LBC INAUGURATION REPORT

Wheresoever the carcase is, there will the eagles be gathered together. Such was the outlook of the Lekki Bird Club (LBC) inauguration on Saturday, 28th March 2009. The august event was well attended by nature lovers from all works of life.

The inaugural event started on a good note with opening chat anchored by a renowned ornithologist, Prof. Augustine Ezealor, A. P. Leventis Ornithological Research Institute (APLORI). During the chat, the audience were amused with ingenious tips to identify birds in the wild.

The chat was closely followed by a presentation titled LBC and its significance by Mr. Alade Adeleke, Director, Technical Programmes, Nigerian Conservation Foundation (NCF). He stressed LBC is not just for birds but for people. The presentation also highlighted that the club is geared towards raising the stake of bird conservation in Lagos State through: systematic recording of birding observations, periodic bird watching trips and promoting bird conservation actions. Members of the club will enjoy free access to Lekki Conservation Centre (LCC) nature reserve and library. They will also be invited to participate in birding trips among other impressive benefits. Mr. Adeleke expressed that the long term plan is to replicate this laudable initiative in other parts of Nigeria. Individuals and institutions were enjoined to partner with the club and have some of LBC activities branded after them.

The second presentation was delivered by Ademola Ajagbe, LCC Coordinator on Lekki Bird Club: in a time like this. The presentation recounted the importance of bird to man. For example, man make jewellery with bird feathers, poultry bird is one of the major sources of animal protein in human diet, farmers in rural areas determine when to plant with the presence or absence of some birds while a number of fruit eating birds are the key agent for propagation of several fruiting tree through dispersal of their fruits. The presentation also featured a brief history of bird conservation in Nigeria and how the defunct Nigerian Ornithological Society was conceived. Mr. A. P. Leventis was acknowledged for his immense financial commitment to bird and biodiversity conservation in Nigeria over the years.

The two presentations were followed by an interactive sessions. Setting the stage for the club was discussed extensively by the participants. However, the registration obligations of members and election of club officials were postponed till the first club meeting. On the interim, six

1 Matthew 24:28 (American Standard Version)
pro tem club officers were nominated; three non-NCF and NCF staff respectively. They are Okechukwu Ibekwe, Dave Simon, Sunny Ojei, Alade Adeleke, Saturday Okhuleigbe and Ademola Ajagbe. The pro tem officials were saddled with the responsibility of fine tuning the club’s structure.

Other side attraction of the inaugural event was sales of bird guide, bird books and binoculars. The meeting was rounded off with a group photograph. Thereafter, Prof. Ezealor led a birdwalk into LCC nature reserve.

The maiden club meeting will hold on Saturday, 18 April 2009 at Lekki Conservation Centre by 10am. However, there will be bird trip to Muritala Mohammed botanical garden by 7am prior to the meeting.