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APLORI

WEST AFRICA'S FOREMOST ORNITHOLOGICAL RESEARCH CENTRE

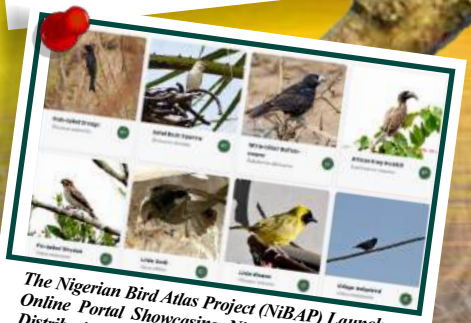
Newsletter

Vol. 12/ December, 2025

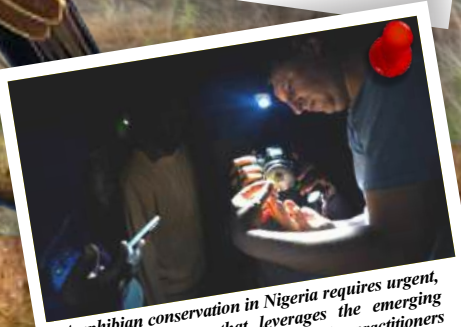
Published Research

Research indicates that Well-planned urban landscapes are essential to sustaining both human livelihoods and biodiversity.

9th Leventis Lecture: Expert Calls for Community -Led Solutions in Nigeria's National Parks.



The Nigerian Bird Atlas Project (NiBAP) Launches Online Portal Showcasing Nigeria's Bird Species Distribution



Amphibian conservation in Nigeria requires urgent, coordinated action that leverages the emerging community of skilled and collaborative practitioners to deliver measurable recovery outcomes. -Prof. Borzée.

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FRONT COVER: Adamawa Turtle Dove -*Streptopelia hypopyrrha* (John Onah)

Director's Desk

We feel highly fulfilled for not missing a single edition of our Newsletters for the year 2025. The current edition is the last one for the year. It is highly packed with interesting articles and developments around our Institution in the last quarter of the year. It provides very interesting and educational articles.

As the year closes, may I use this opportunity to most sincerely thank our benefactor, Mr Anastasios Paul Leventis, who has kept every activity at APLORI going because of his very generous funding through the Leventis Foundation Nigeria. We also appreciate the Vice Chancellor of the University of Jos, Prof. Ishaya Tanko, all Principal Officers, and the Management Team at the University of Jos, who have facilitated our academic programmes as well as our dedicated team of Lecturers and resident staff. Our sincere gratitude also goes to our great Board Chairman Philip Hall OBE and Members of the APLORI Management Board who have provided very valuable advice and direction that made our year highly successful.

We wish you a great holiday season and look forward to a more productive 2026!

Prof. Adams A. Chaskda
Director, APLORI

Editor's Note

This quarter's newsletter, the final issue for the year 2025, highlights our fieldwork and research, alongside key activities across the institute. Notable in this edition is the **9th Leventis Lecture**, held on **November 13, 2025**, which served as a solemn reminder that conservation must be holistic: government, NGOs, and communities must work together to confront the unseen threat that unaddressed climate change poses to our shared world. The message was reinforced by T**unde Morakinyo, Chief Executive Officer of ANI**, who spoke on **"Bringing Nature and People Back to Life — Gashaka-Gumti and Okomu National Parks in Perspective."**

This edition also celebrates special recognitions and awards earned by the Director, APLORI Professor Adams Chaskda. and several researchers who continue to raise the institute's profile on the global stage. Enjoy the read as you learn and relearn how we must all work together to make the Earth a beautiful home where everyone can thrive.

Nanlep Kumle
Senior Communications Officer,
A.P. Leventis Ornithological Research Institute, Centre of Excellence.

CONTENT

Bird On Front Page Series: Amurum Forest Reserve Bird Species 3
Adamawa Turtle Dove -Streptopelia hypopyrrha

Adamawa Turtle Dove
Order: Columbiformes
Family: Columbidae
Name (Scientific name): *(Streptopelia hypopyrrha)*

One may be quick to assume that the Adamawa Turtle Dove is a bird species occurring only in Adamawa State, one of the 19 northern states in the northeast of Nigeria, but that is further from the truth, as this dove species also occurs in the Amurum Forest Reserve, Plateau State, north-central Nigeria, and other areas within the country. However, the term "Adamawa" in the species name originates from the Adamawa Plateau, the region where the species was first documented (MyBirdbuddy.com). In the Amurum Forest Reserve, where APLORI is located, the species has been recorded across all three major habitat types present in the reserve, namely, rocky outcrops, woodland areas, and riparian zones. It is frequently seen perched at the top of dried tree branches, where it gives soft, gentle calls with a distinctive "cloor-cloor-clor" or purring "rrrurrr rr-rrurr" which is similar to the European Turtle Dove but sharper and deeper (Brouwer, 2003; Borrow and Demey, 2004; Baptista et al., 2020). Its presence across the three major habitats within the reserve suggests that it is an adaptable species able to use both open and wooded environments.

This geographic association reflects its broader distribution across parts of West and Central Africa, particularly areas of woodland, savanna, and forest edges. In addition to its ecological presence, the Adamawa Turtle Dove has been recorded in wildlife trade assessments, though at a very low prevalence. It appeared in only one of the seven major trade datasets analyzed by Donald et al. (2024), indicating that while the species is sometimes traded, it is not currently considered a major target of commercial exploitation.

Plate 1: An image of Adamawa Turtle Dove inside the Amurum Forest Reserve.

Field Identification

The Adamawa Turtle Dove is a large-sized dove from the family Columbidae. Adults have a dark-turtle coloured appearance with a blue-grey head down to the upper breast area and a broad black neck patch that extends to both sides of the neck. It has scale-like edges on its wings (Borrow and Demey, 2004; Baptista et al., 2020). The iris has an inner ring that is pink or orange and an outer ring that is dark; the skin around the eye is dark red, the bill is black, and the legs are purplish-black (Baptista et al., 2020). The female is generally paler and less brightly colored than the male. Juveniles are also paler, with an overall ashy-brown body (Gibbs et al., 2001).

