As a follow up on the bird trip to Muritala Mohammed botanical garden, the Lekki Bird Club (LBC) continued its monthly field expedition with a bird watching trip to the Makekodunmi Farms, Abijo, along Lekki-Epe expressway on Saturday, 20th June 2009. In attendance was 10 people, including Mr. Desmond Majekodunmi, the trip host. The group converged at the Lekki Conservation Centre (LCC) and departed for Majekodunmi Farms at about 7am in a convoy of 3 cars.

Ademola Ajagbe kicked off the field trip with a general introduction about the concept of LBC, the habit of bird watching, its relevance to climate change and a few tips on how to spot and identify a bird species. After the short address the team, led by the Farm Manager, went bird watching in the privately owned Majek Agro-forestry Farm. Within two minutes, the Gymnogene often referred to as the African harrier hawk (Polyboroides typus) welcomed us with its undulating flights and slow wing beats as the Didric cuckoo (Chrysococcyx caprius) also notified with its distinctive call.

Within a few minutes the group had recognized Green Hylia (Hylia prasina), Woodland Kingfisher (Halcyon senegalensis), African Green-pigeon (Treron calvus), Green-backed or Striated Heron (Butorides striata), Western or Yellow-spotted Nicator (Nicator chloris), African Pied Hornbill (Tockus fasciatus), Piping Hornbill (Bycanistes fistulator), Variable Sunbird (Nectarinia venusta), Hooded Vulture (Necrosyrtes monachus), Grey-crowned Nigrita (Nigrita canicapillus), African Palm-swift (Cypsiurus parvus), and the Green-backed Camaroptera (Camaroptera brachyura). Others species identified include the Olive-green Camaroptera (Camaroptera chloronota), Senegal Coucal (Centropus senegalensis), Swamp Palm Bulbul (Thescelocichla leucopleura), Little Greenbul (Andropadus virens), Red Vented Malimbe (Malimbus scutatus) and the Green Crombec (Sylvietta virens). In all, twenty one (21) species were indentified.

Of particular interest amongst the identified species is the Hooded Vulture (Necrosyrtes monachus); firstly because it is a species restricted to the Sahel and Savannah regions, and secondly because Vultures face hunting pressure and population decline in the world. This is as a result habitat destruction and degradation, illegal persecution, unlawful poisoning of their food (i.e. use of poisons in the killing of animals) and in some cases disturbance. Hence, the concern for their conservation.

At about 9:30am, the trip came a to close, and a brief meeting on the LBC was held. Amongst the issues discussed is the membership registration and annual dues, where membership forms was given to everybody present. The next trip was scheduled for 18th July 2009. Venue will be communicated shortly.