

Minutes of the 21st AGM of the African Bird Club held at Natural History Museum, London SW7 at 13.30 on Saturday 11th April 2015

Present

The following members registered their attendance at the meeting:

Bruktawit Abdu, Liz Anderson, Jerven Arnoys, Caroline Ash, Graeme Backhurst, Helen Baker, John Bartley, Pat Bartley, Lynn Barton, Ligia Batalha, G W Batty, Phil Belman, Keith Betton, Nigel Birch, Matthew Boyer, Paul Buckley, John Caddick, Ray Cannon, Richard Charles, Bob Cheke, John Clark, Bob Clarke, Elaine Cook, John Cutting, Julie Cutting, Ralph Dakin, Janice Darch, Mike Davidson, Steve Ecclestone, Fiona Farnsworth, John Farnsworth, Lincoln Fishpool, Tony Fulford, Paul Gaffan, Ros Green, Michael Grigson, Phil Hall, Carolyn Hall, Allan Harman, Chris Hendley, Mavis Herdes, Ralph Hobbs, James Hammersley, Mark Hopkins, Brenda Hotham, Phil Hyde, Gabriel Janie, Penny Karamoisin, Michael Kings, Brian Lawrence, Russell Leavett, Sorrel Lyall, Chris Magin, Clive Mann, Sarah Marsh, Duncan Macdonald, Duncan McNiven, David Murdoch, Geoff Orton, Jan Orton, Debbie Pain, Tony Payne, Ruth Payne, Alan Payne, David Pearson, Stephen Pringle, Pat Pringle, Rowena Quantrill, Bill Quantrill, Susan Rendell-Read, Paul Roper, Mary Salton, Martin Searle, Papy Shamavu, Chris Spooner, Dave Strevens, Philip Thomas, Muteng Vooss, Richard Webb, David White, Alan Williams, John Williamson.

1. Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Chris Abrams, Des Allen, Phil Atkinson, Jason Anderson, Ruth Bray, Joost Brouwer, Stephen Cameron, Tasso Leventis, Jeremy Lindsell, Stephen Lowe, Rodah Owako, Bev Randall, Geoff Randall, Tony Wood, Nigel Redman, Barbara Woodcock, Martin Woodcock,

2. Minutes of the 2014 AGM.

The minutes had been circulated; Stephen Pringle proposed acceptance of the minutes as a true record. David White seconded this. The proposal was carried unanimously and the chairman signed the minutes.

3. Matters arising

There were none that would not be dealt with by subsequent items.

4. Report of the Council

In his report as Chairman of the Council, Keith Betton (KB) noted that membership at the end of 2014 had fallen from 1202 to 1061, with members in more than 60 countries.

The Conservation Fund paid out £34,527 to support 18 projects in 11 countries. More than £200,000 has been paid out since 1996, supporting 193 projects in 40 countries. Those supported in 2014 were as follows: Uaso Norok Forest Survey, Kenya; Bird Guide for Takamanda, Cameroon; Red Shouldered Vanga survey, Madagascar; Temperature effects expedition award, Ethiopia; Habitat suitability survey, Mauritius; Sacred Ibis survey, Madagascar; Tracking Nightingales, The Gambia; Cape Verde Warbler survey, Cape Verde; Species along Nile in Northern Sudan; Training in Niokolo-Koba NP, Senegal; Loza Bay survey of endemic birds, Madagascar; Monitoring Aquatic Warbler habitats, Senegal; Distribution of Mt Cameroon Francolin, Cameroon; Land cover impact on Sharpe's Longclaw, Kenya; Increasing understanding of Uluguru Bush-shrike, Tanzania; Distribution of Anambra Waxbill, Nigeria; Population status and distribution of Maccoa Duck, Kenya; Conservation status of the Olive Ibis, Nigeria.

To mark the 20th anniversary of the ABC, £25,000 has been donated to a joint project with the RSPB, Nature Kenya and the World Land Trust to lease a parcel of virgin forest in the Taita Hills, Kenya, to save the Taita Apalis. This is the biggest project ABC has been involved in to date. KB thanked all of the individuals and organisations that have made generous financial donations in 2014. Principally, these were Keith Betton, Paul Bristow, Richard Charles, Mark Constantine, Paul Lascelles, Tasso Leventis, Stephen Pringle, and Chris Spooner. The RSPB and A&C Black made generous donations of books and binoculars during the year.

