

News & Comment — Nouvelles & Commentaires

The Pan-African Ornithological Congress (PAOC)

The 14th PAOC will take place this year in Dakar, Senegal, 16–21 October, with the theme “Global changes — threats and opportunities for birds”. The PAOC is an organisation of professional and dedicated amateur ornithologists, which aims to promote the further study, conservation and appreciation of African birds, and disseminate information on African birds through congresses and their published proceedings. Congresses usually take place every four years, the first one being held in Livingstone, Zambia in 1957 and the most recent one in Arusha, Tanzania in 2012. PAOC14 will be the first congress to take place in a francophone country of West Africa.

Africa was the first continent to have its own “continental” ornithological congress, and the PAOC has played an important role in the development of ornithology in Africa. Of significance is its role in promoting African ornithologists and providing a forum for graduates and others to present their findings to an international audience.

The PAOC usually comprises a mix of plenary presentations and parallel symposia as well as a full day of field excursions. The technical sessions of PAOC14 will take place 17–21 October, split by a day of field visits to various sites within reasonable distance of Dakar. The congress venue is the Ngor Diarama Hotel, which, situated on the Cap Vert Peninsula, offers its own interest for ornithologists, with views out to the Ile de Ngor and the Atlantic Ocean.

Presentations at the PAOC can be made in French or English, and efforts are being made to ensure that at least some sessions will benefit from simultaneous translation. Abstracts and eventual papers may also be submitted in either French or English. Further information about the congress and submission of abstracts and registration are available at <www.paoc-africa.org>.

WAOS plans to have a stall at PAOC14 and to promote its journal *Malimbus*. We hope that a number of WAOS members will participate in the congress and that we can also boost our membership at this important event, especially given that it will take place in West Africa for the first time in 20 years.

Tim Dodman