Habitat, Range, and Status

They are resident species that do not migrate. The plateau's diverse terrain, with its mix of savanna and forest, provides ideal conditions for these birds. These birds prefer open woodland, especially in rocky and hilly areas (Borrow & Demey, 2004). Records from the Nigerian Bird Atlas Project (NIBAP) shows they have a wide distribution stretching from concentrated occurrences in the North Central region to fewer, more scattered records in the Northeast. They are common on the Jos Plateau, frequent in Falgore Game Reserve, but less common farther south, such as in Nindam Forest Reserve, a few have also been recorded around Kaduna, Kari, and Potiskum (Baptista et al., 2020). The species has a very large overall range, so it does not meet the criteria for being listed as Vulnerable, which includes having a range smaller than 20,000 km^2 along with declining habitat or population. Because its range is still extensive, the Adamawa Turtle Dove is currently classified as Least Concern based on the most recent assessment for The IUCN Red List of Threatened Species in 2024 (IUCN, 2024; BirdLife International, 2024).

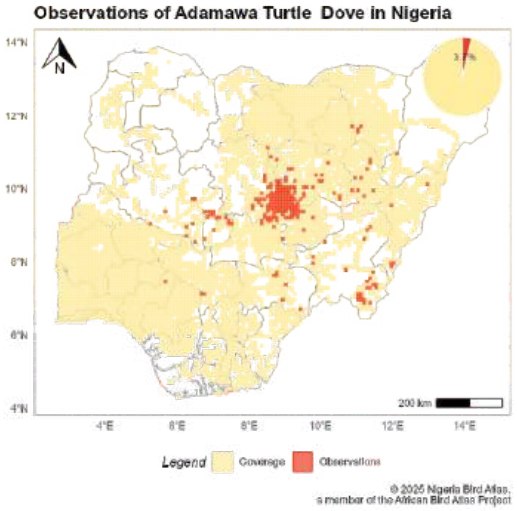

Figure 1: Distribution of the Adamawa Turtle Dove in Nigeria from the NiBAP database.

Feeding Behaviour and Breeding Biology of the Adamawa Turtle Dove

The Adamawa Turtle Dove feeds mainly on seeds. Like many other doves, it eats seeds from grasses, wild plants, farms, and other seed-producing vegetation (Baptista et al., 2020). Breeding usually occurs toward the end of the dry season, with eggs recorded from August to March in North-Central Nigeria and at similar times in northern Cameroon. When food availability and dry ground conditions support successful nesting and end as the early rains begin (Gibbs et al., 2001; Lapois, 2001; Carvalho & Dias, 2006; Baptista et al., 2020).

During courtship, the male performs a display flight, flying upward with rapid wingbeats and then gliding down slowly - a typical behaviour among doves (Baptista et al., 2020). The nest is a simple, loosely built platform of twigs placed in trees or tall shrubs. The clutch size is small, usually consisting of two white eggs (Urban et al., 1986; Gibbs et al., 2001).

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John Onah and Prof. Adams A. Chaskda

1

Ninth Leventis Lecture: Reviving Nature and Reconnecting Communities

The ninth edition of the Leventis Lecture convened scholars, conservationists, policymakers, and local leaders to celebrate the life and legacy of Dr. Anastasios P. Leventis and to highlight topical conservation challenges or progresses locally or globally. Organized by the A.P. Leventis Ornithological Research Institute (APLORI) Centre of Excellence, University of Jos, the annual forum offered a timely platform for evidence-driven dialogue on restoring ecosystems and rebuilding the human–nature relationship.

Founded in 2002, APLORI has grown into West Africa's leading institute for ornithological research, training, and conservation leadership. The institute stands as one of Dr. Anastasios P. Leventis' proudest achievements: a living testament to his sustained investment in people, science, and landscapes. Through scholarships, mentorship, and field programmes, APLORI has nurtured a generation of researchers and practitioners who now shape conservation work across the region.

"Bringing Nature and People Back to Life – Gashaka Gumti and Okomu National Parks" framed the 9th lecture which focused on two of Nigeria's important protected areas. The theme emphasized that ecological recovery requires both technical restoration and renewed social connection: restoring habitats, restoring species, and rebuilding meaningful livelihoods and cultural ties that anchor communities to their landscapes.

Keynote speaker, Tunde Morakinyo underscored the central role national parks play in biodiversity preservation and climate resilience. He called for coordinated action among government agencies, research institutions, and local communities to ensure parks like Gashaka Gumti and Okomu are managed for long-term ecological integrity and shared socio-economic benefit. Morakinyo highlighted:

- The need for science-led restoration plans that integrate local knowledge,
- Strategies to reduce human–wildlife conflict while maintaining livelihoods,
- Partnerships that channel tourism and conservation revenues back into community development.

Tunde Morakinyo
Keynote speaker, 9th Leventis Lecture

The Vice Chancellor, University of Jos, Prof. Ishaya Tanko who was represented by the Deputy Vice Chancellor Academics, Prof. Rahila Gowon reaffirmed the University's commitment to research and community engagement that supports positive conservation outcomes. APLORI founder Dr. Anastasios Leventis reiterated conservation as both a moral duty and a scientific imperative for present and future generations. The Plateau State Commissioner for Tourism, Culture, and Hospitality Hon. Cornelius D. Deoyok praised APLORI's role in ecological recovery and sustainable tourism, noting that well-managed nature reserves can become engines of local prosperity and pride.

Special Guest of Honour
Hon. Cornelius D. Deoyok
Commissioner for Tourism, Culture, and Hospitality

Speakers and attendees repeatedly emphasized practical next steps: accelerating restoration of degraded ecosystems, strengthening community stewardship programmes, scaling up monitoring and research, and deepening cross-sector partnerships that align conservation goals with local development needs.

Professor Rahila Gowon
Deputy Vice Chancellor Academic, University of Jos

There was consensus that reviving parks is not only an ecological task but also a social project that demands inclusive planning and sustained investment.

The Ninth Leventis Lecture renewed a simple but powerful message: protecting nature and strengthening human communities are inseparable goals. As APLORI and its partners continue to train leaders and produce evidence for action, the path to restored parks and resilient societies depends on collaboration, long-term commitment, and the kind of stewardship Dr. Leventis has inspired.

2

University of Jos and APLORI Team Pay Courtesy Call on The Plateau State Government.

The University of Jos and the A.P. Leventis Ornithological Research Institute (APLORI), Centre of Excellence team paid a courtesy visit to the Plateau State Government. The team which was led by the Deputy Vice Chancellor Academic, Professor Rahila Gowon who represented the Vice Chancellor (Prof. Tanko Ishaya) had the APLORI Founder and Funder Dr. Anastasios Paul Leventis, APLORI Board Chairman, Philip Hall OBE, Louisa Agathi Leventis, Head, Leventis Foundation UK, Board Chairman Leventis Foundation Nigeria (LFN), Alhaji Ahmed Mantey, Executive Director, LFN, Dr. Hope Usieta, Director APLORI, Prof. Adams A. Chaskda and the Deputy Director APLORI Dr. Talatu Tende.

