Our vision is to advance our knowledge of the natural world, inspiring better care of our planet.

Our mission is to maintain and develop our collections, and use them to promote the discovery, understanding, responsible use and enjoyment of the natural world.
Charles Darwin took centre stage at the Natural History Museum this year as we celebrated the two hundredth anniversary of his birth. His statue now sits at the top of the stairs overlooking our iconic Central Hall, greeting all those who come to the Museum to explore the diversity of the natural world.

It feels like he belongs here. Darwin was fascinated by life on Earth and his writing shines with a sheer delight in the beauty and complexity of nature. It was through meticulous observation of the smallest details that he was able to grasp the bigger picture. Throughout his life, Darwin’s relentless curiosity drove him to keep asking ‘how’ and ‘why’ – seeking to understand how the diversity of life came about and our place within it.

This quest continues at the Museum today. It drives our scientists as they explore, discover and reveal new insights. It guides our curators as they examine, order and conserve our collections. And it empowers our educators to communicate our knowledge and our passion, as they inspire a new generation to take better care of our planet.

Today this work has new poignancy and urgency as we face profound and unprecedented threats to our biodiversity. The current rate of extinctions is causing irreparable damage to the Tree of Life, which, as Darwin showed, connects all of the natural world including ourselves.

In response, the Museum itself is evolving and entering a new era with a dynamic focus on public engagement. It has never been more important to appreciate the diversity of nature and to understand the interdependence of life on Earth. In September 2009 we opened our new life sciences complex – the Darwin Centre – not just to share what we have learnt, but to invite our visitors to join us on our ongoing journey of discovery.

The Darwin Centre enlists all available resources, from ancient collections to cutting-edge technology, to ensure our message is carried in a clear and compelling voice: the voice of authority on the natural world. It is vital that the Museum maintains its leadership role in collections management, scientific research and public engagement with science, in order to enhance our global reputation and reinforce the UK’s commitment to science, education and biodiversity conservation.

This review covers financial year 2008/09 and calendar years 2008 and 2009.

Dr Michael Dixon, Director
Exhibitions at the Natural History Museum

Amazing Butterflies
As well as the major Showcase Darwin, the Museum staged further outstanding exhibitions this year. Summer 2008 marked a bold departure from the Museum’s traditional gallery-focused exhibitions. Amazing Butterflies was situated in the grounds outside the Museum and featured live specimens for the first time. Hundreds of colourful tropical butterflies. Visitors were invited to explore a themed maze, taking on the role of a caterpillar, pupa, then butterfly, to experience the challenges of this unique life cycle.

Wildlife Photographer of the Year
Visually stunning, sometimes humorous and often thought-provoking – the yearly exhibition of the world’s best wildlife photography opened at the Natural History Museum’s sister Museum in Hertfordshire, which houses the collections of Walter Rothschild

Blaschka’s sculptures
Spectacular glass models of sea creatures such as anemones and jellyfish were displayed in this exhibition. These delicate and incredibly accurate models were crafted by the Blaschka family in the nineteenth-century for use as teaching aids. Three years of conservation work by Museum experts allowed some of these treasures to be shared with the public for the first time in decades.

Wallace, Darwin and Evolution
Part of the Darwin200 celebrations, this exhibition allowed visitors to explore the lives of Charles Darwin and Alfred Russel Wallace and to examine the influences that led them both to develop theories of evolution by natural selection. Local audiences enjoyed learning about the lesser-known Wallace, a Hertfordshire schoolboy who became one of Britain’s greatest naturalists.

Surprising Sharks
Based on the eponymous children’s book by Nicola Davies, this innovative exhibition welcomed almost 55,000 visitors to view these much-maligned predators from a new perspective. With diverse specimens from the Museum’s collection, the exhibition helped visitors to appreciate sharks as awesome examples of nature’s power, who have more to fear from humans than we do from them.

New discoveries

Giant stick insect
The Museum has revealed a stick insect measuring an incredible 56.6cm with its legs fully stretched. The Phobaeticus chani, or Chani’s megastick, is the largest of the 3,000 known species of stick insects. So far three specimens have been found on the island of Borneo and the largest has been donated to the Natural History Museum.

