

2019 Annual Report



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A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

These are extraordinary times for AOS and the birds we study and seek to conserve. While our community documents the myriad pressures on birds and their habitats from every front, each day I marvel at the efforts of our more than 3,000 members to expand our knowledge and address these threats. It is truly an honor to serve as AOS President working with so many dedicated individuals to deepen

our global reach to ensure that AOS remains relevant, influential and responsive, in service to ornithology.

For me, the highlight of 2019 was celebrating the life and legacy of Brina Kessel, a former president of our society. Brina's transformative gift to AOS revealed her extraordinary vision for the future of ornithology. Her legacy reflects a lifelong commitment to advance ornithological science and mentor emerging scientists. Brina's generosity positions AOS to strengthen its support for early-career ornithologists in research, publishing, and career building.

Join me in 2020 in helping our society address the challenges and opportunities in the new decade ahead — **thank you for being part of AOS!**



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kathy".

Kathy Martin

AOS President

Mission & Goals

AOS Mission

To advance the scientific understanding of birds and disseminate ornithological knowledge, enrich ornithology as a profession and mentor young professionals, and promote a rigorous scientific basis for the conservation of birds.

Our Goals

Connect a vibrant community of ornithologists throughout the Americas

Publish openly accessible ornithological research of the highest quality

Achieve excellence in organizing and hosting annual conferences that meet the ever-changing needs of ornithology and ornithologists

Recognize and promote significant accomplishments in ornithology

Excel in professional development for members at all stages of their careers

Sustain scientific impact through financial support for ornithological research

Inform public policy on all issues pertaining to ornithology

AOS Council

President: Kathy Martin (2018–2020)

President-Elect: Thomas Sherry (2018–2020)

Secretary: Andrew Jones (2014–)

Treasurer: Rebecca Kimball (2015–)

Executive Director: Melinda Pruett-Jones

Councilors – Terms Ending 2020

Anna Chalfoun
Abby Powell
Andrea Townsend
Michael Webster

Councilors – Terms Ending 2021

Peter Dunn
Sharon Gill
Sara Morris
Christopher Witt

Councilors – Terms Ending 2022

Sara Kaiser
Erica Nol
Lauryn Benedict
Kristen Ruegg

Past Presidents (Voting)

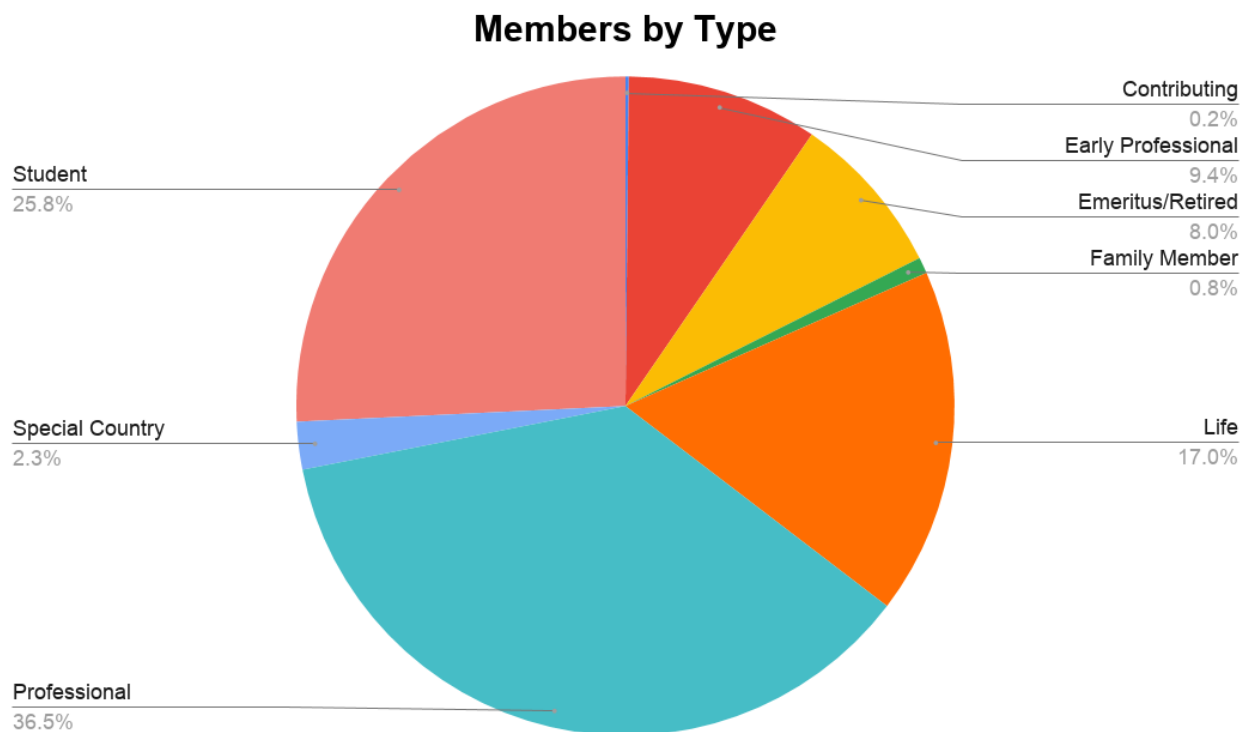
Steve Beissinger
Sue Haig
Scott Lanyon
Frank Moore
Marty Raphael

