

REPORT OF THE BIRDLIFE SOUTH AFRICA RARITIES COMMITTEE – 2014

It gives us great pleasure to present the 2014 Report of the BirdLife South Africa Rarities Committee.

Another exciting year has passed in terms of South African rarities and the Rarities Committee has been kept busy throughout the year adjudicating records. The 2014 period did not see any new birds getting added to the South African list, but there were, nevertheless, some really exciting birds seen and submitted for adjudication. Perhaps the most exciting was the Grey-backed Storm Petrel seen on a pelagic trip out of Hout Bay, but several other really excellent seabird records were also submitted including Tristan-, Salvin's- and Sooty Albatrosses, Blue-, Grey-, Atlantic- and Barau's Petrels and White-faced Storm Petrel. On land there were also some really exciting birds reported, perhaps led by the Hudsonian Godwit at St Francis Bay that proved extremely popular.

The Rarities Committee that operated during 2014 remained unchanged with Trevor Hardaker presiding as Chairman and the rest of the committee made up of Adam Riley, Athol Marchant, David Allan, David Hoddinott, Etienne Marais, Faansie Peacock, John Graham and Phil Whittington. Thanks very much to all of these members for their hard work during the past year. A special word of thanks should also be given to Hanneline Smit-Robinson and Linda van den Heever from BirdLife South Africa who also continued to be involved behind the scenes in so ably assisting with all the administrative duties that has enabled the committee to function more smoothly.

The Rarities Committee is made up of a group of volunteers who give freely of their time to undertake this task. The members, most of them very busy individuals in their own rights, have to take the time to work through each submission with due diligence and make a decision based on the evidence presented to them in that particular submission.

We would like to encourage observers to continue to submitting their records for adjudication by the Rarities Committee. All these records will be included into an official database of accepted South African rarities for future generations to refer back to and will be incorporated into scientific studies.

We look forward to an equally busy 2015 and hope to report back on further exciting rarities next year.



Trevor Hardaker

Chairman of the BirdLife South Africa National Rarities Committee