Pregnant fish
Our research has revealed that a fossil fish in the Museum contains a five-centimetre-long embryo. This makes the 365-million-year-old Inciscociculum ritches one of the earliest examples of a pregnant vertebrate, demonstrating that internal fertilisation started much sooner than scientists previously thought.

2008-09 Awards

Family fun
In November, the Museum won the ‘Kids Love London’ Best Family Fun Award in the 2008 Visit London People’s Choice Awards. Members of the public chose the Natural History Museum from a short list including London Zoo, The London Eye and Madame Tussauds.

Glass conservation
Lisa Stertz, a student from Erfurt University of Applied Science in Germany, has been awarded the Nigel Williams Prize for her work on the Museum’s Blaschka glass collection. The prize is awarded by the Institute of Conservation (ICON) for outstanding achievement in ceramics and glass conservation.
Celebrating Darwin

There could be no more appropriate place to commemorate and celebrate Charles Darwin than the Natural History Museum. Darwin's thinking informs and inspires every aspect of our work. The theory of evolution by natural selection possesses breathtaking power and elegance – it underpins the life sciences, which lie at the heart of the Museum's research.

The Museum's relationship with Darwin's legacy was in the spotlight in 2009 as we championed the national celebrations to mark three significant anniversaries. Darwin200, the partnership developed by the Museum, began in July 2008, commemorating 150 years since Darwin and Wallace presented their ideas to fellow scientists. Events then centred on Darwin's two-hundredth birthday in February 2009 and continued until November 2009, when we marked 150 years since the publication of Darwin's seminal work on the Origin of Species.

Utilising our collections and drawing on our breadth of expertise, we created an extensive programme of events and exhibitions to explore the power of the scientific theory which changed the way we perceive the world and our place within it. As we looked back on Darwin's life, we also considered the relevance of his ideas today. The specially-commissioned artwork TREE represents Darwin's diagram of the Tree of Life, as artist Tania Kovats explains: 'in this humble sketch Darwin was mapping out the future of biological knowledge and set in motion an investigation that we are still engaged with today.'

Darwin200
Darwin200 was a UK-wide celebration of Darwin's life and legacy. The work TREE by British artist Tania Kovats was chosen from a short list featuring 10 leading artists whose proposals were showcased in the summer 2008 exhibition Darwin's Canopy. Inspired by Darwin's iconic sketch of the Tree of Life, TREE is a longitudinal section of an entire 200-year-old oak tree, inlaid into the ceiling of a Museum gallery. The tree itself was taken from sustainable forests on the Longleat Estate, where 200 trees were planted as a growing monument to the endurance of Darwin's ideas. A new habitat has also been created in the forest, including a pond where the tree's roots were excavated.

The vivid and narrative-rich content brought Darwin's journey of discovery to life, following his travels through his own notebooks, letters and specimens of the plants and animals he encountered, including the mockingbirds which first inspired him to question the origin of species. The exhibition included examples of modern evolutionary research to show how Darwin's theory has been developed by subsequent discoveries in palaeontology, genetics and molecular biology.
Since 1881, scientists at the Natural History Museum have been exploring and studying the natural world, using our incredible collections of specimens to address the big questions, such as tracing the origins of our solar system or preventing the spread of disease. Until now, most of this work has happened behind the scenes without many people knowing that we are more than a beautiful building with historical specimens on display.

It has never been more important to understand our planet and to engage as many people as possible with appreciating and protecting the natural world. This is why we have opened our state of the art Darwin Centre. It is a hub of world-class scientific research, allowing visitors to marvel at the amazing diversity of life on our planet, to view our science in action and to explore the natural world for themselves. The visitor experience in this new London landmark begins in the spacious entrance hall, with its Climate Change Wall – a 12-metre interactive collage of screens displaying films, specimens and images to allow users to explore the reality of climate change in their lives. Visitors can also collect a free NaturePlus card, which enables them to save video clips, images and weblinks throughout their journey and then access them online back home or in the classroom.