Membership

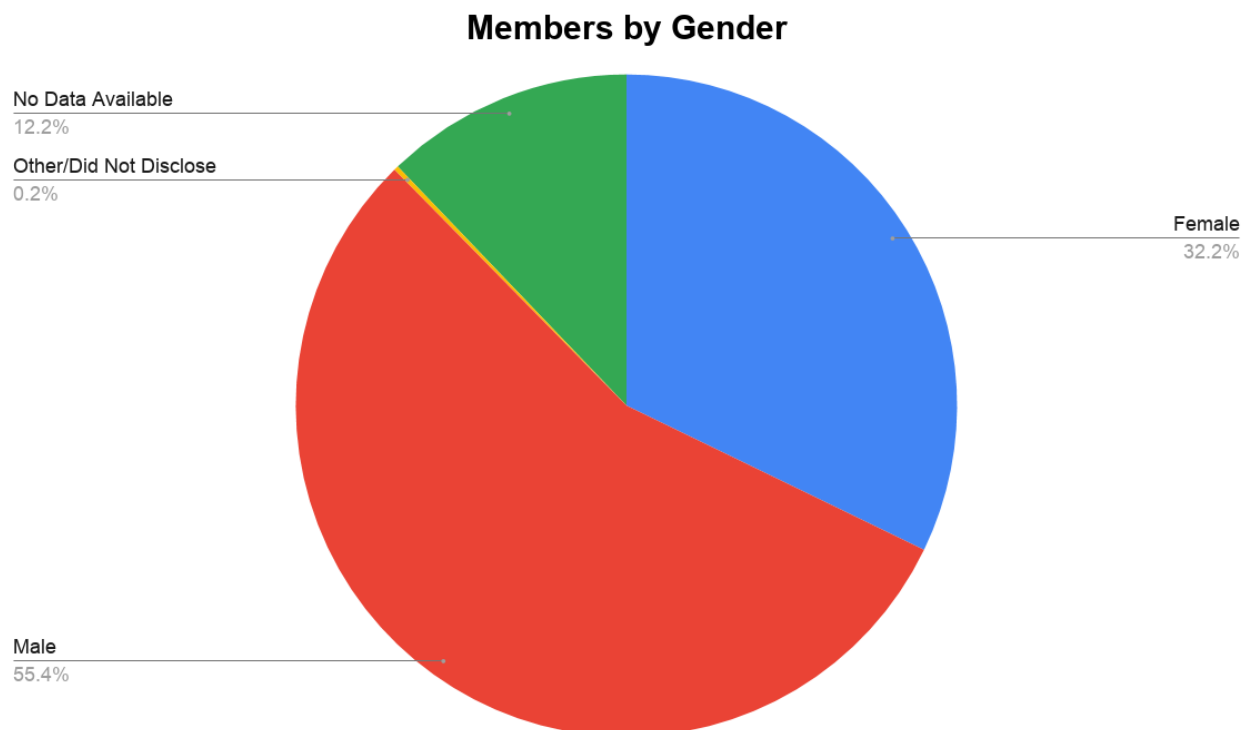
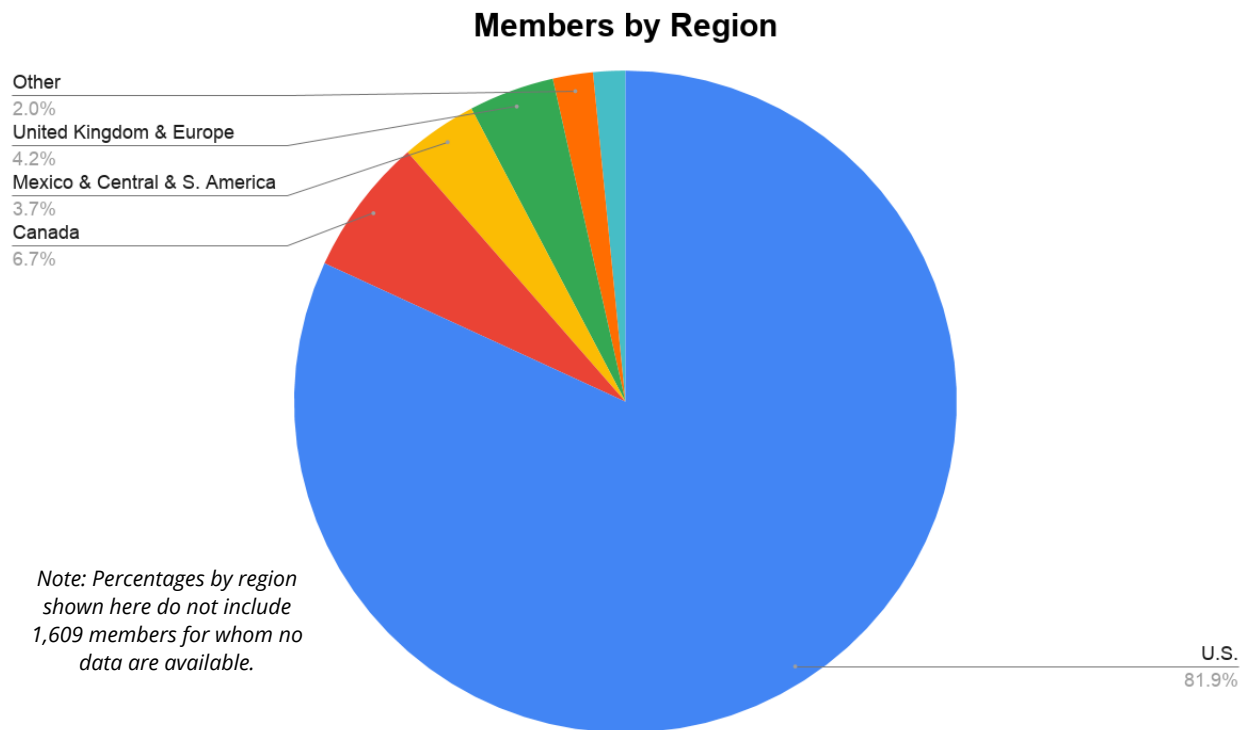
3,142 members

