**Annual report of Malacological Society of London Council**

**2017/2018**

**Delivered by the President, Suzanne Williams**

**Finance, for the financial year ending 31 December 2017** (reported by Katrin Linse)

The finances of the Malacological Society have been satisfactory during 2017 with a gain of £26,376.

Our investments had an overall gain of more than £22.6k (comparing market value at 31 December 2016 with market value at 31 December 2017), with the COIF Investment Fund making a gain of £22,982 and the COIF Fixed Interest Fund a loss of £306. During 2016, a total of £34k was transferred from the current account to savings accounts: £5k was transferred from the current accounts into the COIF Investment Fund and £29k to the COIF Fixed Interest Fund.

Separately, the profit-share from the publication of the Journal of Molluscan Studies in 2015 provided the Society with the majority of its income contributing £38k. The Editor of the Journal, Dr David Reid, and the Assistant Editors are to be commended for their hard work contributing to the publication of our scientific journal. In addition, sales of the digital archives provided over £10.4k of income.

More funds were used for awards (22.6k) in 2017 compared to 2016, with travel awards to conferences and society meetings like the Molluscan Forum increased while the spending on research awards decreased. The Society spent overall less money in 2017 compared to 2016 mainly based on meeting charges (hospitality for 2017 Molluscan Forum not charged in 2017) and JMS colour figures charges.

**Meetings**

The 124th Annual General Meeting of The Society was held at the Natural History Museum, London, on the 27th of April 2017 in the Flett Theatre at the Natural History Museum. We had eleven speakers for a one day symposium entitled, ‘*Molluscan Colour and Vision’*. In this symposium speakers covered a range of topics that highlighted the extraordinary nature of colour and vision in molluscs. Speakers included two invited keynotes from Daniel Speiser and Sönke Johnsen. Other speakers were Jakob Vinther, Trevor Wardill, Lauren Sumner-Rooney, Marcel Koken, Suzanne Williams, Nick Roberts, Angus Davison, Alexander Arkipkin and Julia Sigwart. Over 100 people registered to attend the event.

On 30th November 2017 the Annual Molluscan Forum was held in the Flett Lecture Theatre at the Natural History Museum, London, organized by Andreia Salvador, with help from Jon Ablett, Tom White and the President. A total of 75 people from 10 countries attended the Molluscan Forum 2017. Travel awards amounting to £1,646 were given to 15 students. There were 17 speakers and 6 posters. Luke Helmer (University of Portsmouth) was awarded the Oxford Prize for Malacology for his talk, *'The efficacy of suspended broodstock cages as a restoration strategy for the European flat oyster* Ostrea edulis *Linnaeus, 1758: A case study in the Solent, UK*’. The Society provided lunch for all attendees and this served to create a cohesive meeting, with excellent opportunity to discuss the posters. The Forum was again held consecutively with the Young Systematists’ Forum, affording an opportunity for students to attend both meetings. A full report of the Forum will appear in number 70 of *The Malacologist*.

**Membership** (reported by Tom White)

The last year has been somewhat challenging in terms of maintaining the membership database. I would like to take this opportunity to thank members for their patience; many have had difficulties with their subscriptions, either in making payments or receiving their copies of *JMS.* Part of the problem was an unknown issue with the 1&1 email forwarding system, which meant that many message sent via the ‘membership@malacsoc.org’ address did not get through. Issues with back-issues of *JMS* have been affected by a slow response from OUP, who are now only contactable via a generic email address rather than a specific member of staff. I am continuing to chase up outstanding issues.

Further compounding the issue of renewing subscriptions was the decision to terminate the Society’s PayPal account (see Treasurer’s report) and switch entirely to the Stripe payment system. This resulted in recurring payments being cancelled, which was the only way to make the change. It is hoped that a recurring payment system can be reinstated this year via Stripe; members could also take up the option of setting up a direct debit to the Society’s new bank account (details provided on the Membership webpage), now that the subscription rates have stabilised at the new level.

Any members with outstanding issues and who have not been able to contact me via the ‘membership’ email address should write to me at tom.white@nhm.ac.uk (please note that I have also moved on from my Cambridge position) and I will endeavour to deal with them as soon as possible.

