updates about Club events and are also eligible for discounts on the Club's Occasional Publications. It would assist our Treasurer, Richard Malin (e-mail: rmalin21@gmail.com), if you would kindly inform him if you intend becoming a Friend of the BOC.

The *Bulletin* and other BOC publications

Since volume 137 (2017), the *Bulletin* of the BOC has been an online journal, published quarterly, that is available to all readers without charge. Furthermore, it does not levy any publication charges (including for colour plates) on authors of papers and has a median publication time from receipt to publication of five to six months. Prospective authors are invited to contact the *Bulletin* editor, Guy Kirwan (GMKirwan@aol.com), to discuss future submissions or look at http://boc-online.org/bulletin/bulletin-contributions. Back numbers up to volume 136 (2016) are available via the Biodiversity Heritage Library website: www.biodiversitylibrary.org/bibliography/46639#/summary; vols. 132–136 are also available on the BOC website: http://boc-online.org/

BOC Occasional Publications are available from the BOC Office or online at info@boc-online.org. Future BOC-published checklists will be available from NHBS and as advised on the BOC website. As its online repository, the BOC uses the British Library Online Archive (in accordance with IZCN 1999, Art. 8.5.3.1).

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