



Giving Conservation Wings

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ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2016 OF BIRDLIFE SOUTH AFRICA

Minutes of the 87th Annual General Meeting held at **14h00 on Saturday 12 March 2016**
at the Conference Centre, Skukuza Camp, Kruger National Park, Mpumalanga

1 PRESENT

M Aitken, Carol Alexander, Peter Alexander, Mark D Anderson, Tania Anderson, Andrea Angel-Gonzalez, Kathleen April-Okoye, Averil Arnot, Emma Askes, Phoebe Barnard, Thalia Barnes, Garth Batchelor, BJ Bayne, Letitia Bezuidenhout, Ian Bloxam, John Bowey, J Boyle, Alison Bradshaw, John Bradshaw, Noreen Broomhall, Roger Broomhall, James Browne, Tanya Browne, Bill Cairns, Jill Cairns, Philip Calinikos, May Campbell, Peter Campbell, Lyn Carlsson-Smith, Sven Carlsson-Smith, Mariana Carvalho, David Chamberlain, Adrian Craig, Jeanette Curly, Desiré Dalton, Desneè Davis, Marius Davis, Ingrid de Bruyn, Jill Pamela de Moor, Phillip de Moor, Maureen Dixon, Tony Dixon, Colleen Downs, Malcolm Drummond, Fanie du Plessis, Pam Ellenberger, Wiggie Ellenberger, Derek Engebrecht, Ina Engelbrecht, Elaine Erasmus, J Farmeray, P Farmeray, Andy Featherstone, Simon Fogarty, Stella Fogarty, Simon Gear, Ros Gerber, Rihann Geysler, Chris Gibbons, Ann Gibson, Brian Guerin, Sue Goodman, Shireen Gould, Joe Grosel, A Halajian, Julian Harr, Linda Hart, Beth Hackland, M Heritage, Eric Herrmann, Klaus Hoffmann, Doreen Howard, PE Hulley, Sherine Isaacs, Nazu Jabcoobs, Benita Jordaan, Marian Hofmeyr, Rob Hofmeyr, A Jones, Kenneth B Jones, Felicity Kawichowsky, Thobile Khumalo, John Kinghorn, Antoinette Kotze, Des Lazar, Bokamoso Lebepe, Mark Liptrot, Cynthia Lockwood, Geoff Lockwood, Rael Loon, Casper Lourens, Jacoline Lourens, Dianne Lyall, Alison Lydon, John Lydon, Madimang William Maigig, Tshifhina Mandiwana-Mendaru, RN Mbothwe, Bronwyn Maree, Daniel Marnewick, Virginia A Mes, Eelco Meyjes, Reinier Meyjes, Sakhamuzi Mhlongo, PA Mills, RB Mills, Nomusa Mkhungo, Msawenkosi Mntunswa, TA Mthemby, Sibongile Mtungwa, Monica Muale, Samson Mulandzi, P Mungwe, Chevaughn Nagiah, Mziwendodo Daluaolo Ngcoro, Lester Niss, Gillian Nomis, Christopher Nethonzhe, Jenny Norman, Monika O'Leary, George Oosthuizen, Gisela Ortner, Ian Owtram, Diana Parnell, Samantha Ralston-Paton, Jim Rankin, Zen Rankin, Irene Rasmussen, Rowan Rasumussen, Ernst Retief, Simon Ridge, Lance Robinson, Marli Roelofse, Elena Russell, Peter Ryan, Cecily Salmon, Samantha Schröder, Ann Sears, David Snide, Robert Sears, Buydaphi Sibya, Trevor Sinclair, Janet Smart, Craig Smith, RL Smith, Hanneline Smit-Robinson, Daniel Snijder, Harm Snijder, R Sobatier, Candice Stevens, Jutta Stone, Tim Stone, Peter Sullivan, Michèle Tarboton, Warwick Tarboton, Martin Taylor, Seugnet Terblanche, Mel Tripp, Linda van den Heever, Annan van der Merwe, Shirley van der Merwe, D Vasapoll, Amour Venter, Helen Versfeld, Ingrid Vis, Ann Wanless, Roger Wanless, Ross Wanless, Frank Webb, Heather Wetmore, K Wetmore, Donald Williams, Mike JP White, John Whiteside, Milena Wolmarans, Cliff Wright, Dale Wright, Nontuthuko Xaba, Peter Zietsman, Blair Zoghby, Tony Zoghby, Pamela Barrett (Secretary).

2 WELCOME

The Chairman, Roger Wanless, welcomed all present.

A special welcome was extended to past and present Presidents, Golden Bird Patrons, Corporate members and community bird guides.

The Annual General Meeting was being live streamed to around the world. Special thanks were extended to John Bowey for making this possible.

3 APOLOGIES

Ismail Bhorat, Amanda Calinikos, Elaine Cherrington, Louise Coetzee, Roy Cowgill, Steve Davis, Lesley Frescura, Albert Froneman, Marietjie Froneman, Kristi Garland, Julien Girard, Vernon Head, Denise Holahan, Rose Knight, Nikki McCartney, Sean McCartney, Mike McCullough, Pam McCullough, Lucky Ngwenya, Rick Nuttall, Yvonne Pennington, Otto Schmidt, S Schmidt, Anton Odendal, Elaine Odendal, Rosemary Othenin-Girard, George Skinner, Nigel Stainforth, Sheila Stainforth, Libby Stewart, Rob Stewart, Peter Steyn, Samantha Stoffberg, Ntombi Stungu, Nick Theron, Jenny Wesson, John Wesson, Caroline Wood, Tim G Wood.

