

FOREIGN BIRD FEDERATION

"ELECTRONIC AGM - 2016"

➤ **GENERAL**

First of all, I must apologise that this is being sent out some two months later than I had originally intended. Various things have got in the way of getting it completed; the "TO DO" list always seems to get longer!

This is in fact the third FBF AGM to be held in "electronic" format. Earlier I circulated all of my contacts in Societies affiliated to the FBF, and all those that responded seemed very happy to have this 2016 AGM done in that way. It certainly reduces travel costs, and the time saving is very useful, too. My experience continues to be that only a very small percentage of members of any Society ever attend "physical" AGM's.

➤ **Secretary's Report**

As I am sure you are aware, the Foreign Bird Federation is one of the four parent bodies which form the Management Committee of the NCA, and a particular benefit that the FBF gains from this is that through the NCA's affiliation to the Sustainable Users Network (SUN) I am able to keep you abreast of the discussions that SUN has with Government – for example DEFRA. NCA Chair, Chris Smith, attends most of these meetings which are an opportunity to both feed into Government thinking and learn what is being planned.

I have from time to time asked FBF affiliates what more can we do, but nothing has been identified yet!

➤ **Treasurer's Report**

The Balance sheet for 01.01.2015 – 31.12.2015 is a separate document, and again shows a small profit for the year. Expenditure was the affiliation fee to the NCA and renewal of the website domain name. As in previous years your delegates to the NCA, Dave Paine and I, have claimed no expenses for anything we do for the FBF, including travel, and this positively contributes to the small annual profit we make.

I have said this several times before before (!!!), but I have been FBF Treasurer since 2009, and *acting* Secretary since 2010, so if there is anybody out there who might be interested in taking it on I would be very pleased!

➤ **NCA Report**

I have tried to keep members up to date on the legislative side by forwarding any information I receive as a result of the activities of the Sustainable Users Network (SUN) to which, of course, the NCA is affiliated. Chris Smith, NCA Chair attends

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most of these meetings, so we are well represented.

- ❖ As a result of the Government’s “austerity programme” there have been major reductions in staffing at DEFRA (an estimated 15% cut), and the group that SUN deal with was re-christened APHA (Animal and Plant Health Agency). Nevertheless SUN have built up a working relationship with this group, and in July last twelve APHA Licensing Officers and DEFRA Policy Officials visited the International Centre for Birds of Prey (Jemima Parry-Jones – herself a member of the SUN team - and Jim Collins, SUN Co-ordinator), and spent several hours discussing a range of issues.
- ❖ The Law Commission Report on Wildlife Legislation was finally published at the end of 2015. The aim is to bring all the wildlife and related legislation which has been promulgated over many decades into one updated and self-consistent piece of legislation. The report itself is a major volume, and even the Summary is several pages long! The Bill arising from that is in preparation, but unlikely to get into the Parliament programme any time soon due to pressure of other things.
- ❖ The “Trade in Captive Birds” consultation has now been published (documentary evidence requirements for the sale of certain birds), and removes the need for documentary evidence – thus bringing it into line with EU law. However again it will probably be 2017 before it really comes into force.
- ❖ The European Commission has also been discussing an EU Animal Welfare Strategy, and passed a motion last November embodying a list of 37 species (including animals, birds and plants) which we will not be allowed to keep. While no commonly kept birds are on the list, The “anti’s” will almost certainly apply pressure to add to this list in the future. Fortunately the EU Parliament and the Dutch Government have raised objections to the list, which the Commission will have to consider.
- ❖ SUN have asked DEFRA what would happen if the result of the referendum on UK membership of the EU was to leave the EU. DEFRA said that it was assuming continued EU membership, and “at this point there was no Plan B”. However if there was a vote to leave it would take several years to unravel current legislation, and changes to animal, bird and plant legislation would not be a high priority.

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- ❖ The Scottish Parliament will meet in June 2016 to consider trading and keeping “exotic pets”. This debate will be led by the Scottish National Party.

- ❖ During 2015 and to date, the FBF have been represented at the NCA by myself and Dave Paine. We have near a 100% attendance record. We are pleased that following the 2016 AGM of the NCA, we will be joined by Graham Lee representing the Australian Finch Society. Dave Paine also represents the NCA on the committee of COM-UK

- **FBF Website.**
 - ❖ The FBF website (www.foreignbirdfederation.co.uk) continues in the capable hands of David Jones. This domain name was renewed for two years in 2015 – the cost was very modest. I know David is always on the lookout for some new material for the website. You can contact him at david@foreignbirdfederation.co.uk or at david@turacos.co.uk
Thank you once again David!

- **Congratulations!**
 - ❖ Congratulations to Bryan Reed (Foreign Bird League) and John and Val Ward (National Bengalese Fanciers Association) on being elected to the NCA Roll of Honour at the April NCA meeting. In addition to being Secretary and Treasurer to the FBL, Bryan was my immediate predecessor as Secretary and Treasurer of the FBF, and also a member of the NCA Management Committee. John Ward is a long-time Chairman of the NBFA, while Val is a past Treasurer and current President.

- **Condolences**
 - ❖ Mike Fox of the Foreign Bird Association died a few months ago, and will be greatly missed by the FBA.

Dennis Webster

Treasurer and acting Hon Sec.

27.05.2016