**Publications**

***The Malacologist* (reported by Georges Dussart)**

Unfortunately, publication of the August issue (Number 69) was delayed until early November as several items had been awaited. It comprised 33 pages, including research grant reports, travel grant reports, the minutes of the AGM, abstracts of the AGM conference on colour and vision and an obituary. The research grant reports were from Jorge Audino, (Applying confocal microscopy to study neuro- and myoanatomy of bivalves: a successful approach focusing on the mantle margin) and Alexandra Németh (Age distribution and habitat reconstruction of *Glycymeris insubrica* shells from Late-Holocene sediments). The travel grant report was from Lisette de Hoop of Radboud University in the Netherlands who described her visit to the 20th International Conference on Invasive Species in Florida where she presented a paper on on the quagga mussel (*Dreissena rostriformis bugensis*) and its use by municipalities and conservancies as an eco-engineer (biofilter) in Dutch urban surface waters. The obituary was for Elizabeth Platts, a long-serving member of the Council who is much missed. This issue also included a comprehensive list of past award winners of the Society, included as a future reference source.

The February issue (70) was thirty pages long and published on time. As usual for this issue, it was mostly taken up with abstracts form the Malacological Forum held at the NHM in November 2017. A research grant report from Trond Oskars of Bergen University, Norway reported on his work aiming to understand the diversity of the herbivorous cephalaspid family Haminoeidae. One of the goals of his research is to document the diversity, systematics and taxonomy of the Indo-West Pacific (IWP) genus *Haloa* and to try to use this knowledge to better understand speciation and biogeography of shallow-water gastropods. As a corollary to the list of prize winners published in the previous issue, Issue 70 included lists of all the previous officers of our now somewhat venerable Society. As is unfortunately frequent these days, the issue again included an obituary, in this case of Dai Roberts who had been a Treasurer of the Society for many years. Finally, as usual, the issue presented the official notice of the forthcoming AGM and the nominations for Council.

***Journal of Molluscan Studies* (reported by David Reid)**

The ISI impact factor for the *Journal* in 2016 increased to 1.250 (compared with 1.185 in 2015, 1.326 in 2014, 1.495 in 2013, 1.358 in 2012 and 1.227 in 2011). The *Journal* stands at number 65 in the ISI list of 160 zoological journals (up from 68 in the previous year). Our chief competitor, *Malacologia*, had a lower impact factor in 2016 (0.943), so the *Journal*’s leading position in the field is confirmed by citation statistics. The *Journal* continues to be truly international in terms of the geographical distribution of its authors; for volume 82 (2016) the corresponding authors represented 18 countries (of which the leaders were 18% USA and 12% Japan).

Circulation for the *Journal* in 2017 was 45 institutional (of which 20 were online-only and 15 print-only) and 154 membership subscriptions (compared with 51 and 145 respectively for 2016). In addition a further 2,569 institutions have electronic access to the *Journal* through publishers’ consortia (includes migrated figures; compared with 2,645 in 2016) and 1,092 (unchanged from 2016) have access through OUP’s Developing Countries Offer (for details see <http://www.oxfordjournals.org/access_purchase/developing_countries.html>). This means that the *Journal* is now available to 3,860 member and institutional subscribers (compared with 3,933 in 2016).

The new pricing structure has been fixed for 2018. The cost for a combined print plus online institutional subscription is £628; an online-only subscription is £486 and print-only subscription is £579.

Volume 83 (2017) contained 56 papers and research notes, totalling 483 pages (a significant decrease on the exceptional 606 pages of the preceding volume). The mean delay between acceptance of a manuscript and electronic publication was 6.4 weeks. In total, 176 manuscripts were submitted in 2017 (a decrease of 10% on the 195 in the previous year) and the acceptance rate was approximately 32%. The response of symposium organisers from the 2016 World Congress of Malacology in Penang was disappointing; only four papers from the Opisthobranch Symposium have been published in the *Journal*. The image of *Wunderpus photogenicus* on the cover of Volume 83 was kindly donated by Colin Marshall.