4 CONFIRMATION OF THE MINUTES OF THE 86th ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

4.1 Approval of the Minutes of the 86th Annual General Meeting:

The minutes of the 86th Annual General Meeting of 21 March 2015 were adopted as a true and accurate record of the proceedings.

5 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF THE 86th ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

There were no matters arising from the minutes of the 86th Annual General Meeting.

6 PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS

The President, Phoebe Barnard, welcomed everyone to the 87th Annual General Meeting of BirdLife South Africa and presented her address.

“Diversity – broadening participation in bird conservation and bird-related careers in southern Africa”

“Good afternoon ladies and gentlemen, friends and colleagues, lovers of birds and biodiversity, those who seek solace and inspiration in nature, and those whose lives are focused on understanding it scientifically.

We are all here in this conference room at Skukuza, after a wonderful few days of scientific and laymen’s talks on birds, because we love biodiversity, and we especially love bird diversity.

We may see birds as harbingers of the health of ecosystems; we may seek our recreation or our livelihoods by watching them; by atlasing; by photographing or filming them or recording their songs; by leading tourists or others to see them. We may make our livelihoods by conducting scientific research; by assisting others by capturing and ringing them; by working in offices to strengthen policy, planning and management efforts to conserve them.

In all of these ways of connecting with birds and biodiversity, diversity is the unspoken value, the thing we all aim to see, to achieve. Most of us have a love of diversity in nature, in music, in food, in art.

I was entranced, over the last few days, to hear more from Ian Whyte, from Alan Kemp, from Garth Batchelor and many others about the history of Kruger National Park and its conservation activities. Those were fascinating days. And although we might look back now, and comment that conservation had been too closely aligned to military activities, or was “too white,” I would prefer to choose to be grateful that South Africa had the benefit of passionate conservationists, black and white – and if you didn’t know the story of (for example) Corporal Nombolo Mdhuli, whose statue is outside this room, do yourself a favour and read it there.

I came to this country in 1983 as a young student, aged 22, thwarted by the ongoing bush war in Zimbabwe from taking up an Oxford University project at a little research station near Hwange National Park. To be honest, I didn’t want to come to South Africa in those dark days of apartheid, as I was young and idealistic and had cut my teeth boycotting jewelers’ shops in Massachusetts which sold Krugerrands. I didn’t stay long in this country, before heading to Namibia, where society was much more relaxed. I turned my attention to training science graduates at the University of Namibia. It’s one of my greatest pleasures that at least 5 of my students from there are now professors and senior lecturers with PhDs in their own rights.

So much has changed since those days. And much has not.

To be effective in the conservation of birds and other biodiversity, we need to make sure that we are not committing the cardinal sin of talking inwards, but of talking outwards into our wider society. And most importantly, talking with many voices, but with universal messages.

South Africa is an extraordinarily diverse country, both biologically and culturally. And up until quite recently, most of our voices in conservation have been from a paradigm that is relatively scientifically based, relatively privileged, relatively northern-influenced, relatively middle class, and disproportionately white.

I think we all know that, while these voices are crucial, and have helped put South Africa in an extraordinary place for ornithology and bird conservation in the world, on their own they are not enough.

I’m happy to say that BirdLife South Africa and our partners in universities and other organizations have made major strides over the past years, to try to broaden participation in birding, bird conservation, ornithology, and other bird-related careers, outside this core demographic. I want to emphasize this. Staffing, training, engagement in citizen science, and particularly the bird guides program have been effective at drawing in extremely talented and wonderful people. Many of the very best have been with us this week, and I’d like to mention as just a few, Bokamoso Lebepe, Sakhamuzi Mhlongo, David Letsoalo, Christopher Nethonzhe, Samson Malaudzi, Raymond Rampolokeng, Themba Nthembu, Junior Gabela, Tshifiwa Mandiwana-Neudani, Nomusa Mkhungo – forgive me for not mentioning everyone present – a variety of talented, staff, academics and students who have brought important results and perspectives on ornithology, conservation and evolution to the table.

But we need to work harder to give a voice to the many, varied, interesting people from different backgrounds across this country in order to reflect different ways in which South Africans of all backgrounds relate to nature and can be persuaded to protect and value it in their lives.

I often spoke about transformation of ornithology in South Africa with Phil Hockey and Morne du Plessis, as well as Peter Ryan. Like most universities, UCT has trouble attracting young black South Africans to field biology and ornithology. It is very much easier to attract other African students, especially from English speaking countries.

Speaking for myself, half of my PhD students and one of my three postdocs have been from other African countries – Lesotho, Kenya, and Nigeria in particular. Phil Hockey experienced the same – Rwanda, Malawi, Nigeria, Kenya, Zimbabwe, and we co-supervised one of these together. It has been honestly very tough to find students from South Africa with the right combination of an interest in ornithology or field biology, and a solid preparation in maths and

science. And therein lies the rub in the history of this country, as we are still seeing the crippling effects of apartheid education and poor subsequent investment in maths and science education in this country.

Like many of us in the science policy, research and education arenas, I've been trying to work on (and with) capacity building mechanisms to build that pipeline for academic ornithology. Students have to be targeted earlier than their undergraduate education – we need to reach them in primary school. And so we need much stronger relationships between organisations that are active in wilderness education, primary and secondary education, and universities to help build that pipeline from actually a very early age. The recent collaboration between the University of Limpopo and the University of Cape Town [slide] has helped in the interim to pair talented young undergraduates with the Fitz's programmes, projects and postgrads.

