The Royal Society is an independent scientific academy founded in 1660 and self-governing under Royal Charter. The Society has three roles, as the learned society of the Royal Kingdom, as a learned body, and as a funding body.

Objectives of the Royal Society are to:
- recognise excellence in science
- support leading-edge scientific research and its applications
- stimulate international interaction
- further the role of science, engineering and technology in society
- promote the public’s understanding of science
- provide independent authoritative advice on matters relating to science, engineering and technology
- encourage research into the history of science

For further information on the Society’s activities, please contact the following departments on the extensions listed by dialing +44 (020) 7839 5561, or visit the Society’s Web site (www.royalsociety.org).

Research Support (UK grants and fellowships)
Research Support Grants: 2397
Conference grants: 2540

Science Advice
Categorial enquiries: 2583
Science Communication
General enquiries: 2572

International Exchanges (for grants enabling research visits between the UK and most other countries (except the USA))
Grand enquiries: 2555

Library and Information Services
Library/archive enquiries: 2606

Cover image: Female Sphemolectron punctatus at a nest on Stephens Island, New Zealand. (See pages 2181–2193; photograph by Nicky Nelson.)