



ETHIOPIAN WILDLIFE & NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY

GOLDEN JUBILEE ANNIVERSARY ISSUE



1966 — 2016

August, 2017



FIFTY YEARS OF DEDICATION TO CONSERVATION

Birth of EWNHS

On 21 June 1966, a group of keen environmentalists and advocates of sustainable use of natural resources, most of whom were expatriates, formed the nucleus for what is to be the first indigenous environmental NGO in Ethiopia. The Ethiopian Wildlife and Natural History Society (EWNHS), which was initially conceived as a Social Club, was evolved into a non-governmental, not-for-profit and non-religious, membership based indigenous environmental NGO in September 1966, in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. The 32 founding members selected and formed a Caretaker Committee of 10 individuals, namely, Miss P. Allen, Dr. Birhane Teoume-Lessane, Brother Alfred Kinzing, Mr. P. Walshe, Mr. J. M. Dobson, Dr. F.P. Lisowski, Mr. St. Mandalidis, Mr. J.H.C.Talbot, Major Gizaw G/ Giorgis and Mr. Alan E. King from among its ranks.

Gradually, the number of members grew to 71, out of which the Ethiopian nationals were only 4. One might ask as to why the majority of the members are expatriates. It has not been possible to come across historical documents, which substantiate why so many expatriates happened to be in the fore-front of such an initiative. On the other hand, this of course may not be accidental. The fact that the initiators went as far as succeeding to win the heart and mind of the Emperor as the Society's patron could be an evidence in itself that some of the expatriate members in the Caretaker Committee had easy access to the Imperial Court in connection with some important mission in the country. In that respect, they also obviously had the opportunity to visit some parts of the country and must have been amazed by the natural beauty of the country and the potential threats ahead. On the other hand, although the environmental agenda was a low key affair in the 60s in Ethiopia, it was still better understood in the western world where most of the Caretaker Committee members came from. Hence, while the few Ethiopians did play crucial roles, due credit should be given to our expatriate friends for their initiative that eventually led to the establishment of EWNHS.

Considerable efforts were made to gear the Society towards a more focused nature conservation endeavours. In this respect a sterling effort was made in the late 1970s, by Professor Shibru Tedla the then Head of Research and Publication of Addis Ababa University

(AAU), and Lecturers of the Biology Department (AAU). Their key activities include among others, strengthening the Executive Committee, revising the Society's areas of operation, and establishing a Secretariat which is entrusted with the responsibility of fulfilling its vision and mission. Accordingly, the Executive Committee led by Professor Shibru Tedla, in consultation with AAU, opened the Society's Office in a building near the former Kara Marra Hotel on Bole road, in 1993.

From its establishment in 1966 until it was reorganized and structured at secretariat level in 1993, the Society was run by an Executive Committee consisting of ten members, for about 26 years. Meetings were held at residences of members who volunteered to host. Although there were challenges, the commitment of members to sustain the Society had always prevailed. Four years after it was legally registered, Executive Committee members, particularly Dr. Birhane Teumelisan Co-director of the National Laboratory & Research Institute and V/President of the Society made a passionate appeal to His Majesty Emperor Haileselassie to be the Society's patron. And in November 1968 the Society was accorded the honour and privilege of His Majesty's patronage. The Emperor's guidance was immediate. Besides financial support, His Majesty gave a directive to change the Society's name from "*Ethiopian Natural History Society*" to "*Ethiopian Wildlife and Natural History Society*", to indicate the importance of wildlife conservation. The Emperor's passion for conservation was reflected in his speech, when he received the Society's Executive Committee members. The following is an excerpt from the speech:

"The protection of Ethiopia's animals and plants in their natural habitats is not motivated only by sheer concern and passion for their beauty; but is rather an effort aimed at conserving and taking care of the country's heritage for the next generation."

We are celebrating this anniversary without the founding members, who have either passed away long ago, or are too frail to join us. One of the founding members, Mr. Alan E. King who lives in Adelaide, Australia, is still supporting EWNHS to this date. The Ethiopian Wildlife and Natural History Society is heavily indebted to him, and as such, his unparalleled support to the Society should be acknowledged.

