



**West African Ornithological Society**  
**Société d'Ornithologie de l'Ouest**  
**Africain**



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## Society Notices — Informations de la Société

### John Elgood, a tribute upon his retirement from Council

One third of a century has passed since John, then living in Ibadan but spending Christmas 1963 with Bob Sharland in Kano, dreamed up the idea of a national ornithological society for Nigeria. John has served on Council since the Nigerian Ornithologists' Society took off in 1964, and became WAOS in 1979: as President for 15 years, Secretary for ten, and Vice-President for the last eight. More than just an office-bearer, he has been a father-figure for all of those 33 years. His influence has been felt in his ever-open door at home and his good-humoured encouragement, initiatives, help and advice, in his contributions from the very first issue of the former *Bulletin*, in his choice of the name *Malimbus*, and in his compilation of the annual index. More broadly, he has made a lasting mark upon West African ornithology with his description of a new species (1958, *Ibis* 100: 622–624), his syntheses of migration (Elgood *et al.* 1966, *Ibis* 108: 84–116; 1973, *Ibis* 115: 1–45, 375–411) and of course his books *Birds of the West African Town and Garden* (1960, Longman, London) and *The Birds of Nigeria* (1981, British Ornithologists' Union, London), with its greatly expanded second edition in 1994. The Council lets John, who admits to being well into his eighties, go with reluctance and affection, and the same sort of sentiment that he once expressed about Nigeria, recollection of the bird life of which brought him “an almost unbearable nostalgia”. We thank him, and wish him very well.

Council

### A John Elgood, pour son départ du Conseil

Un tiers de siècle s'est écoulé depuis que John, vivant alors à Ibadan mais passant Noël avec Bob Sharland à Kano, imagina une société nationale d'ornithologie pour le Nigéria. John exerça ses fonctions au Conseil depuis le lancement de la Nigerian Ornithologists' Society en 1964, qui devint la SOOA en 1979: comme Président pendant 15 ans, Secrétaire pendant dix et Vice-Président ces huit dernières années. Plutôt qu'un simple membre d'un bureau, il faisait figure d'un père en toute occasion au cours de ces 33 années. Son influence se faisait sentir même chez lui où la porte était toujours ouverte, dans ses aimables encouragements, ses initiatives, son aide et ses conseils, dans ses contributions depuis le tout premier numéro de l'ancien *Bulletin*, dans le choix du nom de *Malimbus*, dans l'établissement de l'index annuel. De manière plus générale, il a marqué durablement l'ornithologie de l'Ouest africain par la description d'une nouvelle espèce (1958, *Ibis* 100: 622–624), sa synthèse sur les migrations (Elgood *et al.* 1966, *Ibis* 108: 84–116; 1973, *Ibis* 115: 1–45, 375–411) et bien sûr ses livres *Birds of the West African Town and Garden* (1960, Longman,

London) et *The Birds of Nigeria* (1981, British Ornithologists' Union, London) avec sa seconde édition largement augmentée en 1994. Le Conseil voit partir John, qui reconnaît avoir 80 ans passés, avec regret et amitié et avec la même sorte de sentiment qu'il exprima jadis au sujet du Nigéria, le souvenir des oiseaux dont il garde une "nostalgie presque intolérable". Nous le remercions et lui exprimons nos meilleurs vœux.

Le Conseil

### Welcome to C. Hilary Fry, Vice-President

Welcome to Hilary once again, because this is the third time that he takes office in the Society. Initially, he was editor of the *Bulletin of the Nigerian Ornithologists' Society* while teaching at Amadou Bello University, Nigeria. Appointed in 1967 to the University of Aberdeen, he resigned the editorship but, once settled in, took it up again in 1974 until his departure for Sultan Qaboos University, Oman, in 1986. During this period, his work as editor was complicated when, in 1978, the *Bulletin*, an English-language national journal, became a bilingual, West African one, largely through his initiative. One might imagine that the management of a Nigerian society would not be too onerous, perhaps an enjoyable pastime, but Hilary never complained that this change might have converted pastime to burden, insisting that the use of French did him good! On the contrary, he helped consolidate our society, now a vigorous hybrid of the two cultures.

Every member of the society knows of Hilary for his important contribution to African ornithology as co-editor of *The Birds of Africa* (Academic Press, London). They are few among the users of this work who realise the feat that this represents, dealing with so many species, in large part poorly known, and tirelessly encouraging authors scattered across the world. But Hilary has also found time, among these and other tasks, to write an impressive series of scientific papers, and an excellent monograph on bee-eaters, all the while carrying out his professorial duties.

Hilary, to whom WAOS already owes so much, has now agreed to bring his experience and dynamism back to our aid. We greatly value his return, and thank him for coming back.

Council

### Bienvenue à C. Hilary Fry, Vice-Président

De nouveau, bienvenue à Hilary car c'est la troisième fois qu'il revient exercer une fonction dans la Société. Il fut d'abord rédacteur du *Bulletin of the Nigerian*