



PO Box FM 648, Famona. Bulawayo, Zimbabwe

Welfare No: W/0 30/94

NEWSLETTER 33 / OCTOBER 2001

1 - ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Our Annual General Meeting is scheduled for Saturday 3 November, and will be held in the Matopos. Your Chairman is asking all members to give serious thought to the composition of the new committee - after all the society will stand or fall on the strength of this group. We need to attract younger members onto the committee to bring in fresh ideas. We also need to attract both as members and as committee members, representatives of our indigenous population.

The position of Secretary has been filled for the past year on a "temporary" basis, but this important office needs to be filled in a more permanent manner. Both the Chairman and Treasurer have indicated that they will stand for re-election, along with most members of the present committee. But this does not mean that we can be complacent. We need new vision if we are to go forward.

2 - BROCHURES

The Society launched its Matopos Bird Checklist at the annual General Meeting of the Wildlife and Environment Society Zimbabwe AGM held at Maleme Dam in September. This was the initiative of Dr Peter Mundy and the Ornithological Research Unit of the DNPWM, and we are also grateful to the time contributed by Mrs Pam Birch who did all the hard work of pulling it together. A note of appreciation is needed for the proof-readers - one can imagine the ordeal of reading through lists of names!

3 - APOLOGIES

Our last newsletter referred to Karen Duff as having done the drawings for the Conservation Booklet. They were in fact done, and donated to the MCS, by Janet Duff. Apologies are extended.

It is also worth recording that the original booklet was prepared, and translated, by our previous Secretary, Mr Trevor Hemans, and the republication has been made possible through the support of the Edgar's Trust.

4 - HATS AND SHIRTS

We all know that this has been a nightmare for all concerned, but we are promised that the shirts and hats WILL FINALLY be delivered before the AGM. Fresh orders have been placed with new suppliers, and at the time of going to print, production was underway. Regrettably prices have increased since this project was first mooted, with shirts costing approximately \$600 and hats \$500.

5 - MATOBO HILLS BIOLOGICAL TECHNICAL GROUP

As a direct consequence of the World Heritage Submission, the Bulawayo scientific community has come together to establish a co-ordinated research vehicle for the Matobo Hills. There is a considerable amount of knowledge represented in Bulawayo, but this has not previously been shared on a wide scale. The MHBTG has been formed for the purpose of *"furthering and enhancing a greater understanding of the bio-diversity and ecology of the Matobo Hills in their entirety, with a view to strengthening the conservation thereof."*

The group is chaired by the MCS Chairman, Iain Sheasby, but includes representatives of DNPWM (the Ornithological Research Unit), NMM's (The Natural History Museum, Bulawayo), NUST (Faculty of Environmental Science), Chipangali, Marwell Zimbabwe Trust, and the Biodiversity Foundation for Africa. An effort is being made to ensure that no group is left out

The objectives of the MHBTG fit with the aims of the MCS, and it is envisioned that this group will constitute the critical resource pool for the management of the Matobo Hills World Heritage Site.

6 - NEXT EVENT

Date	Saturday 3 November 2001
Venue	Camp Amanzi, Shumbashaba Mkulu Farm, Eastern Matopos
Meet	2:00pm, Churchill Arms
Travel	All vehicles
Details	Provide own chairs, tables, meals and drinks. Don't forget your hat!

The Society Annual General Meeting will take place at 3:00pm. Time permitting there shall be a walk after that, followed by a social braai. Please bring your own food etc. Members wishing to travel out in the morning are welcome to do so, and should liaise with either the Secretary or the Co-ordinator, Mrs M Friend. The route will be sign posted for those travelling out ofc onvov.

7 - REPORT BACK

A total of 45 members joined the Society on the field trip to the historically rich, but little visited, far Western Matopos. The members were afforded warm hospitality by our hosts Derek and Barbara Viljoen, for which we are grateful. The group was taken on an interesting walk to visit rock art sites, grain bins and enjoy lovely views across the Shashani River.

8 - LEOPARD HUNTING

Your committee is very concerned with the DNPWM regulations that permit the hunting of leopard by dogs.

We are already aware of this practice in the area of the Matobo Hills, and have written to the Director, DNPWM on the matter. A reply is awaited. The Matobo Hills is reputed to possess the largest population of leopard in the world - a fact that has been included in the World Heritage Submission - and the concern of the committee, endorsed by the hunting profession, is that leopard hunting with dogs has an almost 100% chance of success, against that of direct shooting which is as low as 25%. This could have a devastating impact on the Matobo population, and result in wounded animals coming in contact with villagers in the communal lands. Then of course there is the whole ethical, professional and inhumane argument to consider.

9 -E-MAIL

The last newsletter was distributed by e-mail to all those members who have submitted such addresses. This practice will continue as we endeavour to reduce the costs of postage. If you are able to receive the newsletter in this format, please advise the Secretary of your e-mail address.

10 - WORLD HERITAGE

The dossier is complete and is in Paris at the headquarters of UNESCO. We now await confirmation of the visit by the IUCN and ICOMOS teams who will examine the dossier and ensure that it applies to the facts on the ground. Their visit is likely to be brief, but very thorough and intense.

The Technical Committee is now compiling the slides and presentations, which will be used during the actual submission at the World Heritage Convention, in Helsinki, Finland in early December. The completed video will form part of the supporting presentation. We hope to bring you positive news before Christmas!

At the same time, a Matobo Hills World Heritage Management Committee has been proposed. This will have as members representatives of the National Museums and Monuments (at Director level), National Parks and Wildlife, Chief Executive Officers of both the Matobo and Umzingwane Rural District Councils, a representative of the Traditional leadership (an elected Chief), Matobo Committee and Matobo Conservation Society representatives. Consequently, all major stakeholders will be included.

11 - SUBSCRIPTIONS

HAVE YOU PAID YOUR SUBSCRIPTION FEES?

SUBS WERE DUE ON 31 JULY AND MUST BE PAID BEFORE THE AGM IF YOU WISH TO ATTEND AND VOTE