With this short prelude, it is important to underline that without the initial initiative and voluntary commitment of the Caretaker Committee, who single handedly tackled the obstacle on the way, EWNHS may not be what it is today, or might not have even been in existence. We must always remember the wonderful job they did, and work hard to fulfill their wishes.

Achievements

The establishment of EWNHS by the founding members is in itself a great achievement. For a long time the Society's activities were confined to indoor functions such as panel discussions on salient environmental issues, presented by professionals; and outdoor excursions to natural and historical sites. Besides indoor/outdoor activities, the publication of *Walia*, a quasi-scientific journal, which featured important environmental topics, was an achievement worth mentioning. All these activities were run voluntarily by members.

In course of time, however, it became evident that the volume of activities and the recognition the Society accorded both nationally and internationally became too demanding to be handled by volunteers alone. Hence, it became imperative to establish a permanent Secretariat, and hire fulltime staffs (currently 15) who work in collaboration with the volunteers. With subsequent transformation, the Caretaker Committee was institutionalized evolving EWNHS into an officially registered Indigenous Non-state Environmental Society, with a permanent Secretariat and salaried staff, in September 1993.

Depending on situations and financial availability, the Ethiopian Wildlife and Natural History Society carry out its activities in different parts of the country in collaboration with government organizations and other partners. The Society has forged a strong working relationship with a number of government ministries and agencies. Some of our partners include among others, Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change; Ministry of Agriculture and Natural Resources; Ethiopian Wildlife Conservation Authority; Ethiopian Biodiversity Institute; Oromia Forest and Wildlife Conservation Enterprise; Addis Ababa University, Biology Department; Horn of Africa Regional Environmental Center and Network; Population, Health and Environment Consortium Ethiopia (PHE); Regional Bureaus of Agriculture; Schools; and Community Organizations.

The achievements of EWNHS have been growing with its transformation into a permanent Secretariat, and clearly defined programme areas, namely, *Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conservation, Environmental Education, Awareness Raising and Community Outreach*; and *Monitoring and Research*. Currently, the Society is run by voluntarily serving Board of Management of seven members. The Board of Management is selected from among members at the Annual General Meeting, every four years. While the Board focuses on policy issues, the day to day activities are carried out by salaried staff headed by Executive Director. The Executive Director is at the same time a non-voting Board member, serving as its secretary.

The following are some of the achievements of EWNHS since 1993:

- EWNHS pioneered the celebration of World Environment Day (WED) with school Nature Clubs, following the decision of United Nations Conference for Environment and Development in Rio de Janeiro in 1992;
- Pioneered in promoting Environmental Education within Ethiopia, working through Nature Clubs established in over 400 Elementary & Secondary Schools, Teacher Training Colleges and Communities distributed throughout the country. It has organized 21 Regional Environmental Education Workshops for 345 Teachers and other experts;
- Published over 40 assorted thematic environmental support publications, including brochures, posters, factsheets, resource materials, club guides, booklets, books and magazines to various target audiences;
- Promoted the transfer of environmental knowledge and awareness via two of its publications, "*WALIA*", a quasi scientific journal, and "*AGAZEN*", which features short reading materials on environment for students and the youth;
- Conducted an intensive assessment and identified 69 key sites within Ethiopia that are extremely important for conservation of endemic and threatened birds and other taxa, and published a book on the Important Bird Areas (IBAs) of Ethiopia, a first inventory of its kind in Africa;
- Served as *spring board* for establishment of quite a number of successful conservation institutions in Ethiopia, as some Executive Directors and key staff

members of these institutions used to be Members of School Nature Clubs established by EWNHS in the past;