The access problems arising from migration to the new OUP website for the *Journal* in 2017 have now been resolved. Members are reminded that they can access the entire electronic archive of *Journal of Molluscan Studies* (and its precursor *Proceedings of the Malacological Society of London*).

Our board of Associate Editors is now: Coenraad Adema (immunology, genomics, parasitology), Thierry Backeljau (molecular phylogenetics and genetics), Liz Boulding (population and reproductive biology), Robert Cameron (ecology and genetics of terrestrial gastropods), Richard Cook (agricultural malacology, physiology, feeding behaviour), Simon Cragg (life histories, sense organs), John Davenport (marine ecology and physiology), Mark Davies (marine ecology and behaviour), Dan Graf (freshwater bivalves), John Grahame (population genetics, morphometrics), Liz Harper (marine bivalves), Bernhard Hausdorf (terrestrial gastropods), Robert Hershler (freshwater gastropods), Michal Horsák (ecology and biogeography of terrestrial gastropods), Kurt Jordaens (systematics, ecology and pest control of terrestrial gastropods), Yasunori Kano (systematics of vetigastropods, tropical ecology), Joris Koene (reproductive behaviour of gastropods), Manuel Malaquias (opisthobranchs), Peter Marko (marine biogeography and phylogenetics), Pablo Martín (freshwater ecology, life history), Ellinor Michel (ecology, freshwater gastropods), Jeff Nekola (community ecology of terrestrial gastropods), Nicolas Puillandre (neogastropods), Ellen Strong (freshwater and marine caenogastropods), Mikael Thollesson (opisthobranchs), Janet Voight (cephalopods), Janice Voltzow (microscopic anatomy), Heike Wägele (opisthobranch biology), Tony Walker (biochemistry, immunology, cytology), Suzanne Williams (molecular phylogenetics and genetics), Nerida Wilson (opisthobranchs, deep-sea and Antarctic molluscs) and Yoichi Yusa (general ecology and behaviour). I am sorry to report the resignation of Associate Editor Anne Lockyer.

I would like to thank all the members of the editorial board, those members of the international malacological community who have contributed to the review process, and the staff of Oxford University Press, for their work on behalf of the *Journal*.

Finally, I have given notice to the President and Council of the Society that I shall resign as Editor at the end of 2018, after 16 years. The Council has agreed to a transitional period of six months (from July 2018), during which I shall work together with the incoming Editor.

**The Society’s websites – www.malacsoc.org.uk** (reported by Tom White)

The website has not been changed substantially over the last year, other than to update various pages with relevant information. It continues to function well, providing information relating to awards, membership and subscriptions and upcoming MSL events, as well as links to the *Journal of Molluscan Studies* and issues of *The Malacologist*. The Wordpress system does not provide analytics in the same way as previously, so data such as the number of visits etc. could not be compiled. If members experience any issues with the website, or notice issues such as broken links or incorrect information, please let know so that these can be corrected.

**The Society’s Facebook account www.facebook.com/malacsoc** (reported by Chong Chen)

The Society’s Facebook page continues to perform well. We now have over 2,100 followers on the page, an increase of about 300 from last year. This means we have a direct outreach population of 2,100 people/organisations who sees our posts; some posts reach over 2,500 views thanks to other organisations who share our posts. For example, the final announcement of the Molluscan Forum reached 2,600 views.

Again, although the Facebook page is doing well so far, it will benefit greatly from an increased number and variety of posts. If you come across items of potential interest for our Facebook audience, please e-mail me (cchen@jamstec.go.jp) with recommendations and I will generate posts. Also, if you have a Facebook account and would like to join the admin team with posting rights and see the performance stats, just let me know which e-mail address you used to register for Facebook, and I will add you as an admin.

If you have suggestions / comments on the Facebook page, please do not hesitate to contact me.

**Awards** (reported by Jon Ablett)

Overall, the Society is very pleased with the number of applications that it receives for Travel Awards and Research Grants. The schemes seem to be achieving their global aim to enable young scientists to engage in malacological research activity both in the laboratory/field and at meetings. Reports from researchers funded through both schemes appear in *The Malacologist*.