Also on the team were the Guest Speaker of the 9th Leventis Lectures Tunde Morakinyo who is the Executive Director Africa Nature Investors (ANI), the Country Manager ANI, Nacha Geofrey,the representative of the Nigerian Conservation Foundation, NCF, Dr. Stella Egbe. On the entourage We're also senior lecturers from APLORI -Professor Filibus Dami, Professor Shiiwua Manu and Dr. Ulf Ottosson.

The team appreciated the support and positive policies of the Plateau State Government to the environmental sector and also stressed the ecological and scientific value of the Amurum Forest Reserve where APLORI is located. These include its role in biodiversity conservation, capacity building for the conservation industry, carbon sequestration (earning carbon credit) for the Jos environment and the general aesthetics of the Plateau landscape.

In terms of the avian richness of the area, the team pointed out that Amurum Forest Reserve hosts over 350 bird species representing one third of the total bird species in Nigeria which also include a number of endemic and threatened bird and plant species. For these reasons, the team solicited for the official recognition of the site and necessary legislative protection by the State Government to ensure its conservation for the benefit of generations to come.

Deputy Governor, Josephine Piyo welcomed the visitors and acknowledged APLORI's positive contributions to the state. She commends Dr. Anastasios Paul Leventis for his leadership and vision and affirmed the government's interest in partnering with organisations that positively impact lives and advance conservation.

On the specific request to gazette the Amurum Forest, the Deputy Governor said the governor is passionate about developments that advance the well-being of Plateau citizens and their environment and urged the University of Jos to bring forward the proposal for consideration by the government.

3

APLORI Commissions PhD Conservation Biology Students' Hostel

The A. P. Leventis Ornithological Research Institute (APLORI) has commissioned a new PhD Conservation Biology Students' Hostel designed to provide a conducive environment for advanced research and learning.

The commissioning took place during the 9th Leventis Lecture on Thursday, November 2025. The facility was officially opened by Louisa Agathi Leventis, Head of the Leventis Foundation UK. She was joined by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academics) of the University of Jos, Professor Rahila Gowon who represented the Vice Chancellor of the University of Jos, Prof. Tanko Ishaya.

Speaking at the event, Professor Adams Chaskda, Director of APLORI, noted that the project was born out of the need to provide students with a befitting environment to encourage better research output. He emphasized that APLORI, Centre of Excellence, is committed to providing the best facilities for Conservation training in Africa and continue to develop manpower for the conservation industry.

Representing the PhD students, Panshak Solomon expressed gratitude to Leventis Foundation, pledging that the students would strive for excellence as a way of honouring the generosity extended to them. He highlighted the impact of Anastasios Paul Leventis' philanthropy, which has already benefited over 200 graduates of the Institute.

The new hostel marks another milestone in APLORI's facility upgrades to foster cutting-edge research and nurture future leaders in conservation biology.

4 New Study Shows How Urban Green Spaces Support Bird Life in Nigerian Cities

Research article

How urban green space typologies and attributes influence avifauna in rapidly urbanizing Afrotropical cities

Panshak Solomon Kumdet [a], Grace Pam[a], Samuel Terstese Ivande[a,b], Ulf Ottosson[a], Filibus Danjuma Dani[a]

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ABSTRACT

Urban green spaces serve as critical refugia for bird conservation in an increasingly urbanized world. To understand how these spaces support avian communities in Afrotropical cities, we investigated bird assemblages across 40 urban green spaces in Jos-Plateau and Abuja-FCT in central Nigeria, covering a total of 91 transects (45.5 km), to examine how green space typologies and attributes influence avian biodiversity. We conducted bird surveys using line transects across recreational parks, wildlife parks, streetscapes, and institutional green spaces for one year. Green space attributes (vegetation and anthropogenic) were measured within quadrats along transects. We recorded 15,405 individual birds representing 146 species from 56 families. Statistical analyses revealed that wildlife parks maintained substantially greater avian species richness, abundance and diversity compared to other green space types. We found that native vegetation hosted greater bird diversity than exotic-dominated areas, while mixed vegetation showed intermediate values. Avian community metrics were positively associated with plants in flower, tree species richness and litter cover, but negatively impacted by pedestrian and vehicular count. No evidence for a significant effect of NDVI in predicting avian community composition was observed, suggesting that local vegetation structure may be more important than overall greenness. We recommended that conservation efforts and management strategies of urban green spaces in Afrotropical cities should prioritize habitat heterogeneity and implement thoughtful design that balances public access with biodiversity conservation. The clear benefits of native vegetation for avifauna also suggest that indigenous plant species should be prioritized in urban greening initiatives.

Researchers from the A. P. Leventis Ornithological Research Institute have released new findings on how different types of urban green spaces shape bird communities in North-central Nigeria. The study examined 40 green spaces across two cities, these inlude wildlife parks, institutional grounds, recreational parks and roadside vegetation. Over the course of one year, the team walked fixed routes at each site, recording every bird seen or heard. They combined these surveys with simple habitat measurements such as tree counts, shrub cover, flowering plants, pedestrian activity, and traffic levels

Across all sites, the team recorded more than 15,000 individual birds belonging to 146 species. These included resident species, migrants from elsewhere in Africa, and species that travel from Europe and Asia to winter in Nigeria. One threatened species, the Hooded Vulture, was also documented. A few urban-tolerant species, such as the Speckled Pigeon, Laughing Dove, and Common Bulbul, were especially common and made up a large portion of the records.

The results show clear differences among green space types. Wildlife parks held the greatest number of species and individuals, followed by recreational parks and institutional grounds. Streetscapes, especially those exposed to heavy traffic and foot movement, supported the fewest birds. Sites with native vegetation consistently recorded higher species richness and diversity than those dominated by exotic trees and shrubs. Areas with a mixture of native and non-native plants fell between the two.

Several local habitat features helped explain these patterns. Sites with more flowering plants, greater tree species richness, and moderate litter cover tended to support more birds. In contrast, high levels of pedestrian activity and vehicle traffic reduced both the number of birds and the variety of species present. Measures of overall greenness from satellite data did not accurately predict bird communities well, suggesting that fine-scale vegetation structure on the ground matters more than broad vegetation indices.