8% increase over 2018

81% retention of 2018 members



Membership (Cont'd)



Annual Meeting

- **1,004** attendees (up 33% from 2018)
- **24** countries represented
- **768** presentations (oral & poster)
- **14** professional development workshops
- **237** students & postdocs awarded general travel funding
- **14** students & postdocs awarded Diversity & Inclusion travel funding
- **14** attendees awarded Caregiver Grant funding (new for 2019)
- **140** eBird checklists submitted
- **9 out of 10** would recommend attending an AOS meeting to others

Highlighting Diversity...

*The Anchorage meeting featured a **plenary lecture** by members of Alaska Native communities, **videos and banners** honoring women in ornithology, an **LGBTQIA+ reception** sponsored by Audubon Alaska, and rainbow "**Celebrate Diversity**" signage and ribbons.*



Annual Meeting (Cont'd)

“I had a fantastic time at the 2019 American Ornithological Society meeting in Anchorage. I’m so grateful to AOS leadership for providing a caregiver grant that enabled my 3.5-month-old baby girl and husband to travel with me. Because my husband was present to take care of baby Sophia, I was able to participate in the conference. Kudos to AOS for implementing thoughtful diversity and inclusion strategies and for finding ways to ensure parenthood (especially early motherhood) isn’t a barrier to a great career!”

–Sarah Schulwitz, Caregiver Grant Recipient



“I don't have results from my postdoc yet, but I can no longer get travel support from my PhD institution to present my PhD work. The travel grant I received really helped my current advisor support my attendance at this conference to present results from my PhD! Being around the AOS community has made me enjoy working with birds even more. Apart from learning about a lot of exciting science, networking with potential future postdoc advisers and colleagues at the meeting and attending the early professional symposium and workshop were really beneficial.”

