



# special issues OF *OSTRICH* in memory of Phil Hockey

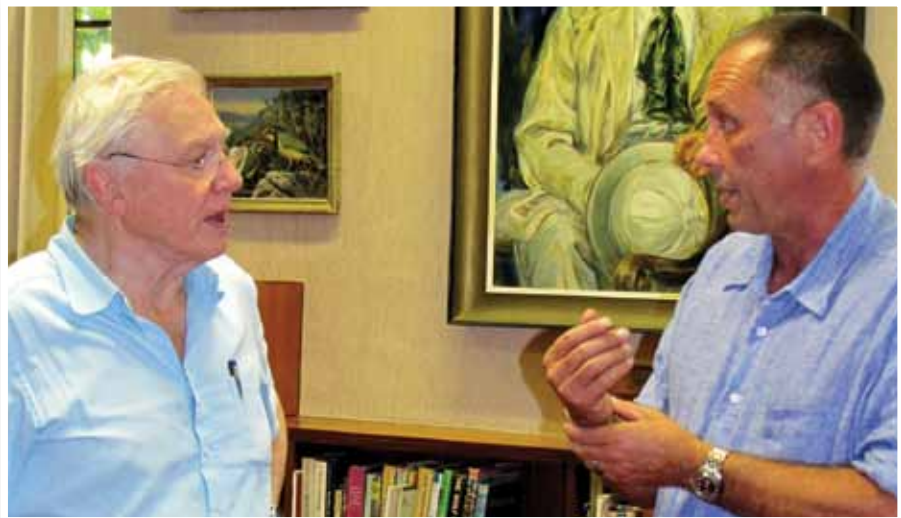
In recognition of his significant contributions to African ornithology, the editors of the scientific publication *Ostrich* have dedicated Volume 86(1 & 2) to Phil Hockey.

Phil Hockey was awarded his PhD from the University of Cape Town in 1983 for a study of the ecology of the African Black Oystercatcher. His subsequent research focused on coastal and estuarine bird ecology, bird migration, avian life history evolution, the ecology of rarity with the aim of promoting conservation strategies, and analysing and predicting avian responses to climate change.

His work on shorebirds earned him recognition as an authority on African waders and in 1995 he published the monograph *Waders of Southern Africa*. He was a co-author of the best-selling regional field guide series, *Sasol Birds of Southern Africa*, and was editor-in-chief, together with Richard Dean and Peter Ryan, of the seventh edition of *Roberts Birds of Southern Africa*. In 2000, Phil was named Marine and Coastal Communicator of the Year by the South African Network for Coastal and Oceanic Research and the directorate of Marine and Coastal Management. In 2008, he was awarded the Stevenson-Hamilton Medal by the Zoological Society of Southern Africa for contributions to the public awareness of science.

## Commemorative issue

The respect for Phil's contributions to ornithology attracted 20 papers for these special issues, with 12 including him as a co-author. There are eight papers on coastal bird ecology, four on avian life history evolution and habitat dynamics, three investigating avian responses to climate change, three on waterbird movements, one on the population metrics of fynbos birds, and a final note on the discovery of a breeding population of Blue Petrels on Gough Island.



CHRIS TOBLER

The first five shorebird papers focus on the African Black Oystercatcher, the species on which Phil led a research programme for more than 25 years and, fittingly, the *Ostrich* cover image for 2015. These papers bring this chapter of a long-term single-species study to a close. It has seen the species downlisted from Near-Threatened in 1994 to being removed from the *Red Data Book of Birds of South Africa, Lesotho and Swaziland* in 2015.

Three papers on avian responses to climate change deal with behavioural buffers, fine-scale patterns of habitat use, and the impacts on foraging behaviour and body condition. These papers emanate from the research programme which Phil developed with Andrew McKechnie during 2009 and which now has projects in the Kalahari Desert of southern Africa, the Sonoran Desert of North America, and deserts of Western and South Australia. Three papers on the temporal abundance and movements

of waterbirds include an investigation into the fluctuation of bird numbers at sewage treatment ponds in an arid environment in South Africa, a review of the implications of waterfowl movement ecology for conservation and disease transmission, and insights into the challenges of monitoring mobile waterbird populations from studies in southern Africa.

Abstracts of the papers in these issues of *Ostrich* can be viewed at [www.tandfonline.com/toc/tost20/current](http://www.tandfonline.com/toc/tost20/current)

DR ROB M. LITTLE

Reference: Little, R.M. and Ryan, P.G. 2013. 'Obituary: Philip Anthony Richard Hockey – "Education is what is left when what has been learnt has been forgotten" (8 March 1956 – 24 January 2013)'. *Ostrich* 84(1): v.