The ABC Bulletin continues to be a very high quality publication, thanks to editors Guy Kirwan and Ron Demey.

ABC media-related resources continued to grow in 2014. The ABC website has undergone a significant rebuild thanks to John Caddick and Southmedia. The AFBID database now has 23,897 images of 2,153 species contributed by 968 photographers. Xeno-canto contains 11,254 sound recordings of 1,665 species, contributed by 181 recordists. The ABC Yahoo discussion group has more than 1000 participants, ABC Facebook page more than 2900 followers and an ABC Twitter account successfully launched last month.

Corporate sponsors continue to give significant support to ABC and these are as follows:

GOLD Birding Ecotours; Rockjumper

SILVER Birding & Beyond; Birding Africa; Letaka Safaris; Limosa Holidays; Safari Consultants

BRONZE Ashanti African Tours; Birdfinders; Birdquest; Field Guides Inc.; Lawson's Birding Safaris; Nature's Wonderland Safaris; Safariwise; Sunbird; Venture Uganda

ABC will attend BBWF 2015 (21st to 23rd August 2015) with the updated stand as last year.

The Council roles for 2014 were: Chairman – Keith Betton; Vice Chairman – Richard Charles; Secretary – Phil Hyde; Treasurer – Chris Spooner; Conservation Officer – Chris Magin; and Corporate Sponsor Officer – Richard Charles; Country Representatives Co-ordinator - Nigel Birch. Carolyn Hall, Caroline French and Alan Williams took on the rôle of Membership Administrator at various times.

5. Presentation of the Accounts for 2014 and the Treasurer's Report

Copies of the Summarised Accounts were distributed at the meeting. Chris Spooner presented the accounts. Gross income for 2013 was £60,472, a fall of £7,545 over 2013. The accounts show a loss for the year of £27098 which while significant should not concern members as it was principally caused by the significant one off donation of £25000 to support the land lease purchase in the Taita Hills in Kenya. The acceptance of the accounts was proposed by John Caddick, seconded by John Clark and approved unanimously.

6. Election of Trustees

The following Trustees stood down having completed their term of office:

Keith Betton, Carolyn Hall, Stephen Pringle.

The following Trustees agreed to stand for re-election: Bruktawit Abdu, Nigel Birch, Paul Buckley, Richard Charles, Tiwonge Gawa, Phil Hyde, Chris Magin and Geoff Orton.

The Trustees propose the following new Trustees:

Chris Abrams, Phil Hall, Stephen Lowe, Rodah Owako and Chris Spooner.

All of the above were proposed by Richard Webb, seconded by David Murdoch and unanimously elected as Trustees of the Club.

7. Election of Executive Officers for 2014

The following have agreed to stand for re-election/election as Executive Officers of the Club: Chairman: Richard Charles; Vice Chairman: Paul Buckley; Treasurer: Chris Spooner; Secretary: Phil Hyde.

These were proposed by Stephen Pringle, seconded by Russell Leavett and unanimously elected.

8. Appointment of Independent Examiner

Chris Spooner proposed that ABC continue with Michael Goddard as Independent Examiner for 2015 and John Caddick seconded the appointment. The appointment was unanimously confirmed.

9. Any other Business

9.1 ABC member Carolyn Hall requested that ABC consider moving the date of next year's AGM to late April to avoid clashing with school holidays. Those present agreed by a majority show of hands..

Action: ABC Council of Trustees.

9.2 KB thanked the whole of the ABC team for their help and support during his Chairmanship and noted the progress in the last 7 years. He concluded by asking all present to consider asking one or more friends and associates to take up ABC Membership.

9.3 Incoming Chair Richard Charles introduced himself and gave his welcoming address. He ended by announcing KB as a second vice-President of ABC, which was met with resounding support from the meeting.

10. Close of Meeting - The meeting closed at 14.00.