



Report of the BirdLife South Africa Rarities Committee - 2015

It gives us great pleasure to present the 2015 Report of the BirdLife South Africa Rarities Committee.

We've had another good year in terms of South African rarities and there were a number of records that were submitted to the Rarities Committee during the year that required adjudication. The 2015 period did not see any new birds getting added to the South African list. However, there were still some really great birds seen and submitted for adjudication. Perhaps the most exciting of these was the country's second Snowy Egret that was seen along the Black River in Cape Town where it remained for a couple of weeks and caused one of the biggest twitches that the country has ever seen. Other top rarities adjudicated during 2015 included the Citrine Wagtail at Strandfontein Sewage Works, Red-footed Boobies and Cape Recife and Uvongo, a Eurasian Blackcap along the famous Zaagkuildrift road and a Red-billed Tropicbird in Knysna.

The Rarities Committee that operated during 2015 remained unchanged with Trevor Hardaker serving 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. Hanneline Smit-Robinson and Linda van den Heever from BirdLife South Africa were also involved with all the administrative duties that has enabled the committee to function more smoothly. A big thank you to all of these people for ensuring that the work of the committee was, once again, able to be undertaken successfully and that feedback could be given to the various observers that took the time to submit their records for adjudication.

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 submit 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 2016 and hope to report back on further exciting rarities next year.

Trevor Hardaker
Chairperson: BirdLife South Africa Rarities Committee