



# Working in Britain for Birds in Italy

Italian Society for the Protection of Birds - UK Branch

Lega Italiana Protezione Uccelli (LIPU)

Honorary Patrons: Bill Oddie, Tony Soper

## **Annual Report for the year ended 30 June 2008**

LIPU-UK, c/o Fernwood, Doddington Road, Whisby, Lincs, LN6 9BX is registered with the Charity Commission (No 1081826) and is constituted by Deed of Trust.

The charity is administered by an Executive Committee, the members of which during the financial year were:

Chairman:	Mr. Joseph Fleming FCIB
Treasurer/Secretary:	Mr David Lingard
Members:	Mrs Carol Debney
	Professor Barry Fantoni
	Mr Tony Gdula
	Mrs Lesley Hales (resigned July 2007)
	Mrs Shirley Lingard

### *Objectives*

LIPU-UK has one overriding objective, namely, to support and encourage the bird protection and habitat conservation activities of Lega Italiana Protezione Uccelli (LIPU) – the BirdLife International Partner for Italy. At the same time, LIPU-UK also works to raise awareness in the UK of the severe challenges to the bird life of Italy which arise as a result of a long history of indiscriminate hunting and trapping of birds in that country.

## *Executive Management*

The Executive Committee has formal meetings three times each year but, in these days of Internet communication, there is an ongoing dialogue between members on a regular (and sometimes frantic) basis if the issue warrants it! Day-to-day activity is concentrated in Lincolnshire where David Lingard and his wife Shirley devote much of their so called leisure time to the furtherance of the LIPU cause but acting always in close contact with the members of the Executive Committee.

## *Finance*

By any measure, the year in question was very successful in financial terms with total income of almost £124,000 being the second highest on record. This was principally attributable to a major legacy of over £40,000 from the estate of a deceased LIPU-UK member, Mrs D M Curtis. This generous bequest was greatly appreciated both here in the UK and at LIPU headquarters as this has enabled us to increase our support to them during the financial year. Even without the legacy, income generation has been commendable with Subscriptions and Donations at over £56,000 showing an increase of 22% over the previous year. The high interest regime in force for most of the financial year is also reflected in the figure for Bank interest at over £16,000 whilst Gift Aid of over £7,000 continues to provide a positive contribution to our income. The annual Prize Draw once again proved popular and generated over £2,000 thanks to the generosity of members who bought (and sold) tickets and also the donors of the attractive prizes on offer.

Turning to expenditure, the vast majority of the total outgoing in 2007/08 relate, of course, to financial transfers to LIPU which totalled over £63,000. The adverse movement in the exchange rate between sterling and the Euro (from a UK perspective) increased the cost of funds transferred to Italy (€80,000) but, nevertheless, this proved to be an exceptional year in terms of the number of projects we were able to support. In addition to the four projects which formed the basis of our 2007 appeal (which were detailed in full in the Annual Report for 2006/07), Executive Committee responded to an interim request from Italy and provided funds for two projects which warranted urgent assistance. As always, close attention is always paid to the running costs

of LIPU-UK and, as the accounts show, these are a low percentage of the overall income figure – even if legacies are disregarded for this exercise. It is encouraging that there has been an increase in the number of members who are happy to receive “Ali” (the quarterly digest of articles translated from the Italian edition augmented by news from the UK) via the Internet. We hope that, as time goes by, the proportion of Internet readers of “Ali” will continue to increase to reduce our costs further – and to help lessen the use of paper in our lives for the betterment of the environment. Another cost-saving measure is the use of Bankers’ Orders to pay annual subscriptions and if you are not already employing that method of payment, please give it consideration. David Lingard will be very happy to supply the necessary form and it is simplicity itself to set up.

### *Financial Reserves Policy*

LIPU-UK maintains a Business Reserve which is set at a figure of £2,000 and this level is reviewed regularly by Executive Committee. In essence, this amount of resource is considered to be the prudent level of funds to guard against any potential liquidity problem that might arise if income unexpectedly dried up and financial commitments had to be met. LIPU-UK has never had to rely on this level of Reserve and it is hard to envisage that it would ever need to do so – but the principle of maintaining prudent levels of resource for this purpose is entirely appropriate. The other major reserve maintained by LIPU-UK is the “Oasi Fund”; at 30th June 2008 this financial reserve totalled almost £285,000. When the Oasi Fund was established in 2000 at a figure in the region of £5,000, its purpose was clearly defined. Namely, to accumulate funds which would be employed either to fund the purchase of land in Italy which would be a nature reserve for the protection of birds and their habitat, or to finance the addition of land or buildings within an existing reserve in Italy which would enhance existing habitat or bird protection resources. There has always been an over-riding caveat, namely, that a candidate investment meeting the initial qualifying criteria would also need to be demonstrably sustainable by LIPU in terms of its long term management and operating costs. A number of candidate investments have been considered by LIPU-UK in the last three years (when the critical mass of the Oasi Fund made land purchase a real possibility) but each, in turn, has not satisfied the standards we had set and/or the land in question has been in a region in Italy