- Raised and distributed over 3.5 million seedlings of assorted indigenous and exotic plant species to be planted in school and sacred grounds, and highly degraded landscapes;
- Played decisive roles in improving the conservation status of the White-winged Flufftail, a globally Endangered bird species, by conserving its paloustrine wetland habitat, using the Site Support Group (SSG) at Berga IBA site as entry point to the wider community and local government stakeholders;
- Carried out intensive monitoring at 23 selected Wetlands that are Important as feeding and resting stages for migratory bird species for 12 years in the row, as integral part of African Waterfowl Census scheme;
- As a member of BirdLife International, championed in taking the leading role in conservation and research of endemic and threatened birds of Ethiopia, including Northern Bald Ibis, White-winged Flufftail, Liben Lark, Abyssinian Bush-crow, White-tailed Swallow, Prince Ruspoli's **Turaco**, etc. In the research front, 2 MSc and 2 PhD studies were facilitated;
- Developed quite a number of Management Action Plans for Conservation of threatened bird Species — White-winged Flufftail, Liben Lark, etc.;
- Carried out Rapid Biodiversity Assessment at 24 Churches & 15 Monasteries to investigate species richness. To that effect, 223 indigenous woody plants have been identified and recorded, of which 120 species have been found to be used by local people for different purposes. Forest Management Plan was also developed for 5 Churches and Monasteries;
- As part of promoting Indigenous Knowledge, it has been possible to identify 544 sacred sites in the Gamo Highlands of south Ethiopia, of which 100 were Sacred Forests, both natural sites and burial cemeteries that have been designated by local communities as conservation entities; and
- Successfully implemented several Complex and Multi-dimensional Projects that involved stakeholders of different perspectives, including Global Environment Facility (GEF) IBA Project, Migratory Soaring Birds (MSB) Project, Royal

Netherlands Embassy (RNE) Project, Ethiopian Sustainable Tourism Alliance (ESTA) Project, Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund (CEPF) Project, etc.

While the achievements stated above speak for themselves, it is important to underline that EWNHS is more importantly proud of pioneering Environmental Education and Awareness-raising programmes in hundreds of elementary and secondary schools. Nothing is more rewarding in conservation, other than winning the hearts and minds of thousands of youngsters to live in harmony with their environment. Indeed, the environmental education activities initiated by EWNHS in few schools have further flourished with the establishment of nature clubs in hundreds of schools throughout the country.

Although EWNHS has made commendable achievements over the years, there should not be room for complacency, be it on the part of EWNHS or any other conservation organization for that matter, as we have still a long way to go and multifaceted challenges to resolve.

Partnership, Establishment of Local Conservation Groups and Net-working

During 50 years of its existence, the Ethiopian Wildlife and Natural history Society has worked in collaboration with a number of foreign partners, implementing projects and sharing information and experiences on conservation. Foreign partners which have been supporting the Society include among others, European Union; GEF-UNDP; British Embassy; French Embassy; Finland Embassy; Royal Netherlands Embassy; Belgium Embassy; Swedish International Development Authority (Sida); Canada International Development Authority (CIDA); Finland International Development Agency (FINNIDA); Norwegian Agricultural Development Agency; Maurice Laing Foundation; Walt Disney Company Foundation; Disney Wildlife Conservation Foundation; Middelpunt Wetland Trust; IUCN-EARO; DFID; Christensen Fund; US Fish and Wildlife Service; US Forest Service; Counterpart International; Conservation International; Family Health International (FHI360); Birdlife International; Norwegian Ornithological Society (NOF); Finish Ornithological Society (SOUMI); Spanish Agency for International Development & Cooperation (AECID); Royal Society for Protection of Birds (RSPB); Naturschutzbund Deutschland (NABU); Tree Aid UK;

Trees for Cities; British Birdfair; Critical Ecosystems Partnership Fund (CEPF); Darwin Initiative; and Wetlands International.

The Ethiopian Wildlife and Natural History Society has also been working in collaboration with local partners. The Society is among the front-runners in creating Local Conservation Groups (LCGs), grass-root conservation partners, which have been playing supportive roles in nature conservation. The Berga SSG/LCG in West Shewa Zone and the Abijata Shalla Environmental Degradation Mitigating Group in West Arsi Zone (Central Rift Valley) are such LCGs, which are active in biodiversity monitoring and conservation in their respective localities.

The Society has also been active in networking with like-minded conservation organizations. Some of the network members include BirdLife International Secretariat; Albertine Rift Conservation Society (ARCOS); Mountain Partnership Forum; Wetlands International; Middelpunt Wetland Trust; Horn of Africa Regional Environment Centre & Network; and PHE Consortium Ethiopia.