The Cocoon
At the heart of the new Darwin Centre is a 65-metre-long, eight-storey-high cocoon that safeguards many of the Museum’s treasures, including the Entomology and Botany collections – 17 million insects and 3 million plant specimens. More than 200 scientists are able to work in the Darwin Centre, pursuing research in the molecular labs, curating material in specimen preparation areas and developing new information resources for science in the imaging labs. Through viewing decks, video and intercom, visitors can see and interact with some of our staff – opening up the world of scientific research.

There is no other museum in the world that brings the public and scientists together in this way or on this scale.

The Attenborough Studio
Inspired by the research and collections of the Museum and the legacy of Sir David Attenborough’s filmmaking, the new Attenborough Studio combines scientific expertise, public dialogue, film and interactive media in a venue specially built to create a truly accessible environment. Pioneering technology allows visitors to engage in real-time link-ups with Museum researchers around the world and to immerse themselves in the natural world. A free, daily programme of screenings, discussions and events includes films specially created by the BBC Natural History Unit to celebrate wildlife filmmaking.

The Angela Marmont Centre for UK Biodiversity
Housed on the lower ground floor of the Darwin Centre, the Angela Marmont Centre for UK Biodiversity will become the leading national venue for the collaborative study of UK natural history. The Museum receives around 33,000 public enquiries each year, and visitors will be encouraged to bring their finds to the new centre, where dedicated staff will guide them through the reference material and collections. Many of the Museum’s UK collections will be available for amateur naturalists to study, including 4,200 drawers of butterflies and 6,200 drawers of flowers. This access will offer new opportunities for the UK’s many wildlife groups and societies and will nurture, inspire and excite naturalists of all ages.

Now the Darwin Centre is open, I love watching people enjoying the exhibits, it is truly incredible to see visitors’ reactions to their first glimpse of the inner workings of the Museum.
One of the most awe-inspiring insights of science is that all organisms have descended from a common ancestor. If we started at the beginning of life on Earth, and followed each lineage of descent as species evolved, established themselves, or became extinct, we would find ourselves traversing an enormous structure, best represented by a tree: the Tree of Life.

From its root system would emanate a single lineage that splits over and over again to produce a dense branching structure that represents a record of life as it was in the past and as it is now. Charles Darwin famously sketched just such an evolutionary tree, and it is timely that this Darwin year brings our focus to it again.

A tree is a helpful tool not only to visualise interrelationships, but also to infer patterns and processes, tempo and mode of evolutionary change. The task of understanding its full structure is a long-term collaborative effort involving scientists around the world. Advances in computing, bioinformatics and molecular biology are helping us to reconstruct the tree’s branching patterns.

Here at the Natural History Museum our science both relies on, and contributes to, an accurate representation of the Tree of Life. This is what we are working towards, whether we are assessing biodiversity, resolving the classification of fossils, measuring the impact of extinction events, or understanding the interaction between organisms and their environment. We work at many levels, from species to kingdoms, and over timescales that range from the present to hundreds of millions of years ago.

Our collections and expertise in taxonomy and systematics underpin all natural sciences and are a crucial part of the nation’s scientific infrastructure.

Understanding our changing world

Scientists today strive to understand the correlation between the evolution of life and significant environmental transformations, such as continental drift, variations in the atmosphere and changes in climate. Studying such changes requires the integrated research approach of evolutionary geobiology, which combines a variety of scientific disciplines.

The remarkable potential of this research approach was demonstrated by a study on the evolution of the scaly tree ferns (Cyatheaceae) in Madagascar, one of the world’s biodiversity hotspots. Here the scaly tree fern diversity includes more than 63 taxa, most of which are only found on the island, and have sprung from three independent, rapid bursts of speciation. The three bursts coincide in time and were probably triggered by a substantial variation in climate 1.5 to 5 million years ago. The results provide valuable insights into the dynamics of vegetation change and the importance of climate change as a trigger.
Learning from major extinction events
The Earth is a complex system that has evolved over thousands of millions of years. Our scientists want to know the processes that shaped its development and how its current geological diversity can be utilised. Research projects concern the origin of the solar system, the origins and utilisation of mineral deposits and the causes of the mass extinction events.