The study is important for urban planning in Nigeria because it provides clear evidence of how the design and management of green spaces affect the wildlife that can survive in fast-growing cities. The findings show that preserving native vegetation, maintaining a mix of trees and shrubs, and reducing disturbance in selected areas can help maintain healthy bird communities. For biodiversity managers, the work provides practical guidance on which green space attributes offer the greatest ecological value. It also highlights the need to balance public use of green spaces with the conservation needs of sensitive species.

For the general public, the study shows that even small decisions about planting trees and green space care can influence the birds that live in their neighbourhoods. As many Nigerian cities continue to grow rapidly, such information becomes increasingly valuable. The authors note that well-planned urban landscapes can support both people and wildlife, offering opportunities to conserve biodiversity even as development accelerates.

Read the full paper here:
https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0301479725031391

5 *Multi-Sectoral Capacity Development for Inclusive Climate Action: "Singing Beyond the Choir"*

Climate change has undoubtedly remained a front-burner on global environmental discuss, a concern that has cross-cutting and multi-sectoral links. Defined as "a change of climate that is attributed directly or indirectly to human activity that alters the composition of the global atmosphere and that is in addition to natural climate variability observed over comparable time periods" (United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change - UNFCCC, 2007b), has been discussed for over four decades. The submission of the World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED) report to the United Nations in 1987 further brought discussions on the environment to prominence. Major milestones were achieved on articulating climate actions since the formation of the UNFCCC by the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) in 1992. These include the launching of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), the start of the Conference of the Parties (COP), amongst others. During COP19 in Warsaw, the UNFCCC created a mechanism for Intended Nationally Determined Contributions (INDCs also called Nationally Determined Contributions - NDCs) and were adapted in member's specific contexts (Samson et. al., 2024). NDCs are valid guide to countries in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), 13 – Climate Action.

Nigeria's NDCs are indeed context specific and makes provision for addressing climate change risk events that affect Nigeria (Federal Ministry of Environment, 2021). Alongside the NDCs, Nigeria has developed several other complementary policies for Climate action. However, what largely remains to be seen is the effective implementation of these policies across different sectors to urgently curb the high levels of vulnerability of Nigeria and other sub-Saharan countries to climate change-related extreme weather events (Therona et al, 2022; Maino & Emrullahu, 2022; African Development Bank, 2019; Awojobi & Tetteh, 2017). Some of Nigeria's policies formulated to support the implementation of the NDCs include: National Adaptation Plan Framework (NAPF), National Climate Change Policy, 2050 Long-Term Vision for Nigeria (LTV-2050), and the Climate change Act 2021. While each of these policies has its focus, inclusivity can commonly be seen to be emphasized in them all. The NAPF, is a detailed adaptation response component of the NDCs (Federal Ministry of Environment, 2020). The two broad objectives of the NAPF process are to:

(a) Reduce vulnerability to the impacts of climate change by building adaptive capacity and resilience.

(b) Facilitate the integration of climate change adaptation, in a coherent manner, into relevant new and existing policies, programs, and activities, in particular development planning processes and strategies, within all relevant sectors and at different levels, as appropriate.

The Guiding Principles of Nigeria's NAPF Process includes:

a. Ensuring Participatory Involvement of all Stakeholders
b. Youth Engagement
c. Harmonising Climate Change Adaptation Responses
d. Climate Change as a Cross-Cutting Developmental Issue and Sector Responsibilities

e. Ensuring an Integrated and Comprehensive Approach
f. Ensuring and Maximizing Multiple Co-Benefits
g. Managing Potential Trade-offs
h. Identifying Social Equity and Ensuring a Gender-Responsive NAP Process
I. Flexible and Iterative Responses for Future Climatic and Non-Climatic Shocks
j. Evidence-Based Climate Change Adaptation Process
k. Incorporating Indigenous Knowledge for Effective Adaptation
l. Communication Strategy for the Process

The NAPF process provides a suitable platform for a broad-based, coordinated, and coherent national adaptation response. The A. P Leventis Ornithological Research Institute (APLORI) has made strategic contributions to the achievement of the objectives of the NAPF process. The Institute's core mandate of capacity development in Biodiversity Conservation and other training programmes aligns with the NAPF objective one, while several other integrative conservation interventions align with the NAPF objective two. A key asset of climate action utilised by APLORI is its plant propagation and recently its greenhouses for smart agricultural practices. It is noteworthy that several locals have been trained by APLORI in these eco-friendly agribusinesses.

Training development workers for climate actions

In fostering partnership for multi-sectoral development for climate action, Dr. Samson Da'an served as lead facilitator at the annual training workshop of the Peace Training Centre (PTC), Jos, on the climate change adaptation, conflict, peace and development module in the past five years. The PTC, Jos, is a joint initiative of Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) Nigeria, African Peace Institute (API) And West African Peace Institute (WAPI) Alumni Association of Nigeria (AWAAN). The annual training provides Peace Building and development practitioners from Nigeria and other African countries the opportunity to study, share and reflect on theories and practice in conflict transformation and peace building relating to the past, present and emerging conflict situations in Africa and beyond. Over the years, PTC has trained participants through seven modules including on Climate change adaptation, conflict, peace and development.

Climate change adaptation, conflict, peace and development: This module elaborates on the theories of climate change, conflict, peace and development based on the Nigerian context; looking at the causes of climate change with reference to increasing environmental degradation, loss of arable land for agriculture, desert encroachment, human practices and industrial pollution. Furthermore, measures for mitigation and adaptation by local authorities to climate change to increase resilience, reduce climate change vulnerabilities amongst others are strategies discussed. Additionally, the module highlights the nexus between climate change, peace, conflict and development. This is with the overall aim of increasing the participants' knowledge and skills in climate change adaptation and mitigation, sustainable agriculture and community resilience. In 2023, the field experience component of the module was introduced and since then participants have been brought on excursions to APLORI yearly. With this input to the module, the outcomes have been gratifying and keeps improving yearly.