There's no reason that in the next decade we can't have made massive progress in increasing the enrolment and employment of black South Africans in field biology, ornithology and bird conservation. Every person tells a unique and important story, from their culture, their personal history, their perspectives, their passions and fears. But to do that, we need to keep up active training in field ecology and conservation, a program I have been pushing within SANBI and with GreenMatter, the biodiversity capacity development organisation.

The Tropical Biology Association (TBA) and the Organization for Tropical Studies (OTS) are both active in Africa and are phenomenal allies in field training. In the Eastern Usambaras for a month in 2014 while teaching with the TBA, I encountered wonderful role models for young ornithologists, bird ringers, bird guides and bird-based tourism business people, not least Dr Chacha Werema and the Mkongewa brothers, Victor (a highly experienced bird projects manager and ringer for a USA-based ornithology project) and Alloyce (a bird guide and bird tourist hostel builder and manager).

I want to close by emphasizing that varied careers are open to those with passion and commitment – not just academic ornithologist or bird conservationist, but also bird research assistant, monitoring projects manager, bird ringer, research site technician, and tour accommodation facilities manager.

There are many paths to diversity and we must walk them all.

(Phoebe Barnard ^{1,2,3}

¹ Lead Scientist: Biodiversity Futures and Climate Change BioAdaptation, Head: Birds and Environmental Change Program, South African National Biodiversity Institute, Private Bag X7, Claremont 7735, South Africa.

² Honorary Research Associate, DST-NRF Centre of Excellence at the Percy FitzPatrick Institute of African Ornithology, University of Cape Town.

³ Outgoing Honorary President, BirdLife South Africa")

The President's Address was unanimously adopted by the meeting.

7 CONSIDERATION AND ADOPTION OF THE BIRDLIFE SOUTH AFRICA 2015 ANNUAL REPORT

Mark Anderson, Chief Executive Officer presented the 2015 Annual Report of BirdLife South Africa (BLSA) to members attending the AGM. This glossy report reflected the important work BLSA has undertaken during 2015. Special thanks and appreciation to Sappi who carried the total cost of designing and printing of the report. The BLSA 2015 Annual Report can be downloaded from: <http://www.birdlife.org.za/about/blsa>

“The past year was another good year for BirdLife South Africa, with many important achievements. Very importantly, BirdLife South Africa remains a committed BirdLife International supporter. As such, we have implemented BirdLife International's 2020 Strategy

in South Africa and much of our work, as outlined in our action plan, is aimed at achieving defined goals and objectives. BirdLife South Africa achieved flying colours in the first, very detailed, Quality Assurance System undertaken by BirdLife International of its Partners.

One of our most important highlights in the past year was the renovation of Isdell House, our new head office in Dunkeld West, Johannesburg. We now have a perfect office – adequate space, safe, large and convenient – and it will fulfil our needs for many decades to come. Isdell House also has a large, indigenous, water wise, bird-friendly garden, with more than 3200 plants of more than 220 species grouped into different habitat types. We are very grateful to Pamela and Neville Isdell, the Chamberlain family, Lewis Foundation, Otto Muller, Nick and Jane Prentice, Gaynor Rupert, and the other donors who provided the funds and materials for this project.

BirdLife South Africa remains in a favourable financial position and, for the sixth consecutive year, we end the year with a small surplus. We have a growing number of Golden Bird Patrons, with 28 patrons contributing R1.62 million during 2015. There was unfortunately a slight decline in the number of Corporate Members. Funding was renewed for a number of positions and projects, including from Airports Company South Africa, Charl vd Merwe Trust, E. Oppenheimer & Son, Investec Corporate Bank Ltd, Pamela and Neville Isdell, Petra Diamonds Ltd, and Rand Merchant Bank. We once again received an unqualified audit opinion, indicating our good financial controls and corporate governance.

BirdLife South Africa continued to do good marketing work and, as a result, there is increased awareness about our organisation, our conservation work and our country's birds. Our most successful awareness campaign yet, the Tuluver campaign, reached at least 81.4 million people! Other marketing work in 2015 included Vote for South Africa's Favourite Bird (with the Cape Robin-Chat winning the poll). The Bird of the Year was the Blue Crane and, as part of our efforts to create awareness about our national bird, we placed giant banners with the words "REAL CRANES FLY" on a crane at a construction site in Sandton. We also produced a poster which was distributed to schools and included in African Birdlife magazine, lesson plans and activity sheets for schools, and pin badges. We hosted a number of very successful events, including the inaugural Flufftail Festival in Sandton City, Flock in Jozi, the Sasol Bird Fair, Owl Awards, the opening of Isdell House, and Birding Big Day.

Six issues of African Birdlife were produced and the magazine continues to be financially viable through sustained advertising income and increasing retail sales and subscriptions. The subscriptions grew from 3896 for the January/February 2015 issue to 4007 for the January/February 2016 issue. During the past year we continued to produce a well-designed and informative monthly e-newsletter which is emailed to almost 10,000 people. We continue to communicate with people through social media, and our Facebook Group and Facebook Page now have about 19,000 and 10,000 members respectively. Our website, which was upgraded, remains a very valuable source of information for people interested in South Africa's birds.

During March, with the approval of the new constitution at our AGM, BirdLife South Africa membership became no longer a prerequisite for bird club membership. Bird clubs are being asked to sign an affiliation agreement with BirdLife South Africa and a nominal affiliation fee is payable for each member. We continue to promote membership, including at events such as at the annual Photo & Film Expo at Northgate in Johannesburg.