The Cretaceous-Tertiary (K-T) extinction event is one of the five so-called ‘mass extinctions’ of the past 600 million years. It was long thought to have been caused by a sudden catastrophic event, but from a detailed teasing apart of fossil records it became clear that it happened over a two-million-year period. This is difficult to reconcile with the most popular belief of a sudden, short-term climate change induced by a meteorite impact. Now we have found that the best, single-cause candidate for many mass extinctions is giant, long-lived volcanic eruptions.

Classifying unwelcome guests
We are studying the interaction between parasites and their hosts to support programmes of disease control and eradication. The naming and classifying of parasitic worms is notoriously difficult. Together they have numerous hosts, a multitude of development stages, and most forms are hidden in animal guts or tissues. Recent collaborations involving Museum staff include the completion of the Keys to the Trematoda, a set of books classifying these flatworms. Moreover, a three-million-dollar grant from the National Science Foundation enables 22 experts from 13 countries to further our knowledge of parasitic worms and build new collections. The project is expected to yield over 1600 species new to science and will ultimately lead to a global understanding of these worms and their hosts that will be unprecedented for any host/parasite system.

Developing a new framework for conservation
Recent years have seen a growing recognition that biodiversity is essential for human well-being. Conservation has evolved from the preservation of flagship species to a focus on ecosystem services. This includes everything the environment provides for us, whether ‘supporting’ (soil formation, photosynthesis, ‘provisioning’ (food, water), ‘regulating’ (climate, disease) or ‘cultural’ (aesthetics, recreation).

We depend on these services and they in turn depend on the Earth’s biodiversity. But to conserve them we need to understand them, and many gaps have been identified in the science needed to underpin such conservation. Taxonomic skills – identifying, naming and ordering – are a vital piece of the puzzle, and Museum scientists are working on projects all over the world to develop this knowledge, linking research on biodiversity to human well-being in its broadest sense.
At the very centre of everything we do are the Museum’s magnificent collections that represent the diversity of the natural world, past and present. We have one of the largest and most important natural history collections in the world. It is a scientific resource of global importance, used constantly by researchers from around the world.

The collections are changing all the time as our understanding of the natural world advances – new specimens, including molecular and frozen materials, are constantly being added and the scientific information that goes with the collection is always being updated. This year’s transfer of our botany and entomology collections to the Darwin Centre is an opportunity to reorganise the collection in line with current taxonomic knowledge.

We have also developed several major strategic projects to help ensure that our collections and knowledge are shared among other related organisations, to be innovative in our approach to collections management and to develop new international standards of collections care.

**Global infrastructure**

SYNTHESYS is a collaborative, EU-funded project that aims to maximise access to European natural history collections and research facilities. The project is managed by the Museum and is entering its ninth consecutive year (after securing a four-year €7.2 million extension). It will provide over 10,000 funded access days to European collections for research scientists, plus networking and joint research. Through the networking activities, the Museum is taking a lead in the development of a pan-European approach to collections management.

The Museum collaborates internationally to develop taxonomy with new technology and to bring institutions together to meet the demand for information for biodiversity conservation. As part of the EU-funded EDIT Network of Excellence, the Museum has developed spaces on the web enabling taxonomists to build, share, manage and publish their data online. These social networking tools, called ‘scratchpads’, are owned by the communities that develop them and support bibliographies, image galleries, specimen records, documents, customised data sets and maps. They enable taxonomists to collaborate in a more fluid and open way and support the online sharing of data with access open to all.

The Museum is also leading a Global Science Forum project supported by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). This involves collaborating with other key institutions around the world to develop a new vision and practical strategy for scientific collections, ranging from natural history specimens to ice cores and soil samples. The project will map out the future for collections in response to research needs, support good practice and high standards, and develop thinking on meeting the broader needs of people worldwide.
EMu – a new species of data management
This year, the Natural History Museum became the first institution of its size to unite its collections management into a single, integrated electronic system. EMu (Electronic Museum) went ‘live’ in March 2008, the culmination of a three-year programme to install it across our five science departments. We are now partners in a worldwide EMu user community of more than 200 institutions, including the Smithsonian Institution National Museum of Natural History in Washington DC and the American Museum of Natural History in New York. EMu is a full collections management system that aligns all our science departments with international standards. EMu will continue to grow and evolve – our next step is to give wider international access to our collections data to ensure that information is freely available to all.