PTC Course 9, Climate change adaptation, conflict, peace and development module: The course this year took place from 20th to 24th October 2025 with twelve participants from Nigeria and Kenya and co-facilitated by Dr. Samson Da'an and Ms. Jennifer Dashe. The pre–training evaluation showed that although the concept of climate change was not entirely new to participants, they still had some key knowledge gaps. After the theoretical inputs of the training, which were a mix of talks, group work, and presentations, participants were brought to APLORI for the field experience on 23rd October 2025. Having received a welcome remark from APLORI's senior communications officer Ms Nanlep Kumle, Mr Christopher Tumba APLORI's Plant Propagation officer, gave a talk on smart agriculture after which he guided participants in the field where they had ample opportunities of interactions. Enriching the experience, participants were shown the following:

I. Utilisation of clean energy at APLORI
ii. APLORI's tree nursery and net house, where different indigenous tree seedlings are raised.
iii. The different habitat types in Amurum forest reserve
iv. The greenhouse

Amongst others, the practical experience helped participants to consolidate the knowledge of climate change adaptation and mitigation measures learned theoretically. This was evident in the outcome of the post-training evaluation administered to the

participants. They showed great improvements in the initial knowledge gaps this was alongside immediate positive shift in mind set of many about the possibilities and urgency of taking climate actions. PTC has received impressive feedback from its Alumni who took the module and had the field experience at APLORI. A number of them have returned to APLORI for further advice, while others have carried on with other climate actions.

As outlined by the Sustainable Development Goal 17, partnership and collaboration especially across institutions and organisations remains cardinal in achieving SDG 13 and all other SDGs. Indeed, leveraging a multi-sectoral capacity development for climate action will not only ensure inclusivity but will also greatly bridge the local manpower deficit in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, at least on the local scale.

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Dr. Samson A. Da'an, Jennifer Dashe and Christopher Tumba

6 APLORI Attends the Leventis Foundation Youth Summit 2025, Reaffirms Commitment to Research in Agriculture

The A.P. Leventis Ornithological Research Institute (APLORI) reaffirmed its commitment to conducting research that seeks to find a balance between agriculture and biodiversity during the Leventis Foundation Nigeria Agricultural Youth Summit (AYS) 2025, which was held at the Nicon Luxury Hotel, Abuja, Nigeria.

The institute was represented by Nanlep Kumle, Senior Communications Officer at APLORI, on behalf of Prof. Adams Chaskda, Director of APLORI. She attended alongside Panshak Solomon, Assistant Teaching Coordinator of the Institute. Nanlep highlighted that since its inception over 20 years ago, APLORI has conducted and published several research works, a great number of which have practical applications in the agricultural industry. She urged the summit's youth participants to use APLORI's research findings to better understand the ecological contexts in which they will operate and to build more resilient, eco-friendly, sustainable businesses.

Welcoming participants, Dr. Hope Usieta, Executive Director of the Leventis Foundation Nigeria, celebrated the Foundation's agricultural training programme. He notes its measurable impact on more than 31,000 young people who have received training over the years. He emphasized that many alumni have launched businesses, achieved self-sufficiency, and created jobs for others through the Foundation's training efforts.

In his opening address, Ahmed Mantey, Chairman of the Leventis Foundation Nigeria Board of Directors, reminded youths of their vital role in ensuring food sustainability in Nigeria and beyond. He expressed the board's readiness at all times to provide guidance and direction.

Organized in partnership with the National Youth Service Corps (NYSC) – a Nigerian Government's mandatory one-year national service scheme for graduates from universities within the country, the summit' themed “Building Youths' and Agripreneurs' Resilience for Agric-Business through Targeted Upskilling and Innovative Agric-Business Finance Mechanisms”. The summit focused on skills development and financing for young agripreneurs. Among its objectives were knowledge transfer and the selection of up to 25 promising youth-led enterprises to receive scale-up support of ₦2 million each.

The summit concluded with exhibitions from Leventis training schools, APLORI, and alumni of the Leventis agricultural training programme, showcasing training outcomes, research applications, and agribusiness innovations.

7 Building Momentum for Amphibian Conservation in Nigeria

The IUCN SSC Centre for Species Survival Nigeria, hosted at the A.P. Leventis Ornithological Research Institute (APLORI), Centre of Excellence, held a landmark Amphibian Conservation Workshop in Jos, Nigeria. Organized in collaboration with the IUCN SSC Nigeria Species Specialist Group (NgSSG) and the Amphibian Specialist Group (ASG), the event featured Prof. Amaël Borzée, Co-chair of the ASG. The meeting, brought together researchers, practitioners, and students both in person and online, drawing participants from Nigeria, Liberia, the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Ghana, Kenya, and Zimbabwe.

Participants engaged in sessions covering IUCN Red List and Green Status assessments, the Global Amphibian Conservation Action Plan, amphibian identification and monitoring techniques, and citizen science platforms such as iNaturalist and GBIF-mediated data, as well as guidance on the Nigeria Specialist Group and how to join. The workshop's field surveys culminated in a nationwide Bioblitz, with virtual and in-person participants documenting their records on iNaturalist. Key observations included the Mottled Squeaker (Arthroleptis poecilonotus), Natal Puddle Frog (Phrynobatrachus natalensis), Hallowell's Toad (Sclerophrys maculata), Medine Grassland Frog (Ptychadena pumilio), Egyptian Toad (Sclerophrys regularis), Xenopus spp., among others (Explore the observations here: https://www.inaturalist.org/observations?project_id=259636).

A major outcome of the workshop was the development of a draft framework for national amphibian conservation priorities, focusing on:

1. Research and Monitoring – Bridge data gaps through baseline assessments, systematic surveys, long-term monitoring, habitat evaluations, and contributions to a National Red List of amphibians.
2. Capacity Building – Strengthen expertise through workshops, training programs, and development of national identification guidelines.
3. Collaboration and Networking – Foster partnerships that enhance national and international visibility.
4. Public Education and Awareness – Communicate the ecological roles of amphibians, counter negative perceptions, and ensure accessibility of information in local languages.
5. Policy Integration – Incorporate amphibian assessments, including National Red List outcomes, into national biodiversity action plans.
6. Sustainable Funding – Secure resources to support research, conservation, and awareness initiatives.

In his address, the Director General of the Nigerian Conservation Foundation (NCF) underscored the importance of a data-driven approach to support the identification and establishment of amphibian-triggered Key Biodiversity Areas (KBAs) across Nigeria. The workshop featured remarks from the Director of APLORI, Prof. Adams A. Chaskda, who emphasized the Institute's commitment to research and advancing

capacity building for conservation in Nigeria, and expressed gratitude to Prof. Amaël Borzée for his invaluable contributions to the workshop. The Chair of the Nigeria Species Specialist Group, Prof. Shiiwua A. Manu, highlighted the urgent need to strengthen national amphibian conservation efforts and commended Prof. Borzée and the Centre for their exceptional facilitation and support throughout the workshop.The workshop concluded with the issuance of certificates of attendance to participants and a commitment to establish a national amphibian network, along with the development of a National Red List for amphibians. The final day also featured a seminar by Prof. Borzée on amphibian conservation in agricultural landscapes, inspiring the broader University of Jos community to protect amphibians in human-dominated environments.