–Anusha Shankar, Diversity & Inclusion Travel Grant Recipient

Research Funding

- **\$84,500** in research funds awarded to 38 students
- **\$12,500** awarded to 5 postdocs
- **15%** increase over 2018 research funding

New Kessel Fellowships

*New in 2020, AOS will award **three \$15,000 fellowships** for early-career researchers, funded by a generous bequest from Dr. Brina Kessel.*



“The Hesse Student Research Award I received from AOS allowed me to greatly increase the scope of my study. Thanks to AOS, I can collect genetic samples from underrepresented populations of *Sporophila corvina* in Costa Rica and Panama. The samples will be used for next-generation sequencing, which will provide a better resolution of patterns of diversification and gene flow between populations and subspecies. The sampling funded by this award is key to understanding the complete evolutionary history of this species complex, which is central to my dissertation project.”

–Diego Ocampo, Student Research Award Recipient



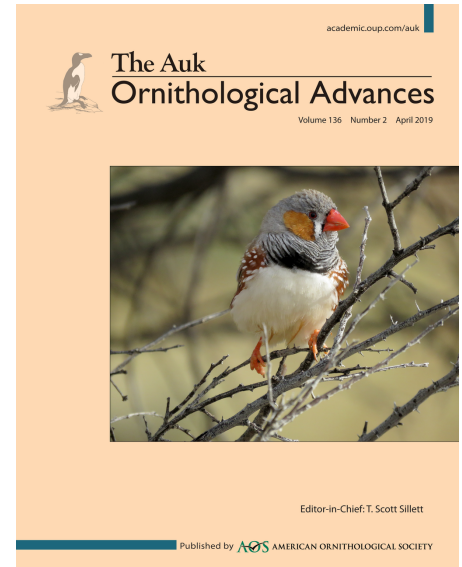
Publications



*Highest impact factors for
any peer-reviewed
ornithology publications
worldwide*

*Submissions to both
journals up from 2018*

Impact Factor: 2.804
1/28 ornithology journals



Impact Factor: 2.659
2/28 ornithology journals



"I have very much enjoyed my first few months as the new Editor-in-Chief of *The Condor*, and I'm looking forward to guiding *The Condor* as we traverse a world with ever-increasing human influence. This influence demands that we generate, analyze, and interpret data to provide managers and policy-makers with the best information possible. We continue publishing papers on topics including migratory connectivity, impacts of climate change, urbanization, and energy infrastructure on birds, and effects of habitat restoration and management. I am excited about increasing the geographic scope of *The Condor* to include more papers from tropical areas with high bird diversity. I'd also like to see more interdisciplinary work, such as research that combines ornithology and economics to estimate the biological and financial costs and benefits of particular conservation strategies, or that quantifies the ecosystem services and disservices provided by birds."

-Catherine Lindell, new Editor-in-Chief of The Condor



Amanda LaFay Photography

Publications (Cont'd)



"My experience publishing in *The Auk* was quite positive, with a straightforward submission process, a good response time, and fair and constructive reviews. I am pleased that *The Auk* helped facilitate such a positive publishing experience, especially since it was my first time publishing in a peer-reviewed journal. I learned a great deal about the various steps and processes involved in peer review and publication, all of which will aid me greatly in future academic endeavors."

—Liam Mitchell, University of Lethbridge undergraduate



- Introduced the new **Wesley Lanyon Award** for best review paper published in an AOS journal by an early-career AOS member
- Introduced **mandatory double-blind peer review** to maximize objectivity and reduce unconscious bias
- Introduced **mandatory data archiving** to improve transparency (no cost for AOS members)
- **Eliminated page charges** for AOS members and introduced a **25% member discount** on optional open access fees
- Research from AOS journals covered by **ABC News, Discover, National Geographic, Newsweek**, and more

Conservation & Public Responsibility

AOS's **Conservation Committee** contributed in significant ways to a paper published in September 2019 in *Science* showing that North America's total bird population has declined by approximately 28% since 1970. The study received extensive media coverage, and a coalition of bird conservation organizations created a new website, 3BillionBirds.org, to inform audiences about bird declines and how they can help.



Graphic courtesy of Cornell Lab of Ornithology



AOS was a signatory on **important commentary letters** to federal agencies on issues central to our mission, including proposed amendments to the Migratory Bird Treaty Act and the Endangered Species Act and threats to the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. AOS is also a contributing member of the **Ornithological Council**, which serves the needs of AOS members and the scientific community.