The Society aims to make the following awards annually.

* Travel Awards - at least 5 each of up to £500 for Society members, £300 for non-members
* Research Grants - at least 5 each of up to £1500

Application forms and guidance notes for both schemes have been updated recently and can be downloaded from The Society’s website.

**Travel Awards**

In 2017 there were 2 rounds of Travel Awards, June and December. The Society received 9 applications for awards to travel and was able to fund 8 of these requests. All Travel Award applications are reviewed by an Awards Committee. The Society is pleased to have announced the following awards.

*June Travel Awards*

* María Pilar Cadierno (Universidad Nacional de La Plata)

**£300** for the ‘14th International Congress on Invertebrate Reproduction and Development’

* Matías Giglio (Universidad Nacional de La Plata)

**£300** for ‘Physiomar 17’.

* Lisette de Hoop (Radboud University)

**£300** for the ‘Global Action Against Aquatic Invasive Species Conference’

* Nathaniel T. Marshall (University of Toledo)

**£500** for the ‘14th International Congress on Invertebrate Reproduction and Development’.

* Patricia Peinado (University of Tasmania)

**£500** for ‘Physiomar 17’.

* Leonardo Santos de Souza (Universidade Federal do Rio de Janeiro)

**£500** for the ‘X Congreso Latinoamericano de Malacología Development’.

*December Travel Awards*

* Jorge Alves Audino Sampaio (Universidade de São Paulo)

**£300** for the ‘“American Malacological Society Annual Meeting” symposium’. USA

* Umberto Rosani (University of Padova)

**£300** for the “American National Shellfisheries Association”. USA

A total of **£3000** was allocated by The Society for Travel Awards. All applicants have been notified of the outcome. Note that this amount does not necessarily reflect actual ‘spend’ as occasionally students withdraw from the intended visit.

**Research Grants for 2017 - Senior Research Grants & Early Career Research Grants**

The MSL council decided to restructure the research grants from 2016 by awarding Senior Research Grants and Early Career Research Grant. Early Career Research Grants are conferred on students and researchers without professional positions, but without regard to nationality or membership of The Society. Senior Research Awards are aimed at established researchers in professional positions, but without regard to nationality. Applicants for Senior Research Awards must be members of The Society. Early Career Research Grants will be reviewed by MSL council members and Senior Research Grants may be reviewed by a Reviewers Panel including both council and non-council members invited for that purpose.

**Early Career Research Grants**

By the closing date of 15th December 2017 the Society had received 26applications from workers from 23 institutions in 12 different countries. In general, the scientific quality of the research projects submitted was excellent.

On behalf of the Society, I would like to formally thank the members of the Grants Review Panel for their hard work in reviewing all applications. The Panel has agreed the following awards, in alphabetical order.

* Amodio, P. (University of Cambridge, UK), **£1500**

‘Are octopuses creative tool users or tool specialists?’

* Cobo Llovo, M. (University of Alabama, USA), **£1300**

‘Solenogastres from remote locations, a step forward in the knowledge of Aplacophora’

* Fernández-Vilert, R. (Harvard University, USA), **£1410**

‘Assessing the phylogenetics and systematics of the nudibranch mollusc family Dotidae (Gastropoda, Heterobranchia) in the Mediterranean’

* Kang, V. (University of Cambridge, UK), **£1500**

‘Finding molecules that stick: Identifying adhesive proteins and understanding their role in the limpet’s powerful adhesion’

* Laibl, C.( SNSB Bavarian State Collection of Zoology, Germany), **£1135**

‘Barcoding coffee grounds – Exploring the diversity of pteropods in the world´s oceans using sediment deposits in collection jars’

* Lundquist, S. (University of Cambridge, UK), **£755**

‘Freshwater mussels as environmental indicators for climate history’

* Ostermair, L. (Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität, Germany), **£1128**

‘Taking advantage of contamination: Molecular analyses of solenogaster midgut contents to determine food sources’