We regularly interact with our affiliated bird clubs and their members through presentations at bird club meetings and attendance of the three bird club forum meetings. We are very grateful to our country's birdwatchers who not only contribute to our country's economy through the pursuit of their hobby and spread an awareness of birds to other people, but also contribute important information through a number of citizen science projects, especially SABAP2. We were also able to secure funding from members of the Rare Bird Club for the Bird Guide Training Programme

We produced three important publications in 2015, the revised directory of "Important Bird and Biodiversity Areas in South Africa", the first "Important Bird and Biodiversity Areas Status Report" and "The 2015 Eskom Red Data Book of Birds of South Africa, Lesotho and

Swaziland". These books will guide much of BirdLife South Africa's work during the next few years.

Our main goal is the conservation of our country's birds and their habitats. In terms of our Terrestrial Bird Conservation Programme, we have been involved with the satellite tracking of Secretarybirds and we now have more than 50,000 data points from the 11 tracked birds. The results of this study will help us conserve this threatened raptor. We also undertake research and conservation work on a number of other raptors, including the Taita Falcon and Southern Banded Snake Eagle.

We remain integrally involved in efforts to conserve the Critically Endangered White-winged Flufftail, possibly our most threatened bird. We coordinated the 2nd meeting of the AEWA White-winged Flufftail International Working Group in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, and continued with our efforts to conserve flufftail habitat in South Africa (such as Middelpunt wetland) and Ethiopia (Berga wetland). Some of our flufftail work is conducted through the Middelpunt Wetland Trust, on which we are represented.

BirdLife South Africa remains at the forefront of birds and renewable energy work in South Africa, and we are now a recognised international authority in this field. We presented our work at local and international meetings, including in Ghana and the USA. During 2015, the third edition of the BirdLife South Africa and Endangered Wildlife Trust's "Best Practice Guidelines for Birds and Wind Energy" was finalised and released. It was endorsed by the South African Wind Energy Association. We also drafted the "Best Practice Guidelines for Birds and Solar Energy", and it was reviewed by experts from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the World Bank.

Through the Ingula Partnership and with funding from Eskom, we are involved with a number of important projects at Ingula (the site of an important pump-storage electricity generation scheme). These include recording and monitoring bird and other biodiversity at Ingula and the development of species action plans for the Wattled Crane and Yellow-breasted Pipit. We have assisted Eskom with the process of declaring Ingula as a nature reserve and the proclamation of this protected area is imminent. During late- 2015, David Maphisa, a former BirdLife South Africa staff member, received his PhD for work he did at Ingula on the development of an adaptive management regime for grasslands which will benefit grassland birds.

On the Seabird Conservation Programme front, we successfully recruited a new Coastal Seabird Conservation Manager and formalised the new Pamela Isdell Fellow of Penguin Conservation position. An appeal for funding to undertake a feasibility study for the eradication of mice from Marion Island realised the required funding and the New Zealand expert undertook the site visit and drafted a report.

The Global Environment Facility-funded Food and Agriculture Organisation Common Oceans project, which will involve extensive work with the tuna long-line fisheries in the Indian Ocean high seas, is underway. One appointment, Dr Yuna Kim, has been made and two other positions will be filled in early-2016. We managed to secure a place on a Korean tuna longliner for 120 days, where we conducted an extremely important series of trials of weighting systems to be used to prevent albatross bycatch on Korean longlines. Some of the results of our successful Albatross Task Force and other seabird conservation work was presented at the World Seabird Conference in Cape Town in October, a conference we helped organise. We are grateful to Rand Merchant Bank for funding our Ocean View bird-scaring line project, as well as our membership of the Responsible Fisheries Alliance. Both are key strategic projects.

We successfully negotiated the handover of a marine IBA project in West Africa, the Alcyon Project, to BirdLife International. This has come with significant financial support for our Seabird Conservation Programme manager's position and massively raised the profile of BirdLife's Marine Programme (BIMP) in West Africa. In addition, BIMP now has its first fully-funded staff member, Justine Dossa, based in Senegal

The focus of the Policy & Advocacy Programme work has been government liaison, especially with the Department of Environmental Affairs. We have been represented at several local and international meetings, including the annual International Association of Impact Assessors South Africa conference and the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment. Our Mining and Biodiversity Project Manager spent six weeks in the United Kingdom and Germany on a climate change fellowship with BirdLife International and the RSPB. We have been actively involved in the revitalisation of the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) regional committee and we were represented at the Regional IUCN Forum in Nairobi. BirdLife South Africa responded to a wide range of Environmental Impact Assessments (EIAs), from coal mines on the Mpumalanga Highveld to concentrated solar plants and wind turbines in the three Cape provinces. We also engaged with Strategic Environmental Assessments (SEAs) for fracking in the Karoo, the Gautrain expansion and the Eskom roll out of its power line infrastructure. We worked with the Department of Environmental Affairs to host a World Migratory Bird Day celebration at the Marievale Bird Sanctuary.

After five years of hard work assessing IBAs, the IBA Programme published the revised IBA Directory and the first IBA Status Report for South Africa. These publications were launched at two events, in Johannesburg and Cape Town, and attended by distinguished guests, partners and funders. There has been an impressive uptake of the directory and report, including by conservation planners, government departments, and other conservation NGOs.