where pressures from the surrounding environment would not have made the establishment of a reserve sustainable. In last year's Annual Report, I mentioned the possibility of adding to an existing LIPU reserve in Sicily but, after detailed research into this particular location followed by discussion of the risk factors with our colleagues in Italy, it was mutually agreed that sustainability could prove problematic and it was decided that we should not go ahead. The search for a suitable investment in Italy continues and, hopefully, will result in the identification of a candidate which satisfies all the required criteria in the near future. However, in the light of the difficulties which we have been encountered in pursuing the original investment ambition of the Oasi Fund, Executive Committee is shortly to consider a reformulation of our Reserves policy to ensure that the funds generated by our members by way of donation, bequest and by supporting fund-raising efforts are proactively employed in the furtherance of our declared overall objectives in the near term.

### *Membership*

It is disappointing to report a further small fall in the number of members compared to the figure at the previous year end – now 958 (995) - despite much hard work and effort to counter this trend. We are very conscious of the financial pressures on all individuals in the light of soaring food and energy prices against a backdrop of steadily increasing inflation and global uncertainty arising from the so-called credit crunch. However, we are determined to work towards the restitution of a 1,000 plus member base and, to that end, have launched a recruitment campaign backed by a new and very attractive leaflet (designed by David Lingard and Carol Debney). This is being augmented by giving new members a free copy of the excellent "A Birdwatcher's Guide to Italy" thanks mainly to the sponsorship of the publishers (Lynx Edicions).

### *Projects supported*

Our 2008 Annual Appeal was launched midway through the financial year. The funds generated by this exercise are earmarked for the following projects.

- Anti-poaching campaigns and activities in the Straits of Messina combined with support of two camps in Sardinia aimed at challenging thrush trapping activities.

- A fifth successive year of survey work to map the raptor migration routes through Sicily in the Spring.
- The monitoring of rare and endangered species such as Little Bustard, Eleonora's Falcon and Short-toed Eagle with the aim of safeguarding their futures.
- A contribution towards the costs of conservation and protection of Shearwater at their breeding sites on the island of Linosa where the local authority has now started a rat eradication project which will be of immense benefit to these birds.
- The support of LIPU Recovery Centres by funding the purchase of medical and surgical supplies.

The first three listed projects are being funded to an individual level of €13,000 with our good friends from the Anglo Italian Society for the Protection of Animals (AISPA) agreeing to fund fully one of those three major projects. Our relationship with AISPA goes back many years and it is a matter of great pride and satisfaction to LIPU in Italy, and to ourselves in the UK, that we have achieved much with their support. We have also agreed with LIPU to provide €13,000 on a combined basis towards the costs of Projects 4 and 5 listed above.

### *Acknowledgements*

For a great number of years, the majority of the translation work on most of the reports and publications emanating from LIPU, has been undertaken by Brian Horkley who has maintained a very high standard in capturing the nuances and subtleties of the material on which he has worked. In more recent times, Brian has gradually phased down his translation work whilst other members of the team of translators (to whom we are also very much indebted) have taken on more of this work and responsibility. It was with some sadness, but in the knowledge that Brian had really earned his "retirement", we said goodbye to Brian in March this year. He has made a major contribution to the success of LIPU-UK and we cannot thank him enough for his part in this achievement. Brian has now handed over the senior role in the team of voluntary translators to Carol Debney and we wish her every success in this new endeavour on her part.

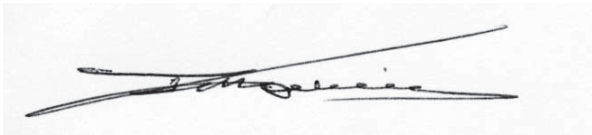
We were sorry that Lesley Hales decided to resign as a Trustee at the beginning of the year under review but, in the relatively short time she was with us, she made a valuable contribution to our discussions and deliberations for which we will always be grateful. As ever, we remain conscious of the need for succession planning and informal dialogues have been held with two potential trustees which, at this time, do not seem likely to result in a new member joining the team. However, if anyone reading this report would like to hear a bit more about what being a Trustee would mean then do please get in touch with us.