* Prasetiya , F.S. (Universitas Padjadjaran, Indonesia), **£1500**

‘Physiological effects of marennine-like pigment on Pinctada maxima, the South Sea Pearl Oyster (PoMPier)’

* Rama Rao, S. (Sunway University, Malaysia) **£1461**

‘Population genetic diversity of invasive apple snails (Pomacea spp) in Malaysia’

* Sampaio, E. (University of Konstanz, Germany), **£1500**

‘Disentangling multi-partner effects on octopus-fish cooperative hunting’

* Sleight, V. (University of Cambridge, UK), **£1500**

‘Developmental biomineralisation mechanisms’

Therefore **11** Research Grants have been funded at a total cost of **£14,689**. The success rate was **42%**. The Grants Review Panel would like to emphasise that the quality of all applications was high and that it funded as many excellent projects as possible. Applicants will be formally notified of the outcome of their application within three weeks of the AGM.

**Senior Research Grants**

By the closing date of 15th June 2017 the Society had received 3applications from workers from 3 institutions in 3different countries. On behalf of the Society, I would again like to formally thank the members of the Grants Review Panel for their hard work in reviewing all applications. The Panel has agreed the following awards, in alphabetical order.

* Dr Joris M. Koene, Vrije Universiteit, the Netherlands.

**£1500** ‘Cuban Cupids: Mating behaviour of dart-possessing land snails

* Dr Katja Peijnenburg, Naturalis Biodiversity Center and Leiden University, the Netherlands.

**£1500** ‘Adaptive potential of pteropods along a meridional transect in the Atlantic Ocean ‘

**The Annual Award**

The Society received three nominations for the 2018 Annual Award. The Judging Panel elected to offer the Annual Award to Philip R. Hollyman (Bangor University, UK.) for a thesis entitled ‘*Age, growth and reproductive assessment of the whelk, Buccinum undatum, in coastal shelf seas*’. The Society sends its best wishes and congratulations to Dr Hollyman

**The Oxford Prize for Malacology**

The Oxford Prize for Malacology is awarded annually for the best presentation at the Molluscan Forum, is generously supported by Oxford University Press, publisher of the Society’s journal. The 2017 winner is Luke Helmer for his talk entitled ‘The efficacy of suspended broodstock cages as a restoration strategy for the European

**Euromal**

The society provided £2000 to the organisers of the 2017 Euromal Committee to fund student placements at the 8th EUROMAL in Krakow, Poland. The recipients were chosen by the Euromal Committee and were:

* Sofifa Bakalayeva - £81
* Luis Javier Chueca - £55
* Dr Ana Vanessa Pinto Modesto Bento - £300
* Dr Eder Somosa Valdeolmillos - £300
* Dr Feng Tang - £464
* Dr Amaia Caro Aramendia - £300
* Dr Justin Kemp - £500

The Society awarded 3 student prizes at Euromal 2017 for the best student oral presentation. The winner of the award was David Willer for his talk ‘Improving productivity of bivalve mollusc aquaculture using microencapsulated products’ and the two runners up were Alyssa Rita Frederick (Differential disease resistance patterns in eastern Pacific Haliotids) and Dagmar Rihova (Coat for every occasion: periostracum of selected land snails – a preliminary report).

**Officers and Council**

This is my final year as President of the Society and as in the previous two years, it has been an absolute pleasure to work with all Society’s Officers and Councillors. I am proud to be involved with such an active Society, whose activities contribute to the Society’s stated goals to “advance education, research and learning for the public benefit in the study of Mollusca from both pure and applied aspects”. The Society does this by providing grants and awards to students, early career researchers and established scientists to promote malacological research, publishing two excellent publications, as well as maintaining an active website, which is updated regularly, and a Facebook account, which highlights events and papers of interest to the malacological community. It also organizes stimulating meetings and has managed to maintain both a healthy membership and financial status.

None of this would be possible without the hard work, dedication and inspiration of the Society’s Officers and Councillors who are all volunteers. As such, I would like to express my sincere gratitude and appreciation to all of them.

In stepping down as President I know I will be handing over to very capable hands and that the new incumbent will be greatly aided by the professionalism of the Council and Officers.