One of the national strategic objectives of the IBA Programme has been to improve the protection status and management of our most vulnerable IBAs. The Biodiversity Stewardship (BDS) model has been employed by the IBA Programme as key to achieving this, and the IBA Programme is now using BDS in six IBAs to achieve formal protection and improved management practices. With four years' experience in BDS, the IBA Programme has become a key role player in this conservation landscape, evidenced by our invitation to serve on the Biodiversity Stewardship Technical Working Group.

The IBA Programme has also taken the initiative to address some of the challenges facing BDS, especially financial sustainability. The Biodiversity Fiscal Benefits Project was launched in 2015 and has made great strides in understanding and leading on the fiscal benefits accruing to landowners who formally protect their land under BDS. Among other things, this project is testing the amendment to Section 37D of the Income Tax Act; a revision for which BirdLife South Africa was largely responsible in 2014. A number of training sessions with BDS field officers have taken place, as well as strategic meetings and agreements with government departments, such as Treasury, the South African Revenue Services (SARS) and the Department of Environmental Affairs. SARS has asked our Fiscal Benefits Project Manager to assist with the drafting of an official SARS interpretation note for the amended section 37D of the Income Tax Act.

We launched the Western Cape Estuaries Project in mid-2015 and appointed a staff member to manage this project, the aim of which is to formally secure protection of and improve the management of the Berg River, Bot River and Klein River estuaries in the Western Cape. This complements the work already being done by the IBA Programme at the Verlorenvlei Estuary and Moutonshoek catchment. We have also been involved with the planning of a 2017 waterbird survey at estuaries and other wetlands along the east coast of Africa, including South Africa, Mozambique, Tanzania and Kenya.

The Blue Swallow Stewardship Project, which focuses on Biodiversity Stewardship in the KZN Mistbelt Grasslands IBA, was launched. Using BDS and linking into a larger landscape scale approach undertaken by our KZN Regional Conservation Manager, this project aims to develop best practice guidelines, land management and formal protection to secure the enigmatic Blue Swallow and the last remaining patches of mistbelt grasslands, interspersed with forestry and dairy farming. After a year of development, the IBA Programme is also near to finalising an IBA Prioritisation Model which will be used to develop a list of priority IBAs which require urgent conservation action by the IBA Team.

One of the often intangible yet crucial achievements of the IBA Programme, which was brought home in 2015 as a huge milestone, is the institutional relationships we have developed. When the IBA Programme was rejuvenated in 2010, it was a little known

Now the IBA Programme is recognised as a leader and forerunner in conserving landscapes of critical importance for birds and other biodiversity. This is the result of a sound and coherent national IBA strategy and the commitment, relationship building and implementation of the programme by the regional IBA conservation managers. The IBA Programme has also established opportunities through innovative strategic projects such as the Fiscal Benefits Project and developed landscape scale partnerships with like-minded people and organisations.

With funding from the RSPB for our Partner Development Officer position, BirdLife South Africa's work now extends into the subregion, especially Mozambique and Zimbabwe. We provided input into BirdLife Zimbabwe's strategic planning process which resulted in the organisation changing its focus towards addressing threats to Zimbabwe's vultures. During the year, two vulture workshops were held, a vulture action plan was developed and a vulture task force was established. BirdLife South Africa is now involved with the East Atlantic Flyway Initiative work in South Africa, Namibia and Angola. During 2015 we successfully concluded the Critical Ecosystems Partnership Fund project in Mozambique and thus strengthened conservation capacity in that country.

The above is only a summary of BirdLife South Africa's work during 2015 and more details of the organisation's work are available from the programme and project managers. I am immensely grateful to BirdLife South Africa's staff for their hard work and dedication, and it is a privilege and honour for me to work with the team. BirdLife South Africa has a very able Executive Board, chaired by Roger Wanless, and members with diverse experience and expertise. We benefit immensely from the board's guidance and oversight. It is indeed the collective contributions of many people, bird clubs, companies and organisations which are allowing us to "give conservation wings" and to the many contributors I extend my heartfelt thank you."

The BirdLife South Africa 2015 Annual Report was unanimously adopted by the meeting.

8 CONSIDERATION AND ADOPTION OF THE CHAIRMAN'S 2015/16 REPORT

The Chairman, Roger Wanless, thanked everyone for attending the 87th Annual General Meeting of BirdLife South Africa, and presented his report.

"We have had a wonderful address from Phoebe, and Mark has reported comprehensively on the affairs of our organisation over the past year. I will detain you only for a short while – with a report back followed by some brief comments.

At the AGM last year we replaced the Council, which used to meet twice-yearly, with a Board of Directors that met more frequently and fulfilled those functions that you would normally expect from such a body. In addition, we began to set in place a formal and vigorous performance management system. This involves several phases – agreeing mission and vision followed by key management areas, methods and tools for measuring performance, monitoring and reporting, followed by remedial action where required.

In other words, we are after performance measurement, governance, transparency and accountability, and ultimately greater success. The process also involves a self-appraisal by the Board of itself and its individual members. And if you think I am personally above all this, forget it. The final piece is when they kick me out the room and discuss my own personal performance in the Chair.

As you will see from the Annual report, we have made some headway in the first year. It is, however, a work in progress. I wish you to know how seriously the Executive Board takes the

issues of performance and governance and its own fiduciary duties. You, our members, and all our partners need to know how dedicated we are to these non-negotiable imperatives.

Which brings me to partners and partnerships. I just love the word. In the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB) we have a great partner and in BirdLife International we have a wonderful mother organisation. Both the RSPB and BirdLife International rate us in the top rank of their worldwide family in terms of conservation success and business probity. We then have great corporate and personal patrons and sponsors, several of them here today, without them we would be but a shadow of our current self.