Amphibian conservation in Nigeria requires urgent action, and an emerging community of skilled and collaborative practitioners is well-positioned to address this challenge.

Danmallam Bello Adamu

8

Plateau State Youth Tourism Roundtable: Youth, Research and, Nature Meet to Unlock Tourism Potential

The Plateau State Government, through the Plateau State Tourism Corporation led by Director General Edward Pwajok, has begun a youth-focused push to place tourism at the centre of the state's economic and environmental planning. The inaugural Youth Tourism Roundtable convened young people, tourism practitioners, researchers and institutional partners to spotlight hidden assets, share practical pathways to access them, and map collaborative approaches to sustainable tourism development.

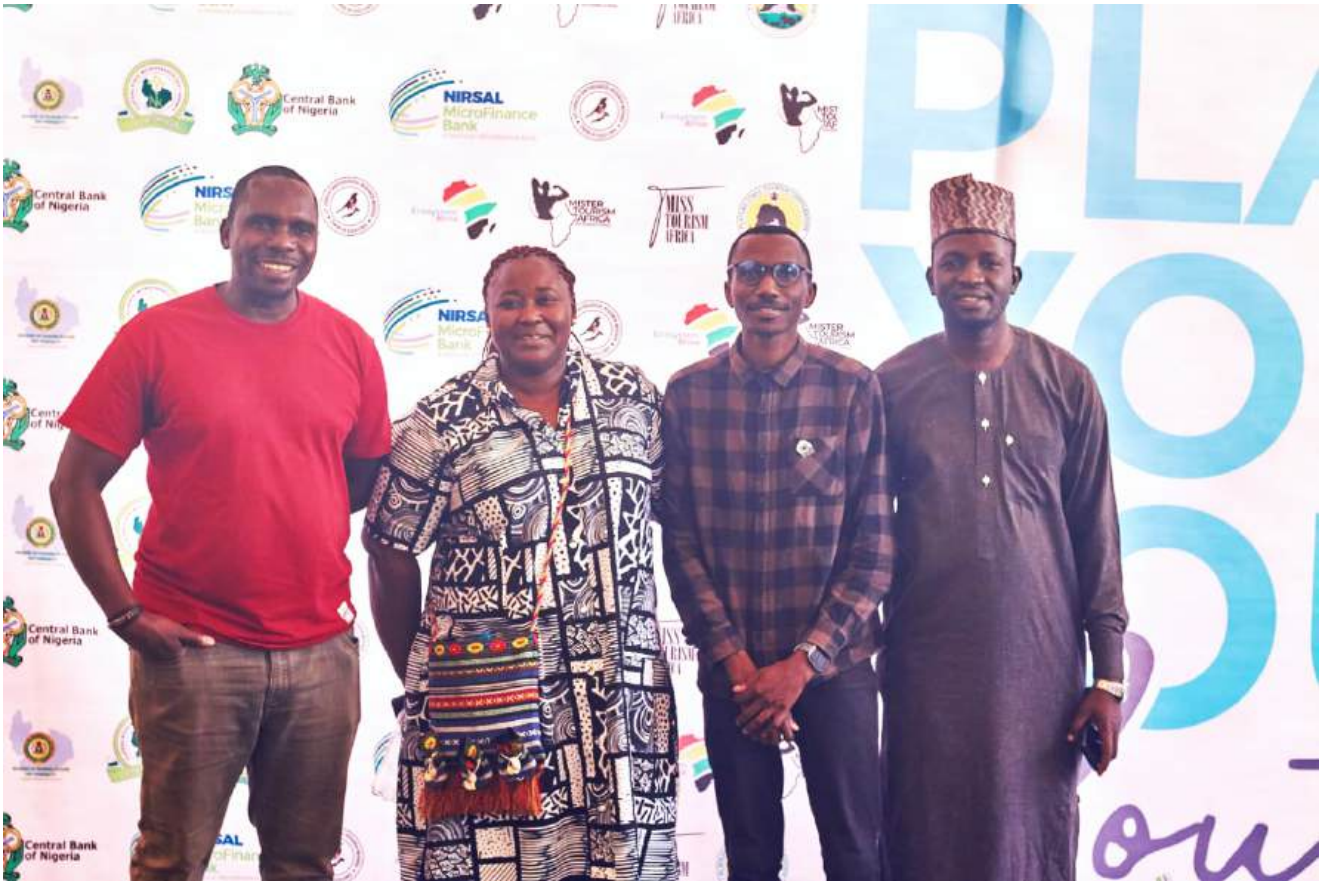
The roundtable brought together a cross-section of stakeholders from across the tourism value chain. Participants discussed how to make Plateau's natural and cultural resources more accessible, marketable and beneficial to local communities—while protecting biodiversity and strengthening research-tourism linkages.

A featured partner was the A.P. Leventis Ornithological Research Institute (APLORI), Centre of Excellence at the University of Jos, which used the platform to highlight both its research expertise and the Amurum Forest Reserve, the institute's home.

APLORI showcased its work in ornithological research and capacity building, and positioned Amurum Forest Reserve as a leading eco-tourism and birdwatching destination. The institute highlighted the reserve's remarkable avifauna, noting it supports more than 300 bird species—about one third of Nigeria's known bird diversity—making it an exceptional site for visiting birders, researchers and students.

APLORI called for stronger collaborations between research institutions, tourism operators, government agencies and youth groups so that the reserve and the institute can be better integrated into Plateau's tourism offerings.

Nanlep Kumle, Communications Officer at APLORI, emphasized the urgent need for institutional partnerships that promote the reserve as a tourist destination and educational site. She urged youth and tourism stakeholders to visit Amurum Forest Reserve to observe its biodiversity, learn from ongoing research, and join efforts to protect and sustainably use the forest's natural resources.



Panshak Solomon, APLORI's Assistant Teaching Coordinator and Head of ICT, represented the director at the event. He reiterated the importance of youth engagement, capacity building, and digital outreach to expand the reserve's visibility and tourism potential. The roundtable framed youth as essential drivers of a sustainable tourism future. They bring new ideas for marketing, technology-enabled visitor services, community-led enterprises and volunteer conservation. Engaging youth in tourism planning can create inclusive job opportunities, strengthen local stewardship of natural sites, and amplify Plateau's visibility as a destination for eco-tourism and academic exchange.

