

BOC ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2014

The Annual General Meeting of the British Ornithologists' Club was held in the upstairs room at the Barley Mow, Horseferry Road, Westminster, London SW1P 2EE on Tuesday 20 May 2014 with Chris Storey in the Chair. Thirteen members were present.

1. **Apologies for absence** were received from David Fisher and Clive Mann.

2. **Minutes of AGM 2013:** The Minutes of the 2013 AGM held on 21 May 2013, which had been published (*Bull. Brit. Orn. Cl.* 133:165-166 and the BOC website) were approved and signed by the Chairman.

3. **The Chairman's Review, Bulletin Editor's Report, the Trustees' Report and Accounts for 2013.** Copies of the document were available at the meeting. The Chairman began by thanking Helen Baker for all that she had done for the Club during her time in the Chair: it was considerable and the Club was much in her debt. He added that with her usual generosity Helen had agreed to help with the running of the website.

The Chairman also thanked the Committee members, and Guy Kirwan, Eng-Li Green and Steve Dudley for all their support and work during the past year. He added that David Montier had decided to retire from his position of Hon.

Treasurer and that Richard Malin, a new member of the Club and co-opted onto the Committee, had agreed to put his name forward for election to that position. The forthcoming June Bulletin would include an announcement of a Special General Meeting on 23 September, prior to the evening meeting on that day, at which the election of Richard Malin to the role of Hon. Treasurer would be proposed.

The Chairman concluded by saying that the Committee had begun a process of reappraisal of its activities. The Club faced a declining membership, a substantial reduction in the numbers attending evening meetings and had assumed sole responsibility for Checklist publishing following the unilateral decision of the BOU to withdraw from joint publication of Checklists and associated works, although the BOU would continue to handle sales of existing joint works and

future Checklists published by the Club. The Committee intended to ensure the BOC's funds were being best used to further the aims of the Club consistent with its charitable status and current realities, and that the Club was run in as effective and cost - efficient manner as possible.

The *Hon. Secretary* expressed regret at the disappointing audiences, averaging ca 20, attending the four diverse and uniformly excellent evening meetings held in February (Ascension Island birds), May (White-shouldered Ibis *Pseudibis davisoni* in Cambodia), September (Malagasy region birds) and November (avian land-use in Cyprus). Unless attendances improve in 2014, the Committee would need to consider discontinuing the long tradition of dinner meetings. By contrast, the joint one-day meeting, with the African Bird Club and the Natural History Museum, held at the NHM on Saturday, 6 April, attracted an audience well in excess of 100, building on the success of previous such joint ventures.

The four issues of the Bulletin for volume 133 (2013) comprised a total of 352 pages, a recent record, including 28 papers of broad geographical scope though with a continuing emphasis on the Neotropical region. Taxonomic issues continued to figure importantly, and two new subspecies were described, of Subalpine Warbler *Sylvia cantillans* and Upper Magdalena Tapaculo *Scytalops rodriguezi*. The interval between receipt and publication for accepted papers has continued to be reduced under the present Hon. Editor and now averages only a little over 7 months, and the free inclusion of colour illustrations where justified is clearly attractive to authors. With the withdrawal of the BOU from involvement in Checklist production, a meeting of an *ad hoc* Sub-committee of the Club took place in December to consider the future of Club involvement in Checklists and other Occasional Publications. This made recommendations for consideration by the Committee in 2014.

The *Hon. Treasurer* introduced the Accounts for the year ended 31 December 2013. He referred first to the Investments in the Balance Sheet which showed an increase over the year of £33,514. Of that figure £32,328 was due to an increase in the market

value of the unit trusts held in the Herbert Stevens Trust Fund, the balance being distributions reinvested.

Members' subscriptions had gone down by £460 and investment income by almost £1,000, mainly because a two-year fixed term deposit had matured early in the year and could only be replaced at a much lower rate.

Bulletin costs had increased to £16,024, partly explained by there being more pages in 2013 than in the previous year. A grant of £500 had been made to the Museum Curators' Conference to support the attendance of a delegate from St Petersburg.

With total income of £23,994 and expenditure of £30,147, there was a deficit for the year of £6,153. However with total assets of £414,680, the Club remained in a healthy position.

The *Hon. Treasurer* proposed and the Meeting accepted the adoption of the Report and Accounts.

4. Election of Officers: Robert Prys-Jones and David Montier were confirmed as continuing in office as Hon. Secretary and Hon. Treasurer respectively.

Note: Subsequently it was noted that the resolution was redundant since under the Club's new rules their re-election in 2013 was for a term of four years, ending in 2017 unless terminated earlier.

5. Any Other Business: There was none.