Setting new standards in collections care
The Museum is driving forward international standards of collections care, constantly learning and progressing as our collections themselves change. We have improved our understanding of the environmental conditions required to preserve natural materials so that they can be used for future research. To ensure we meet these standards, the Museum has invested in a centralised environmental monitoring system that measures parameters such as oxygen, temperature and humidity.

To address the challenge of pests, we have developed a system of integrated pest management in museum collections. This combines centralised policies with training programmes, quarantine procedures, pest monitoring and risk zones. The Museum has also pioneered the use of lasers to clean natural history specimens. This removes the need for chemical cleaning and ensures that fragile data within the specimen is not contaminated.

Recent acquisitions
Our collections continue to grow, with a number of major acquisitions including the Cadiou collection of 230,000 spectacular hawkmoths – currently the subject of a major internet taxonomy project – and 2,000 leaf-mining insects. Newly-acquired fossils include the tooth of a fossil bear from Suffolk, a very rare find, and a 240-million-year-old shark Wodnica, the only complete example of its genus.

We were delighted to acquire a section of the Ivuna meteorite – it is the best example of only nine meteorites in the world that match the chemical composition of the Sun and so provides unique material for science on the origins of the solar system.

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Ivuna meteorite

Caring for our collections
Palaeontologist Brian Rosen
Asteroceras and Promicroceras, ammonites

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Joyce McGann at the Fossil
Marine Reptiles Gallery

Joyce McGann, Learning Volunteer
I am a Learning Volunteer working at Focus Points in the galleries, interacting with school groups, families and adults and encouraging them to explore, handle and ask questions about selected specimens.

I first came to the Museum with friends from church who were taking part in the Following Footprints programme for foster families. They invited me, but I did not realise that I was going to be part of the team researching dinosaurs and presenting our knowledge! I started to read about Mary Anning who hunted fossils between 1812 and 1847, and I was hooked. I came again the following year and we researched and presented insects. I was so enthused I joined the Volunteer Programme. I am proud to be part of the Museum’s ongoing learning.

Nature Live
Our Nature Live programme of informal talks offers visitors an opportunity to meet Museum scientists, discuss the natural world and our place within it. For the Museum it’s a chance to share our passion for nature and to engage people with our science and collections.

This year’s highlight was our Darwin season that featured a rich programme of events to augment the Darwin exhibition, enabling our visitors to speak directly to experts on evolution and to explore Darwin’s life and legacy.

Discussing Darwin
We developed a series of evening conversations in an informal, café-style setting. This format allowed more time to delve deeper into the more complex and controversial aspects of Darwin’s work and its impact on society.

With high profile speakers, as well as key thinkers embedded in the audience, we created an inspiring forum for adult audiences to engage with Darwin’s cultural legacy, which extends far beyond science. Subjects tackled included science and faith, slavery, eugenics and sexual selection.

The programme was a huge success. All tickets sold out well in advance and excellent feedback from visitor groups gave us new courage to delve deeper into the more complex and controversial aspects of Darwin’s work and its impact on society.

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Other key developments include the launch of our Teachers’ Panel and development of a new suite of activities in the Darwin Centre for secondary science students. As part of this year’s Darwin celebrations, we developed events and workshops to engage school children from the ages of 5 to 19 in the complex and compelling subject of evolution.

New Audiences
The Museum offers programmes that engage a wide range of groups from a variety of ages, ethnicities, socio-economic backgrounds and needs.

Schools
We offer a rich and diverse programme of curriculum-linked activities for pupils from nursery to A-level. Working with schools, we use our unique resources to build scientific literacy and inspire further study of science. We welcomed almost 150,000 booked school visits, a 14 per cent increase from the previous year.

Real World Science is an innovative national education partnership created and led by the Natural History Museum. Working together with Oxford University Museum of Natural History, Manchester Museum and Tyne and Wear Museums, we have supported secondary science learning and teaching by developing over fifty new learning activities over the past five years. Building on a national teacher consultation carried out by the partners, Real World Science has demonstrated that the resources of natural history museums significantly enhance science teaching and learning for pupils.