Then there are our numerous NGO friends, such as WWF-SA, EWT, WESSA and SANParks Honorary Rangers. We also partner with universities such as the Percy FitzPatrick Institute of African Ornithology and the Animal Demography Unit at the University of Cape Town. We have good relationships with departments and organs such as DEA and SANBI.

Our staff are not just a partnership, they are a great family. Then there are all our volunteers and helpers who give so freely of their time and talent.

A relatively new partnership – all of three years old – is the BirdLife National Trust. My co-trustees, Humphrey Borkum, David Lawrence, and Michael Spicer, together with Mark Anderson, are determined to grow the trust to the point where it will serve as a major source of financial strength to your organisation.

Last, but most important of all is our partnership with our direct members and with our affiliated bird clubs. At our board meetings we constantly remind ourselves of how critical the link with our bird clubs and our members is.

Another bit of partnering is that between the Board and myself on the one hand, and Mark Anderson on the other. Suffice to say, it is good. Mark is doing a great job and we support him all the way.

The reason I mention all of this? In the face of constant and increasing threats, from numerous quarters, to our precious birds and their habitats, it is a great comfort to know that our work is supported by such a wonderful web of partnerships.

Thank you all.”

The Chairman’s 2015 report was unanimously adopted by the meeting.

9 CONSIDERATION AND ADOPTION OF THE BIRDLIFE SOUTH AFRICA 2015 AUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS AND REPORT

Fanie du Plessis, BLSA Finance and Operations Manager, reported on behalf of Mike McCullough, Treasurer of BLSA.

The audited Financial Statements for the year ended 31 December 2015 were tabled and presented to the meeting.

Despite tough economic times, the organisation has achieved a net operating income for the 6th year running. The net income from operations for the year ended 31 December 2015 amounts to R490,825 compared to 890,846 for the year ended 31 December 2014.

Gratitude is expressed to all donors who have ensured that the organisation’s administrative expenses were once again covered by in large.

Most of the organisation's conservation programmes and projects were sufficiently funded during the year. Total revenue for projects increased from R13,773,633 in 2014 to R16,283,747 for the year under review. The Wakkerstroom Centre continues to incur losses due to the absence of a suitable funder. Total gross income increased from R22,207,115 in 2014 to R25,667,926 for the year under review. BirdLife South Africa remains very grateful to all donors irrespective of the value of the donation.

Additional to the net income from operations, a surplus on the sale of investments and the sale of our Lewis House property, reduced by a donation to the BirdLife National Trust, resulted in a net income for 2015 of R523,903 compared to R1,197,496 in 2014.

The financial position of the organisation remains healthy. The ratio of current assets vs current liabilities has remained stable since the 2014 year of assessment. Current assets, mainly comprising of cash and cash equivalents, are sufficient to cover current liabilities, mainly comprising of funding received in advance.

Accumulated Funds for the year under review has grown slightly from the prior year to R9,995,467. This mainly consists of Retained Income to the value of R1,160,567, R5,908,473 in the Sustainability Fund and the excess of market value of investments over initial cost of R2,626,427.

The Annual Financial Statements for the year ending 31 December 2015 have been audited by KPMG and approved by the Executive Board. KPMG is thanked for their services and BLSA is appreciative of the cordial relationship that exists and for the advice received during the year.

It was proposed that the Financial Statements for BirdLife South Africa for the year ended 31 December 2015 be adopted by members.

There being no questions, the BirdLife South Africa audited Financial Statements for the year ended 31 December 2015 were unanimously accepted and adopted.

10 APPOINTMENT OF 2016 EXTERNAL AUDITORS

Mike Evans and his staff at KPMG Inc. were thanked for their efficient and professional manner in which they handled the BirdLife South Africa 2015 audit and meeting the tight deadlines set for them.

KPMG Inc. had, subject to agreement by members of BirdLife South Africa, accepted to continue as auditors of BirdLife South Africa for the financial year 2016.

The meeting unanimously agreed and approved a motion by Fanie du Plessis to reappoint KPMG Inc. as BLSA's external auditors for the financial year 2016.

11 NOMINATION AND ELECTION OF EXECUTIVE BOARD OFFICE BEARERS IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE BLSA CONSTITUTION OF 21 MARCH 2015

Honorary President: The current Honorary President of the organisation had served for a period of four years. In accordance with clause 10.4 of the BLSA constitution, members had been invited to forward nominations for Honorary President. One nomination, duly proposed, seconded, and accepted by the nominee, had been received. There being no objections the meeting unanimously agreed and approved the election of Colleen Downs as Honorary President of BirdLife South Africa.

Treasurer: The current Treasurer of the organisation had stepped down. In accordance with clause 8.2.3 of the BLSA constitution, members has been invited to forward nominations for Treasurer. One nomination, duly proposed, seconded, and accepted by the nominee, had been

received, There being no objections the meeting unanimously agreed and approved the election of Tony Zoghby as Treasurer of BirdLife South Africa. The Treasurer will serve on the Executive Board of the organisation.

Regional Bird Club Forum representatives: In accordance with clause 13.4 of the BLSA constitution, it was noted that with effect from 1 March 2016 the Western Cape Birding Forum had nominated Mark Brown as its representative on the BirdLife South Africa Executive Board.

12 LAUNCH OF BLSA INITIATIVES AND PUBLICATIONS

12.1 Bird of the Year 2016:

Mark Anderson introduced the 2016 Bird of the Year – the Sociable Weaver.