As in previous years, I find myself trying to find new ways of expressing appreciation for the work of our Secretary/Treasurer, David Lingard, who devotes a great deal of his time working tirelessly to promote the case of LIPU through LIPU-UK but I can never really do justice to this pleasant task. He, and we, are fortunate that his wife, Shirley, not only supports him in all that he does but also plays an active part in the work required to make LIPU-UK a success. We are very grateful for all that David and Shirley continue to do for the organisation and that view is also held strongly at LIPU headquarters in Parma.

### *Summary*

We live in a world of uncertainty. There is global uncertainty in financial markets, the price of all forms of energy is soaring and unstable, climate change and global warming are now accepted as reality even by those who strenuously denied these factors in the past and food costs are rising both at home and abroad. But, as individuals, we try to ensure that life goes on as normally as circumstances allow and, in our own ways, we hold on to the values which are important to us. What does remain certain, however, is that the work of LIPU is vital in making a positive impact on the conservation of habitat and the protection of birds throughout Italy. Of equal importance is the battle to win the hearts and minds of the young people of Italy who will be the guardians of the natural resources and wildlife of their country in years to come and it is pleasing to report that LIPU is making great progress in this important area of endeavour. As a charitable trust based in the UK we are conscious that we should also reflect on our aims and objectives and consider to what extent they might be considered to be of "Public Benefit" here in the

UK. In this respect, we find ourselves in a position not dissimilar to a number of other UK charities which have been established by individuals who have recognised that the values which we hold in this country are not shared to the same extent in other parts of the world and which can impact on our lives here. To a degree, we see ourselves operating in a European context and there is no doubt at all that the biodiversity of the continent is influenced by the attitudes and practices of individual countries which are of geographic significance in the massive movement of birds from their wintering to breeding grounds. The links between the UK and Italy have been of historic importance and the work of LIPU-UK continues in the long tradition of encouraging and supporting the relationship between our two countries to the benefit of both – and to the benefit of the birdlife which we seek to protect. We are grateful for your continuing support and encouragement and we look forward to a future when the combination of the work in LIPU allied to the imposition of stricter application of the Birds Directive of the European Commission will see continuing improvement in the conservation and protection of birds in Italy and of the habitats on which they depend.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Joe Fleming', is centered on a light gray background. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Joe Fleming  
27 September 2008

On behalf of the Trustees/Members of the Executive Committee of LIPU-UK

Statement of Financial Activities for the Year to 30 June 2008

<u>Income and Expenditure</u>	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total	2007
	£	£	£	
Legacies	41861		41861	0
Subscriptions & Donations	20457	35585	56042	454940
Annual Draw	2428		2428	2756
Gift Aid tax claims	7326		7326	6958
Deposit Interest	16243		16243	11234
Charitable Trading	0		0	0
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>88315</b>	<b>35585</b>	<b>123900</b>	<b>66888</b>
 <u>Charitable Activity Expenditure</u>				
Paid to LIPU for Projects	28064	35585	63649	43346
Newsletter Production	2644	0	2644	2212
Travel	581	0	581	299
<b>Total</b>	<b>31289</b>	<b>35585</b>	<b>66874</b>	<b>45857</b>
 <u>Other Expenditure</u>				
Postage	3207	0	3207	1365
Printing	644	0	644	0
British Birdwatching Fair	616	0	616	599
Annual Draw	664	0	664	625
Trustees Meetings	106	0	106	206
Independent Examiners Fee	150	0	150	150
Stationery	196	0	196	1524
Recruiting Campaign	471	0	471	0
Miscellaneous Admin costs	311		311	0
Insurance	49		49	0
Petty Cash	155		155	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>6569</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>6569</b>	<b>4469</b>
 <b>Total Expenditure</b>	 <b>37858</b>	 <b>35585</b>	 <b>73443</b>	 <b>50326</b>
 Net Income for the Year	 50457	 0	 50457	 16562
 Fund Balances B/F	 239481		 239481	 222919
 Fund Balances C/F	 <b>289938</b>	 <b>0</b>	 <b>289938</b>	 <b>239481</b>