Participants recommended concrete steps to translate discussion into action: deepen partnerships between research and tourism institutions, design youth-led tourism enterprises, and training programs, develop targeted marketing for birdwatching and nature tourism, and improve access and visitor facilities at priority sites like Amurum Forest Reserve.

The Plateau State Youth Tourism Roundtable set a promising tone for linking research, youth energy and government commitment to grow sustainable tourism across the state. With partners such as APLORI amplifying the scientific and conservation value of sites like Amurum Forest Reserve, Plateau has a clear opportunity to build eco-tourism that supports biodiversity, education and local livelihoods.

9 The Entomological Society of Nigeria Clamoured for Innovative and Ethical Considerations in Zoological Practice

The Entomology Society of Nigeria (ESN) conference was held this year in Jos, Plateau State. The conference brought together experts from across academia and non-governmental organisations, including the A.P. Leventis Ornithological Research Institute, Centre of Excellence, University of Jos.

The conference, which coincided with the 60th anniversary of the ESN, presented yet another opportunity for the experts to discuss how we can all help foster biodiversity, emphasizing that insects should be allowed to thrive as their importance in the ecosystem is far more -reaching than we can imagine.

Welcoming the delegates, Professor Rabiu Salihu, President, Entomological Society of Nigeria, stressed the importance of collaboration and interdisciplinary learning as this will offer a holistic understanding of the environment.

Professor Ololade B. Akogun who is the Regional Research Director (ERICC Project), International Rescue Committee, New York, USA, presented the lead paper of the conference. He centered his talk on finding and creating innovative ways in which every insect thrives in it's environment. He challenged his colleagues to be critical thinkers and highlighted technological innovations, interdisciplinary links with health and education, ethical considerations in biodiversity research, and practical recommendations for curriculum reform and policy. The aim, according to him, is to ensure insects remain protected, studied responsibly, and integrated into strategies for human health, food security, and ecosystem resilience.

The conference climaxed with a panel discussion where the director of APLORI, Professor Adams Chaskda, alongside other discussants, re-echoed the need for research and policy frameworks. Some of the key points stressed were:

1. A review and remodel of the zoology curriculum to reflect modern entomological approaches: include molecular methods, bioinformatics, conservation ethics, and applied insect science.
2. Mainstream ethics in insect and biodiversity research: develop guidelines for collection, specimen use, habitat impact assessment, and community engagement.
3. Promote interdisciplinary research in zoology and entomology: integrate sociology, public health, education, and agricultural sciences to create socially relevant and ethically grounded studies.
4. Prioritize habitat protection policies that secure safe, stable environments for insects, particularly pollinators and keystone species.
5. Encourage investment in accessible technologies and citizen-science programs to broaden participation and data collection across regions.
6. Foster continental collaboration to coordinate research priorities, training, and resource sharing.
7. Ensure open, accessible communication of findings to policymakers, farmers, and public-health stakeholders.

The panel was unanimous that insects are the most numerous animal group and foundational to human well-being. Therefore, the future of entomology must balance rapid technological innovation with strong ethical frameworks, interdisciplinary training, and habitat protection.

10

Spotlighting Leadership and Impactful Research: Professor Adams Chaskda's Recognition

The director of APLORI , Professor Adams Chaskda continues to elevate the institute's profile through outstanding contributions to ornithology and biodiversity conservation. Recently, the director was awarded an **Honorary Fellowship of the Entomological Society of Nigeria and received a Fellowship of the Zoological Society of Nigeria** for his Excellent Leadership and academic contributions in the field of Zoology during the 18th conference of the Zoological Society of Nigeria held at the University of Ibadan, Oyo State, South-east Nigeria. These honours recognize sustained scientific leadership, impactful research, and a commitment to conservation that resonates nationally and internationally. We celebrate these achievements and the continued global influence it brings to APLORI.

11a

The Centre for Species Survival Nigeria, A.P. Leventis Ornithological Research Institute (APLORI), Centre of Excellence, has Received the Reverse the Red Accelerator Award at the 2025 IUCN World Conservation Congress

The Centre for Species Survival Nigeria coordinated by the A.P. Leventis Ornithological Research Institute was one of the nine recipients of the maiden edition of Reverse the Red Accelerator Award during the recently held International Union for Conservation of Nature's World Conservation Congress in Abu Dhabi. The awarded project seeks to promote the recovery of the endangered Pterocarpus erinaceus in order to reverse species decline in Nigeria.

Also, the project aim to strengthen science-based conservation and foster local partnerships that will contribute to reversing the decline of P. erinaceus. The Reverse the Red Accelerator Award is funded by the Mohamed bin Zayed Species Conservation Fund and Synchronicity Earth.

Read the press release here:
www.reversethered.org/news/reverse-the-red-announces-accelerator-award-winners
Together, we can #ReverseTheRed!
#CSSNigeria #APLORI #IUCNSSC #Conservation #Biodiversity

Danmallam Bello Adamu Coordinator, IUCN Species Survival Commission Center Nigeria, speaking at the Centre for Species Survival Meeting held during the World Conservation Congress Abu Dhabi, 2025

APLORI Researcher, Panshak Solomon Kumdet, Wins 2025 GBIF Graduate Researchers' Award

We are delighted to announce that Mr. Panshak Solomon Kumdet, a PhD student and researcher at the A. P. Leventis Ornithological Research Institute (APLORI), University of Jos Centre of Excellence, has been named one of the winners of the 2025 Global Biodiversity Information Facility (GBIF) Graduate Researchers' Award.

He is the second African student ever to receive this prestigious global honour—an outstanding achievement for both him and the Institute.

Panshak's groundbreaking research advances the frontiers of biodiversity informatics and conservation in West Africa. His work draws on GBIF-mediated data collected through BirdPlus, a mobile application he co-developed with the Nigerian Bird Atlas Project (NiBAP).

Designed to strengthen citizen-science participation and improve biodiversity data from the Global South, BirdPlus enables users to record bird observations in multiple languages-even without internet access-helping to bridge critical data gaps for underrepresented bird species in Nigeria.