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Raising our standards

We have put in place an Environmental Management System to ensure our commitment to sustainability permeates every aspect of the Museum’s work. It translates our passion for nature’s diversity into practical, tangible actions across all departments: auditing our lighting systems, reducing the carbon footprint of the Ice Rink, using low-emission fleet cars, even recycling our old staff uniforms.

Small actions cumulate and the more people take action, the more it will help to cut carbon emissions. We have worked with Government bodies to develop working standards such as Display Energy Certificates for ourselves and other public buildings and are reviewing the positive contribution we can make as a cultural sector.

With our iconic buildings, awesome collections and world-renowned research, we have a unique and powerful voice. This demands of us that we don’t just comply with legislation but strive to raise the standards, inspiring others to do likewise and assessing our own work with honesty and integrity.

100 Hours of Carbon Saving

The Museum again demonstrated its commitment to cutting carbon emissions from the workplace by joining this year’s ‘100 Hours of Carbon Saving’ campaign, run by the Chartered Institute of Building Services Engineers (CIBSE). The campaign encourages initiatives to reduce carbon emissions from the workplace. Through a number of projects, the Museum’s energy savings resulted in carbon dioxide emissions being reduced by 100 tonnes over the campaign period. As well as the positive environmental impact, the project also resulted in financial savings for the Museum. As a result, we were short-listed from 700 applicants for two of CIBSE’s awards: Best Campaign, and Champion of Champions for Energy and Emissions Manager Glynnan Barham, who led the project.

Energy rating on display

We were the first museum in the country to produce a Display Energy Certificate. This is located at all public entrances to our sites. The certificate shows the actual energy use of the building and the operational rating so that the public can see how energy-efficient the Museum is. The level of efficiency is based on the energy consumption as recorded by gas and electricity meters. These certificates are now required for large buildings that provide a public service and are accompanied by an Advisory Report, which lists measures to improve the energy efficiency of the building.

Wildlife Garden rewarded

The Museum’s own Wildlife Garden was among the recipients of the 2008 Green Flag Awards, the national standard which recognises and rewards the best green spaces in the country. Run by the Civic Trust, the scheme celebrates parks and greens spaces which are freely accessible to all, and awards those judged to be welcoming, safe, well maintained and supported by the local community. Our Wildlife Garden is a tranquil haven for visitors to encounter nature in the midst of the city, and for the thousands of plants and animals that flourish here in the varied habitats of woodland, meadow and pond.

Claire Methold, Environmental and Sustainability Manager

My role stems from ISO 14001 – the international standard for environmental management systems. I’m here to check that all the Museum’s departments are complying with legal requirements, like hazardous waste regulations, and to assess their environmental impact, such as which chemicals are used in labs or how materials are chosen for projects.

I am working to ensure that sustainability is at the heart of our decision-making. Just as every project is assessed for cost and for health and safety implications, we want environmental impact assessment to become a part of project planning. It’s great to work at an organisation where everyone is on board with the sustainability agenda.
Colin Ziegler, Head of Publishing
It’s been a really successful year for Publishing. Sales have been strong enough for us to make a significant financial contribution to the Museum, and our books have also fulfilled our remit in spreading understanding of the natural world. I’m particularly proud of 99% Ape, which explores the fundamentals of evolution in a very approachable way. As well as selling very well in the Museum, particularly during the Darwin exhibition, the Open University took 4,000 copies to accompany a course, the Wellcome Trust bought 6,800 copies to distribute to every secondary school in the UK, and we have sold North American rights and currently have two foreign language editions in production.

We are seeking to transform our iconic Waterhouse building through the creation of vibrant new gallery spaces, world-class learning facilities and an unprecedented range of resources for scientific research and collections storage. To achieve this, we launched the Evolution Campaign in 2008 to fundraise for major capital refurbishment and redevelopment of our existing public offer, collections storage and science research facilities. The campaign focuses on three areas that are integral to the Museum’s work: science, heritage and learning.

We are developing new programmes and initiatives to open up different ways in which people can support our work, including an Individual Patron’s programme, innovative donation boxes and our first appeal mailing. In October 2008, we launched our first Annual Fund, raising money to support the Museum’s scientific expeditions. At the Museum’s Late Night events, which ran from November 08 to April 09, we ran a successful prize draw in aid of the Annual Fund thanks to the generous support of Journey Latin America, who kindly donated a holiday for the top prize.

