

### **Closing time gaps in scientific bird collections - towards an international strategy of collection development**

Compared to previous decades there is only a fairly small number of incoming specimens in most European ornithological collections to date. This appears to be due both to legal regulations and to altered ethical considerations. As a consequence, there is a lack of temporal and geographical coverage in specimen holdings, particularly for the last two decades. Regarding the increasing awareness of the importance of voucher specimens for population studies, biochemical, and molecular analyses, museums might become unable to provide adequate contemporary material if the development of their bird collections stagnates further.

Hence, there is an urgent need to fill these gaps in ornithological collections as soon as possible. While European museums usually are allowed to accept and preserve dead birds that are donated by the public, they rarely have legal permissions for collecting birds actively. Thus, the quality and quantity of incoming specimens is less controllable in terms of a focused development of the collections.

In their own interest, museums need to prevent being reduced to merely repositories of past biodiversity. That is why concerted international collecting strategies are necessary to promote museums as active scientific institutions and to raise their recognition within the scientific community.

This workshop aims at discussing strategies to collect data-rich material in order to close temporal and geographic gaps in ornithological collections. By doing so, the strategies of different institutions shall be presented as well as practical or legal problems with specimen acquisition. Ideally, a consensus of how to proceed jointly should be reached that could form the basis for a concerted European collection strategy.