



# African Bird Club

Working for birds and conservation in Africa



<https://www.africanbirdclub.org>

## Chairman's Newsletter

June 2017



**Richard Charles  
Chairman, ABC**

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(Photo: Creavo Medical Technologies)

As I write this Newsletter, the UK is enjoying summer weather which may match that in parts of Africa - temperatures in excess of 30°C have not been unusual. We can be sure that it will not last!

We are excited to have launched our restructured Supported Membership scheme, with more than 180 new members in Africa recently receiving their eBulletins. Feedback has been extremely positive. It is a great pleasure for me, on behalf of Council to welcome them to the African Bird Club. We shall be looking imminently to extend Supported Membership to more nominated people throughout the continent.

The ABC Conservation Fund lies at the heart of the Club's activities, so we were delighted when, in April, the March Conservation Fund of the TIDES Foundation informed us of their intention to double last year's already generous donation to ABC. The Club is enormously grateful for this support and confidence ; the story is told below.

**Importantly, may I please request any member who has not yet renewed their 2017 subscription to the Club to do so as soon as possible. Thank you!** As ever, if you have any difficulties paying online through the website, please let us know, with details of any problem encountered. I hope you enjoy our summertime news!

### ABC eBulletin – circulated in June 2017 for new Supported Members in Africa

As mentioned in previous newsletters, it is ABC strategy to ensure much greater access to the Club within Africa. There are many passionate birders, conservationists, fieldworkers, rangers and students who would wish to benefit from membership of the Club, crucially with access to the Bulletin, but for whom the cost of a subscription may be prohibitive.

The restructured Supported Members' scheme does just this. In recent months, our many partners in Africa have been invited to nominate up to 10 (initially) Supported Members, and I would particularly like to thank our Country Representatives for their efforts. We are delighted to say that, at the time of writing, we now have over 180 new Supported Members from 21 countries across Africa - those registering before June have received the March 2017 eBulletin (Bull.ABC 24.1); the next eBulletin issue (September 24.2) will be circulated contemporaneously with publication of the hard copy. The first mailing has given us the chance to iron out a few login issues, but the response from new Supported Members has been overwhelmingly positive. We shall imminently be looking to expand Supported Membership further.

## March Conservation Fund makes major donation to ABC Conservation Fund



<https://marchconservationfund.org>



<https://www.tides.org>

In 2015 The March Conservation Fund identified the African Bird Club as an organisation exemplifying values consonant with their mission and, in April 2017, they made a grant to the Club's Conservation Fund of US\$23,000, doubling the previous year's award.

Based in San Francisco, CA, The March Conservation Fund expresses the mission to '*expand protected areas, support ecological research, and empower the public to become stewards and advocates for the natural world*'. Recognising that birds are amongst the most easily appreciated organisms in nature, and are also excellent indicators of ecosystem health, their work is focused on building the capacity of non-profit operations, both in the USA and abroad, to conserve populations of threatened birds and associated biodiversity. Administration of their grant awarding activities is provided by the TIDES Foundation.

In May this year, our Treasurer, Chris Spooner, took the opportunity, during a personal trip to California, to meet Ivan Samuels, Executive Director of the March Conservation Fund, a wonderful chance for a detailed exchange of information about our respective activities, allied to an excellent day's local birdwatching together!

On behalf of all members, Council would like to express its gratitude to Ivan Samuels and the March Conservation Fund for such generous collaboration with the Club, for the benefit of African birds.

## Annual Members' Meeting and AGM, Natural History Museum, April 1st 2017

The prestigious Flett Lecture Theatre in the Natural History Museum in London was again the venue for one of the Club's main events of the year. The day's programme comprised six talks, three before lunch and three after. Videos of all of the days lectures can be enjoyed at [https://www.youtube.com/results?search\\_query=african+bird+club+2017](https://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=african+bird+club+2017)

## ABC Members' Day and AGM: Saturday 21st April, 2018

Once again, Council looks forward to welcoming as many members and guests as possible to this annual highlight in the Club's calendar, to be held in the Flett Lecture Theatre at the Natural History Museum, London. As ever, our thanks are due to Prof. Ian Owens, Director of Science, and to Ms. Esther Murphy, who facilitates everything on the day. Plans are already underway to provide an exciting and mixed programme to suit all interests and inclinations. The final programme, which will aim to balance the interests of conservation, science, field trips/bird ID and beautifully illustrated presentations of general birding interest will be circulated early in 2018. **Please pop this date in your diary today!**

## John Kinghorn joins ABC Council as Youth Representative

Josie Hewitt, our representative for Next Generation Birders, has recently resigned from Council to concentrate on her examinations and university entrance, we wish her well and thank her for her help and advice. Council is delighted to welcome John Kinghorn into the renamed position of Youth Representative. John is doing an amazing job as Chairman of Youth Africa Birding, a platform for Africa-based birders aged 14-29 years, where one can interact with like-minded young birders. See [www.youthafricabirding.com](http://www.youthafricabirding.com), <https://twitter.com/yabirding>, and @YABirding.



John Kinghorn: Photo Birding Ecotours



John is now also our Country Representative for South Africa, and Council welcomes him on board in both roles.

## Website 'Tips and Tricks' (from John Caddick, ABC Webmaster)

Are you aware that the ABC website has a large amount of birding information for every African country? There are 63 country sections and a lead section which covers the whole of Africa.

The best way to find the information you require is to use the drop down list at 'Countries' on the home page of the website. Click on any of the links and this will take you to the introduction for that section for example <https://africanbirdclub.org/countries/Africa/introduction> for the whole of Africa and <https://africanbirdclub.org/countries/Sierra-Leone/introduction> for Sierra Leone.

The format and structure which you will see on the right hand side of the page are identical for each country and include pages on hotspots, important bird areas, species, visiting and contacts for instance. Below this list, you will see a small box titled 'Country Information' which will allow you to move quickly to a different country without having to revisit the home page.

Many people write to ABC with questions about a particular country such as 'who is the best contact for country X?' or 'where are the best birding sites?'. A lot of the answers to such questions are on the ABC website so it is a good place to try and find what you require.

The original contents for each country were written some twelve years ago by ABC members who had a detailed understanding of the country and its birds. The pages have been updated frequently with new information as it has become available. Please let us know if you have additions or corrections for any country and send these to [website@africanbirdclub.org](mailto:website@africanbirdclub.org).

### Thanks to our generous donors

As always, we are enormously indebted to our sponsors and donors; they are the engine behind the effectiveness of our Conservation efforts. So our thanks, as ever, to both our Corporate Sponsors and our loyal private donors, large and small!

### ABC on Social Media



Don't forget to keep in touch with the Club's news and views in real time!

Moderated by our General Secretary, Phil Hyde, ABC can be found on Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/groups/AfricanBirdClub/>, Twitter <https://twitter.com/africabirdclub> and the Yahoo Africa Birding Group – sign up via our website and follow Club>African Birding Group. As above, we aim to upload the AGM lectures to YouTube after each meeting.

### Upcoming Events for your Diary

- **ABC Members' Day and AGM 2018**
  - Saturday April 21st 2018: Natural History Museum, London
  - Programme will be circulated early in 2018
- **British Bird Watching Fair: August 18th - 20th 2017, Rutland Water Nature Reserve**
- **Sao Tome & Principe – ABC Conservation Tour: January 14<sup>th</sup> – 21<sup>st</sup> 2018**



As at June 2017 trip full! Call Birdquest: 01254 826317 (international: +44 1254 826317)  
Email : [birders@birdquest-tours.com](mailto:birders@birdquest-tours.com)

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