

CLUB ANNOUNCEMENTS

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Bulletin of the BRITISH ORNITHOLOGISTS' CLUB

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The 1,006th meeting of the Club was held on 21 November 2022 via the online medium of Zoom.

Prof. Michael Cherry, professor of zoology at the University of Stellenbosch, South Africa, spoke on *What can be done about range declines in South Africa's forest-dependent birds?* Over half of South Africa's forest-dependent birds have suffered range declines over the past 30 years. These declines have been concentrated in Eastern Cape Province, despite an 18% increase in forest cover there over the same period. The cause of local forest bird extinctions appears to be habitat degradation arising from informal harvesting of forest products. Natural products comprise 10–14% of household income in rural villages in the former Ciskei and Transkei areas of the province, so the investigation focused on the impact of informal harvesting of bark, poles and timber on avian functional diversity. Bark and timber harvesting resulted in canopy gaps, negatively affecting bird species that forage in the understorey or on the forest floor. Moreover, much bark harvesting appears to be driven by commercial demand, and 29% of trees harvested for bark in the province die from ringbarking. By contrast, pole harvesting is of less concern as it appears to be on the decline owing to reduced demand, is occurring at sustainable levels, and is mostly for household use. The Forest Act of 1998 provides for sustainable harvesting through Participatory Forest Management (PFM), but in practice it has not been implemented. Based on the study's findings, suggestions were provided for improved methods of monitoring and control. The talk is now available on YouTube (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HJWeLgIYk>) and also via the Club website <https://boc-online.org/>.

The Club held an informal unminuted evening meeting on Monday 28 November 2022 at 6.00pm in the upstairs room at the Barley Mow, 104 Horseferry Road, London SW1P 2EE. The meeting commenced with an excellent talk by Tony Statham on *Bird books and bird stamps* with examples, and continued with a general discussion concerning the Club and its future plans and development. The evening was attended by: Ms A. Belman, Mr P. J. Belman, Mr R. Bray, Cmdr. M. B. Casement, Mr. S. Chapman, Mr M. Howard, Mr A. Jackson, Mr R. Langley, Mr S. MacDonald Smyth, Mr R. Middleton, Dr R. Prŷs-Jones, Mr A. Richford, Mr S. A. H. Statham, Mr C. W. R. Storey (*Chairman*) and Ms A. Wilson.

Friends of the BOC

The BOC has from 2017 become an online organisation without a paying membership, but instead one that aspires to a supportive network of Friends who share its vision of ornithology—see: <http://boc-online.org/>. Anyone wishing to become a Friend of the BOC and support its development should pay UK£25.00 by standing order or online payment to the BOC bank account:

Barclays Bank, 16 High Street, Holt, NR25 6BQ, Norfolk
Sort Code: 20-45-45
Account number: 53092003
Account name: The British Ornithologists' Club

Friends receive regular updates about Club events and are also eligible for discounts on the Club's Occasional Publications. It would assist our Treasurer, Richard Malin (e-mail: rmalin21@gmail.com), if you would kindly inform him if you intend becoming a Friend of the BOC.

The *Bulletin* and other BOC publications

Since volume 137 (2017), the *Bulletin* of the BOC has been an online journal, published quarterly, that is available to all readers without charge. Furthermore, it does not levy any publication charges (including for colour plates) on authors of papers and has a median publication time from receipt to publication of five to six months. Prospective authors are invited to contact the *Bulletin* editor, Guy Kirwan (GMKirwan@

aol.com), to discuss future submissions or look at <http://boc-online.org/bulletin/bulletin-contributions>. Back numbers up to volume 136 (2016) are available via the Biodiversity Heritage Library website: www.biodiversitylibrary.org/bibliography/46639#/summary; vols. 132–136 are also available on the BOC website: <http://boc-online.org/>

BOC Occasional Publications are available from the BOC Office or online at info@boc-online.org. Future BOC-published checklists will be available from NHBS and as advised on the BOC website. As its online repository, the BOC uses the British Library Online Archive (in accordance with IZCN 1999, Art. 8.5.3.1).