Birds are excellent flagship species and valuable indicators of the environment as places that are rich in bird species are often abundant in other forms of biodiversity. The presence of birds indicates a healthy environment and thriving ecosystem. BirdLife South Africa conserves our country's birds. By focusing on birds, the sites and the habitats on which they depend, BirdLife South Africa hopes to improve the quality of life for birds, for other wildlife and ultimately for people.

Each year a Bird of the Year is chosen by BirdLife South Africa. Bird of the Year is one of BirdLife South Africa's annual initiatives for creating awareness about birds and bird habitat conservation. Educating people is one of the key components of BirdLife South Africa's conservation work. The aim of the project is to choose a bird species and focus education and other activities on it during the coming year and improve public awareness about the species and the need to protect the species (and related species) and its habitat.

The Sociable Weaver is an icon of southern Africa's arid zones. Although Sociable Weavers are not found throughout South Africa, other weavers (listed below) are more widespread and found in South Africa: White-browed Sparrow-Weaver, Thick-billed Weaver, Red-billed Buffalo Weaver, Dark-Backed Weaver, Cape Weaver, Southern Brown-throated Weaver, Yellow Weaver, African Golden Weaver, Village Weaver, Southern Masked Weaver, Lesser Masked Weaver, Spectacled Weaver, and Red-headed Weaver.

Learning materials (on the BLSA website www.birdlife.org.za) and posters are available for the 2016 Bird of the Year. Pin badges are available for sale.

12.2 Bird of the Year 2017:

Mark Anderson introduced Bird of the Year 2017.

Bird clubs had been requested for nominations for Bird of the Year 2017, which the BLSA Marketing Committee reviewed. The recommended species was proposed to the Executive Board who approved the Lappet-face Vulture as 2017 Bird of the Year. The Lappet-faced Vulture will be the ambassador for other vulture species. BirdLife International is focusing on the plight of the vulture worldwide.

Bird clubs were encouraged to continue submitting their annual nominations for Bird of the Year.

12.3 Bird Checklist 2016:

Mark Anderson announced the launch of the 2016 Bird Checklist, sponsored by Carl Zeiss (Pty) Ltd South Africa. The checklist is in its 7th year of publication. The checklist reflects the latest Red List status, especially for vultures.

The checklist was compiled by Chris Lotz, Chairman of the BirdLife South Africa List Committee. The BirdLife South African List Committee for 2015 consisted of the following members: David Allan, Rauri Bowie, Hugh Chittenden, Callan Cohen, Bob Dowsett, Guy Gibbon, Trevor Hardaker, Chris Lotz, Etienne Marais, Faansie Peacock, Ernst Retief, Peter Ryan,

Hanneline Smit-Robinson and Martin Taylor.

Carl Zeiss (Pty) Ltd South Africa sponsored the publication of the checklist.

The Afrikaans Voëly 2016 is available to download from the BirdLife South Africa website www.birdlife.org.za Sponsors are needed to print the checklist in languages other than English.

12.4 BLSA Flock at Sea AGAIN 2017:

The trip will be a four night (Monday 24 April to Friday 28 April 2017) Birders Cruise to the continental shelf on board the MSC Sinfonia, departing and returning to Cape Town. To date over 1600 people have booked for the trip. Peter Harrison will be a guest speaker on board ship.

12.5 BLSA Flock 2018:

Mark Anderson advised that the venue of BLSA Flock 2018 will be announced soon.

13 GILL MEMORIAL MEDAL AWARD 2016

The Gill Memorial Medal is awarded for an outstanding lifetime contribution to the knowledge of southern African birds.

The outgoing Honorary President of BirdLife South Africa, Phoebe Barnard, announced and introduced the recipient of the Gill Memorial Medal Award 2016.

Professor Philip Anthony Richard Hockey was a scientist and ecologist of unusual acumen. Although he chose quality rather than quantity for research papers, he was nonetheless a prolific scientist, supervising >40 post-graduate students, >100 research papers and >150 popular articles. His stature as a giant in the birding and ornithological worlds was only enhanced by his often irreverent style and wry humour. Presentations from visiting scientists and students alike were guaranteed to receive incisive questions and insightful suggestions to any topic under consideration. He was a dyed-in-the-wool Percy FitzPatrick Institute man, with his PhD and entire career undertaken at the institute.

Phil came to the FitzPatrick part-time in 1976 to assist with a study of the breeding biology of the White-fronted Plover *Charadrius marginatus* at Langebaan Lagoon. He later moved to South Africa in 1979 and obtained his PhD from the University of Cape Town in 1983 for a study of the ecology of the African Black Oystercatcher *Haematopus moquini*. Most of his subsequent research focused on coastal and estuarine bird ecology, the ecology of bird migration, avian life history evolution, and the ecology of rarity (especially anthropogenically mediated rarity) with the aim of promoting appropriate conservation strategies, and analysing and predicting avian responses to climate change.

His interest in shorebirds took him to tropical Africa and islands in the Indian Ocean, South America, the Canary Islands and the Middle East. He led research expeditions to Chile, the Canary Islands, Mauritius, the Seychelles, Kenya, Madagascar, the Arabian Gulf and Namibia. His specific focus on coastal waders and interactions with their food supplies earned him recognition as an authority of African waders and in 1995 he published the monograph '*Waders of Southern Africa*' (Struik Winchester, Cape Town). By the late 1990s, Phil was recognised as one of the most experienced ornithologists in southern Africa, and was tasked with Editor-in-Chief, along with Richard Dean and Peter Ryan, of the seventh revision of *Roberts - Birds of Southern Africa* (John Voelcker Bird Book Fund, Cape Town). He was also a co-author of the best-selling regional field guide, '*Sasol Birds of Southern Africa*' (Struik Nature, Cape Town).