2019 Award Winners



William Brewster Memorial Award

Helen James & Craig Benkman

Elliott Coues Achievement Award

Linda Whittingham & Peter Dunn



Ralph W. Schreiber Conservation Award

José Maria Cardoso da Silva



Loye & Alden Miller Research Award

A. Townsend Peterson



James G. Cooper Early Professional Award

Karan Odom & Kyle Horton



Ned K. Johnson Early Investigator Award

David Toews



Marion Jenkinson Service Award

Alice Boyle



Peter R. Stettenheim Service Award

Phil Stouffer & Mark Hauber



Katma Publication Award

Benjamin Winger, Giorgia Auteri, Teresa Pegan, & Brian Weeks

Harry R. Painton Publication Award

Jason Carlisle, Anna Chalfoun, Kurt Smith, & Jeffrey Beck

Get Involved!

Undergraduate or emeritus professor? New to AOS or been a member for decades? Do you never miss an annual meeting or do you keep up with the Society from afar? Regardless of your circumstances, there are plenty of ways to get more involved in our community — you are AOS!

Engage on social media. Follow AOS on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram to keep up with Society news and see what your fellow AOS members are up to. (You can also showcase your research through a week-long “takeover” of our Instagram account regardless of whether you have an account of your own — contact us if you’re interested!)

Attend a meeting. Our annual meeting is one of the biggest events for ornithology worldwide. We offer travel funding, grants to offset caregiving costs, student registration discounts in exchange for volunteering, and more to make our meetings accessible to as many members as possible.

Do more at meetings. Already a regular at AOS meetings? You can help them function smoothly by volunteering for extra tasks such as chairing a session (indicate your willingness when you submit your abstract) or being a judge for the student presentation awards (contact us to let us know you’re interested!).

Nominate colleagues (or yourself!) for awards. AOS bestows a number of annual awards recognizing exemplary scientific achievement in ornithology; research excellence; exceptional publications in ornithology; and notable sustained service to the Society.

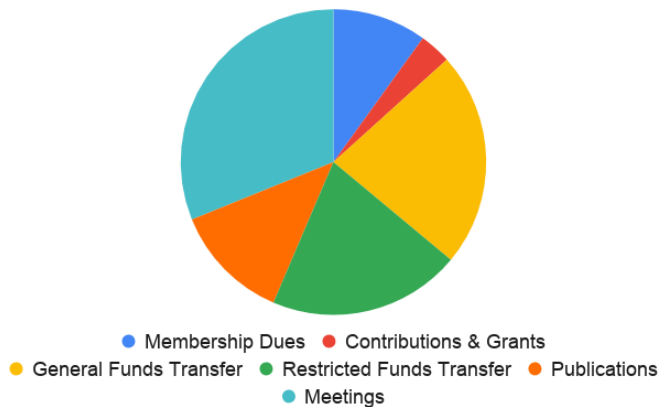
Get involved in our publications. If you’d like to review papers for *The Auk: Ornithological Advances* and *The Condor: Ornithological Applications*, create an account on Editorial Manager and then contact us to let us know you’re interested in being a reviewer.

Serve on a committee. AOS has standing committees related to almost every aspect of ornithology and the Society — there’s guaranteed to be one related to your interests, and the Society couldn’t function without the support of our volunteer committee members.

Run for Council. The AOS Council is the Society’s governing body. If you’re interested in helping set the course for AOS’s future, consider nominating yourself for an open position during the next election cycle.

Financial Snapshot

2019 Revenue



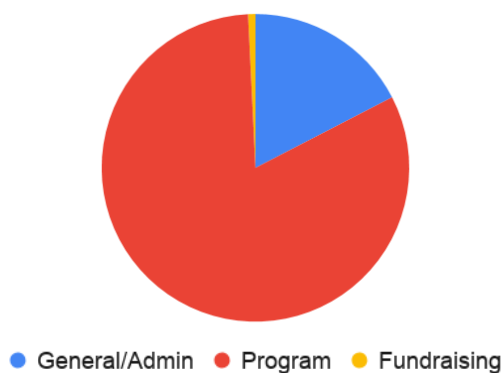
Membership Dues:	\$148,000
Contributions & Grants:	\$50,000
General Funds Transfer:	\$338,000
Restricted Funds Transfer:	\$303,000
Publications:	\$185,000
Meetings:	\$463,000

Total: \$1,487,000

Note that figures on this page represent preliminary, unaudited numbers.

AOS operates with a balanced budget, using annual income and transfers of general and restricted funds as necessary to meet expenses.

2019 Expenses



General & Administrative:	\$259,000
Program	
Communications:	\$181,500
Grants & Awards:	\$265,000
Meetings:	\$364,000
Membership:	\$147,000
Publications:	\$200,000
Projects & Activities:	\$5,000
Public Affairs/Orn. Council:	\$54,000
Fundraising:	\$11,500

Total: \$1,487,000



Total Assets as of 30 Nov. 2019: \$23,205,000