We also launched a new Corporate Membership programme in December 2008. The new streamlined programme highlights the Museum’s science and research, showing how the Corporate Members can help support this valuable work.

Hawkmoths
An emergency appeal launched in July 2008 enabled us to purchase an important collection of 230,000 hawkmoths for the nation. Hawkmoths are tiny creatures that may have a far-reaching impact on our lives. They are one of the main insect groups that scientists are using to develop new DNA barcoding techniques, which will enable species to be identified from a few sample cells. This will have many benefits – for example, farmers could assess whether caterpillars will grow into crop-damaging pests, thus reducing the instances of ‘just-in-case’ spraying with pesticides.

Our major donors
We are grateful for the continued support from our many major donors, especially: Accenture, American Express, Anglo American plc; Bloomberg BP; British Airways; GlaxoSmithKline plc; KCOM Group plc; Maersk Group; Rio Tinto plc; Shell; Veolia Environnement; Zephyr TVC.

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Generating income
This collection, assembled over 40 years by hawkmoth specialist Jean-Marie Cadiou, was the most important of its kind ever to become available and so was in great demand. We are very grateful to all who enabled us to secure the funds in time to make the purchase. Our special thanks go to Madame Natasha Cadiou, the de Rothschild and Rothschild families and the John Spedan Lewis Foundation.

Wildlife Photographer of the Year
We look forward to working with Veolia Environnement who came on board in 2009 as the new title sponsor for our Wildlife Photographer of the Year competition and exhibition in 2009/10 and 2010/11. The competition has become the world’s leading showcase for the very best nature photography, helping to highlight our shared responsibility to protect the diversity of the natural world.

Income and expenditure

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2008-09 income (net)</th>
<th>£k</th>
<th>2009-10 expenditure (net)</th>
<th>£k</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Government grant in aid</td>
<td>51,619</td>
<td>Estates services</td>
<td>8,301</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sponsorship and donations</td>
<td>5,649</td>
<td>Communications and fundraising</td>
<td>4,627</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Admissions and membership</td>
<td>2,078</td>
<td>Visitor services</td>
<td>6,444</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Net surplus from trading activities</td>
<td>5,168</td>
<td>Exhibitions</td>
<td>5,654</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scientific grants</td>
<td>3,481</td>
<td>Scientific curation and research</td>
<td>19,476</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (inc investment income)</td>
<td>1,685</td>
<td>Libraries</td>
<td>3,408</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corporate services/other</td>
<td>6,054</td>
<td>Corporate support</td>
<td>7,054</td>
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<tr>
<td>Capital expenditure</td>
<td>15,299</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Celebrating biodiversity

Next year we will move from the origin of species to the future of species as we engage with the International Year of Biodiversity 2010. The year, designated by the United Nations General Assembly, is both a celebration of the importance of biological resources and a call to halt the current severe rate of biodiversity loss.

It’s an apt progression from the focus on Darwin in 2009 – Darwin’s ideas underpin not only evolutionary biology but also our modern concepts of ecology and diversity, reminding us how closely related and interconnected we are to the rest of the natural world. It’s also a timely spotlight: in October 2010, all signatory countries to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) will meet to measure their progress on commitments made at the Johannesburg Summit in 2002 and to set new targets to protect the world’s biodiversity. 2010 will be a crucial year to proclaim the importance of biodiversity for human well-being and to raise an alarm for the precarious health of the Tree of Life.

The Natural History Museum will lead the celebrations in the UK on behalf of the CBD and supported by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra). We will be working with diverse partners throughout the UK and internationally, recognising that finding solutions to biodiversity issues requires widespread collaboration.

Here at the Museum, we will take the themes of the International Year of Biodiversity as the principal focus to create a rich and diverse programme of events and activities. At the heart of this will be the launch, within the Darwin Centre, of the Angela Marmont Centre for UK Biodiversity – a focal point to stimulate environmental awareness and inspire a deep appreciation of Britain’s natural history.
The review is also available online www.nhm.ac.uk