The Ethiopian Wildlife and Natural History Society is one of the few known sources of information on birds and wildlife studies. Because of this, the Society is often selected to serve as a member of various committees and task forces on environmental matters. Nile Basin Initiative; National Flower Alliance; Central Rift Valley Working Group; Sheka Forest Alliance Advocacy Group; National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP) Technical Team and Man and Biosphere National Task Force are some of the main committees and task forces to which EWNHS is/has been a member.

EWNHS is the only NGO that is working on the study of birds in Ethiopia. In connection with this, the knowledge and awareness about birds in Ethiopia has progressed significantly. Through the IBA programme, the Society has indicated its concerns and the necessary precautionary measures to be taken in all the 69 IBAs in the country.

Acknowledgements

At this point in time of celebrating the 50th year anniversary of the Ethiopian Wildlife and Natural History Society (EWNHS), it would be proper to recognize the contributions of various individuals and institutions. At the outset, we would like to extend our utmost appreciation and sincere thanks to the founding members and Caretaker Committee Members who have been instrumental for the very survival of the Society. Moreover, we cannot express enough thanks to Mr. Alan E. King who has inspired the nucleus idea that led to the establishment of a non-state conservation institution in Ethiopia, the current EWNHS. He has also been the chairperson of the Board of Management for many years.

We are hugely grateful and indebted to the past and active Board of Management Members of the Society for investing their own financial resources and sacrificing their precious time on voluntary basis. Underpinned by members, like-minded partners, dedicated employees and volunteers, Board Members built the profile of the Society and guided it to the stage where it is now. Nobody has been more important to EWNHS in the pursuit of its objectives and activities than the Board Members, without whose genuine guidance the Society would have not been what it is now.

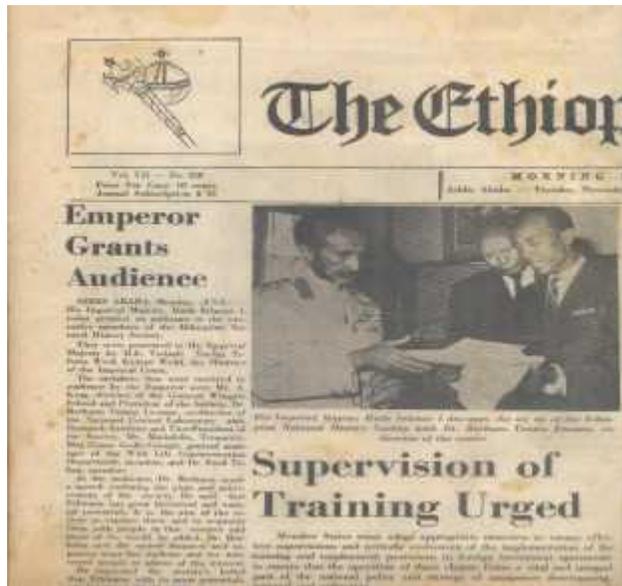
Protection of environment, conservation of biodiversity and ensuring of improved livelihoods of communities is absolutely the mandate of Government. Civil society organizations are there to assist government and fill gaps. For any civil society organization, like EWNHS, to be successful on the ground and discharge its responsibility, the good will of Government and acceptance by communities/beneficiaries is extremely crucial. EWNHS is deeply indebted to the Government in general and the line ministries in particular for their good will, provision of working environment and support. Our deep appreciation goes out also to the local communities/beneficiaries for consenting to our objectives and partnering with us.

We would like to express our deep and sincere gratitude to development partners, without whose financial support and technical backstopping, the existence of the Society for 50 years would not have been realized. They are too many to enumerate here from

individuals to trusts & foundations, embassies to Governments and from International NGOs to International Development Agencies. We gratefully acknowledge the funding kindly granted to us thus far and look forward for future collaborative partnerships.

Finally, yet importantly, we owe a huge debt of appreciation to BirdLife International Secretariat (and its members) for the support they extend to the Society in terms of fundraising, image building and all-rounded technical capacity building. A special and profound gratitude goes to NABU, BirdLife Partner in Germany, for extending institutional support to EWNHS as non-restricted funds for meeting core activities of the Society, while at the same time becoming an example of north-south collaboration between BirdLife partners.