Phil was appointed as Director of the FitzPatrick Institute in July 2008 and led the DST-NRF Centre of Excellence using 'Birds as Keys to Biodiversity Conservation' to new heights. Phil was able to capitalize on that opportunity to full extent, using his strategic insight, persuasive

personality and unbending determination to secure renewal of the CoE status and long-term benefits for birds, conservation, research and, of course, the Percy FitzPatrick Institute.

During his time at the institute, he graduated 33 MSc students and 18 PhD students and supervised eight Post-doctoral Fellows and more than 30 honours projects. The impact of his and his student's research has been disseminated in more than 120 scientific publications. He also held membership of advisory services of 17 learned societies, councils and steering committees, was recently on the Editorial Board of the journal *Biological Conservation* and on the International Advisory Group of the journal *Public Library of Sciences (PLoS)*.

Phil was passionate about the need to disseminate the science of birds, and their conservation, to a wide audience, and frequently presented public lectures, radio and television interviews. He also published over 150 semi-popular articles and 12 books and book chapters. In 2000, he was named "Marine and Coastal Communicator of the Year" by the South African Network for Coastal and Oceanic Research (SANCOR) and Marine and Coastal Management (MCM). In 2008, he was awarded the Stevenson-Hamilton Medal of the Zoological Society of Southern Africa (ZSSA) for contributions to the public awareness of science.

Phil's insights and leadership in ornithology have been exemplary and valued by a wide range of the ornithological sector and will be remembered through his vast contribution to the avian literature, both scientific and popular. Phil touched the hearts and lives of many people, from deeply insightful discussions about birds to warm interactions on life itself. He was a deeply caring person with an open heart and will be sorely missed by his family, ornithologists world-wide, the zoological community and our country as a whole. It gives us great pleasure to nominate Phil Hockey posthumously for the Gill Memorial Award.

Peter Ryan, on behalf of Samantha Stoffberg, presented the Gill Memorial Award 2016 Acceptance Speech:

Phil Hockey was a scientist and ecologist of unusual acumen. Although he chose quality over quantity for research papers, he was nonetheless prolific, supervising more than 50 postgraduate students and writing over 120 research papers and 150 popular articles. He was also a giant in both the birding and the ornithological worlds – two worlds that relatively few people straddle easily – and this status was only enhanced by his irreverent style and wry humour. He contributed insightful suggestions on any topic, and presentations from students and visiting scientists alike were guaranteed to receive incisive questions.

Phil was a dyed-in-the-wool Percy FitzPatrick Institute man. His PhD and entire career were undertaken at the Fitz. He first came to South Africa from the UK in 1976 to assist with a study of breeding White-fronted Plovers at Langebaan Lagoon and then moved here permanently in 1979. He obtained his PhD from the University of Cape Town in 1983 for a study of the ecology of the African Black Oystercatcher. Most of his subsequent work focused on the ecology of coastal and estuarine birds, bird migration, life history evolution and the ecology of rarity. In all of this, he aimed not only to do good science, but to promote good conservation strategies and to predict birds' responses to climate change.

Phil's interest in shorebirds took him to tropical Africa, the Indian Ocean islands, South America, the Canary Islands and the Middle East and he led research expeditions to Chile, the Canaries, Mauritius, the Seychelles, Kenya, Madagascar, the Arabian Gulf and Namibia. His focus on coastal waders and their food supply established him as an authority on these species in Africa; in 1995 he wrote the monograph *Waders of Southern Africa*. By the late 1990s he was recognised as one of the most experienced ornithologists in southern Africa and was asked to be editor-in-chief, along with Richard Dean and Peter Ryan, of *Roberts VII*. He was also a co-author of the best-selling regional field guide *Sasol Birds of Southern Africa*.

Appointed director of the FitzPatrick Institute in July 2008, Phil led the DST-NRF Centre of Excellence to new heights. He capitalised on the opportunity presented by his new position, using his strategic insight, persuasive personality and unbending determination to secure the renewal of Centre of Excellence status and thereby ensure long-term benefits for bird research, conservation and, of course, the Fitz. During his time there he graduated 33 MSc and 18 PhD students and supervised eight postdoctoral fellows and more than 30 honours projects. The impact of his and his students' research has been disseminated in more than 120 scientific publications.

An advisory member of 17 learned societies, councils and steering committees, Phil was also on the editorial board of the journal Biological Conservation and in the international advisory group of the journal Public Library of Sciences (PLoS). He was passionate about the need to disseminate the science and conservation of birds to a wide audience and often gave public lectures and radio and television interviews. In 2000 he was named Marine and Coastal Communicator of the Year and in 2008 he was awarded the Stevenson-Hamilton Medal of the Zoological Society of Southern Africa for contributing to the public awareness of science.

Phil's insights and leadership in ornithology were exemplary and highly valued. He will be remembered not only for his vast contribution to the avian literature, both scientific and popular, but also because he touched the hearts and lives of many through his deeply insightful and good-humoured discussions about birds – and about life.

15 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

None.

There being no other business for discussion the Chairman again thanked everyone for attending.

Special thanks were extended to the Flock 2016 organising committee for a successful event.

The meeting was adjourned at 16:00

Signed:.....

Designation:

Date:.....



Member of IUCN (International Union for Conservation of Nature)