A SHORT PICTORIAL REVIEW OF EWNHS



H.I.M Haile Selassie I was very supportive of the Society



Prof. Shibur Tedla played a leading role in institutionalizing EWNHS



Mr. and Ms. Alan King seen here are life time supporter of the Society

Conservation Out-reach Programme Activities



EWNHS is a pioneer organization in the celebration of World Environment Day (WED) & other Environment events



Awareness raising about nature conservation is an important programme area of EWNHS

Conservation Activities



Rehabilitation of fragile eco-system around Abijata Shalla NP & Liben Woreda Guji Zone



EWNHS Conservation efforts are showing a difference



A few endangered bird species of Ethiopia whose conservation EWNHS has prioritized

*Prince Ruspoli's
Turaco*



*White tailed
swallow*



Liben Lark

Social Services and Livelihoods improvement Activities



Clean Water for Schools, Project Beneficiaries, and Livestock



EWNHS has supported schools to improve the teaching learning environment by constructing & repairing dilapidated class room buildings - Bufata Arjo Elementary School, Central Rift Valley (West Arsi Zone)





Community Conservation Groups have benefited their members through income generation activities



EWNHS has successfully promoted temperate fruit trees in Addis Ababa



EWNHS Membership Registration Form

I. Personal details

1. Dr/ Mr/Mrs/Ms: _____ 2. Full Name: _____ 3. Sex (M/F) : _____ 4. Date of Birth (d-m-y)*: _____ 5. Place of Birth* : _____ 6. Nationality: _____ 7. Qualification (Dip, BA, MA, BSc, MSc, etc.): _____
8. Field of Study: _____ 9. Occupation: _____ 10. Organization: _____
11. Position: _____.

II. Contact Address

12. Country: _____ 13. State: _____ 14. City/Town: _____ 15. Subcity: _____ 16. Kebele: _____ 17. H. No*: _____ 18. P. O. Box: _____ 19. Tel (Office): _____ 20. Tel (Home): _____
21. Mobile: _____ 22. Fax: _____ 23. E-Mail: _____ 24. Website: _____

* Optional

III. Membership Category

Please tick the membership category that most suits you:

Membership Category	Subscription Fee
1. Ordinary Member	Birr60.00 <input type="checkbox"/>
2. Family Member (Ethiopians)	Birr125.00 <input type="checkbox"/>
3. Elementary School Students (Grades 1-6)	Birr5.00 <input type="checkbox"/>
4. Secondary School Students (Grd 7-12)	Birr10.00 <input type="checkbox"/>
5. Colleges and University Students	Birr15.00 <input type="checkbox"/>
6. Nature/Wildlife Clubs, Schools & CBO	Birr45.00 <input type="checkbox"/>
7. Institutions (NGOs, GOs, Colle. & Univ.)	Birr100.00 <input type="checkbox"/>
8. Corporate members (profit making org)	Birr500.00 <input type="checkbox"/>
9. Supporting Members (Resident Expatriates & Ethiopians by Birth)	US\$20.00 <input type="checkbox"/>
11. Life Members (Resident Ethiopians)	Birr1500.00 <input type="checkbox"/>
12. Life Members (Resident Expatriates)	Birr2500.00 <input type="checkbox"/>

IV. For Membership Categories No. 6-8 only:

I, the undersigned, confirm my Institution's interest and commitment to be a member of the Ethiopian Wildlife and Natural History Society and pledge to fulfill the membership requirements, including the payment of the annual membership fee.

Membership authorized by

Position _____ Signature _____

V. Mode of Payment for all Membership Categories

I wish to pay:

1. by cash on the date of the General Annual Meetings
2. directly at the EWNHS Office
3. by cash to a collector assigned by EWNHS

4. as bank transfer to the dedicated bank account of EWNHS
5. as postal money order

Date of Application: _____

Signature: _____

(For Membership Categories other than 6, 7 and 8)

Please tear off and return the completed form to the EWNHS Secretariat in person, the scanned copy by E-mail (ewnhs.ble@ethionet.et) or by post (EWNHS, P. O. Box 13303, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia).