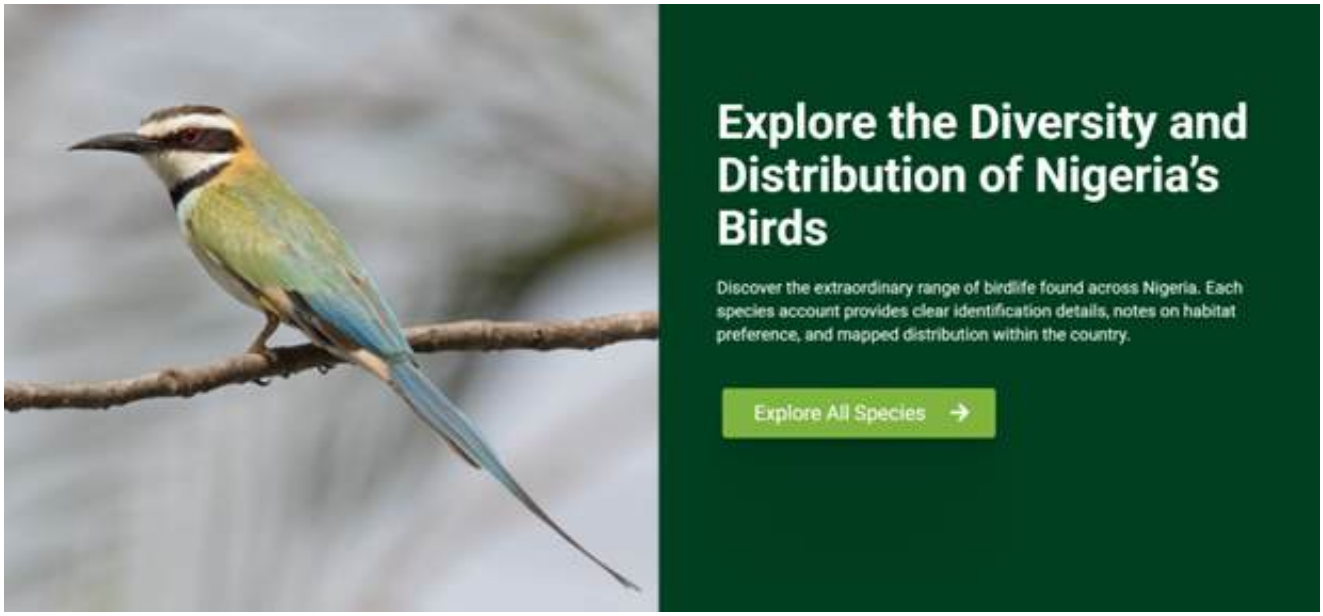
This milestone underscores APLORI's enduring commitment to excellence in ecological research and conservation training. Through its robust postgraduate programmes and international partnerships, the Institute continues to nurture a new generation of African scientists contributing meaningfully to global biodiversity knowledge.

In his remarks, Panshak attributed his success to the mentorship and support he received at APLORI, noting that the Institute's enriching environment has been central to his growth as a researcher.

We warmly congratulate Panshak on this outstanding recognition and celebrate what it represents for APLORI, the University of Jos, Nigeria, and biodiversity conservation across Africa.

Read the full announcement on the GBIF website: https://www.gbif.org/news/6uC3zYjCrBxS8hbv0YfBVT/nigerian-phd-student-kumdet-panshak-solomon-wins-2025-graduate-researchers-award

12 *The Nigerian Bird Atlas Project (NiBAP) Launches Online Portal Showcasing Nigeria's Bird Species Distribution*



The Nigerian Bird Atlas Project (NiBAP) at the A. P. Leventis Ornithological Research Institute (APLORI) has launched a new online portal designed to make information on the nation's bird distribution easier to access. The platform, available at https://aplori.org/birds, offers a simple way for anyone to explore the diversity of species found across Nigeria.

The portal opens with information on 50 bird species, with more entries to be added as the project grows. Each species account provides clear identification notes, typical habitats and a map showing its distribution within the country. The layout presents these details in a logical sequence, allowing users to move from images and key features to habitat information and mapped records with ease.

The new platform is designed to serve a wide range of users. Students and early learners can use it as an introduction to common and notable species. Researchers and conservation workers will find the distribution maps and habitat notes useful for field planning and reference. Citizen scientists, including birdwatchers and volunteers who contribute sightings, can rely on the platform to guide their observations and improve the quality of their records. For the general public, the site offers an accessible way to learn about birds found in their surroundings and across different regions of Nigeria.

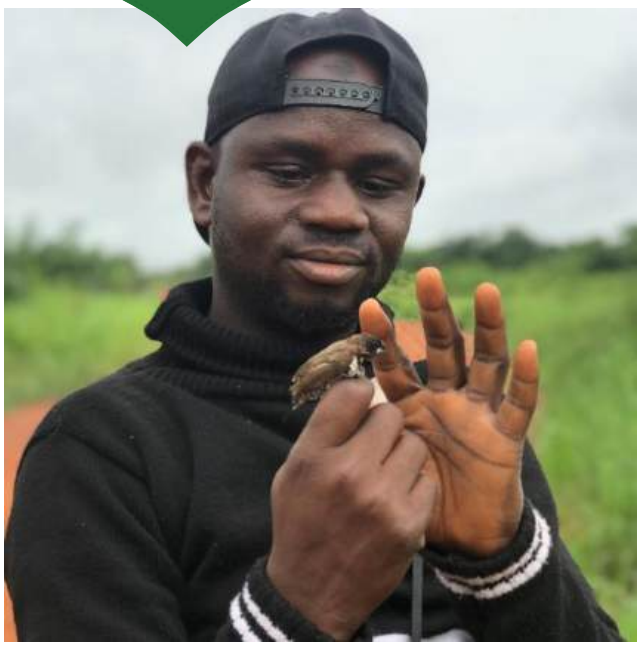
The portal is intended to support broader interest in biodiversity at a time when environmental awareness is increasing across the country. The Nigerian Bird Atlas Project plans to expand the collection steadily, turning the platform into a long-term resource for education, conservation, and national understanding of Nigeria's biodiversity.

Photo collections are provided by nature enthusiasts who are adequately credited.
Visit https://aplori.org/birds today.

13

Aficionado's Binoculars

A Life for Birds: From Childhood Conviction to Biodiversity Leadership



Taofeeq Adewuyi Dynamo

I grew up in a family that loves nature and believes that killing harmless animals destroys God's creations. That conviction shaped everything that followed: my curiosity, my study choices, and the quiet insistence that my life should help protect the living systems that sustain us. From childhood walks to the first field notebook I kept as an undergraduate, I could see through it my ever-growing passion and understanding for the natural world.

I studied Biology at the University of Lagos, where my understanding of the ecosystem was built from the individual level to the complex interactions within the ecosystem. Later on, I completed an MSc in Ecotoxicology and Pollution Management at the same university, and this sharpened my understanding of how pollutants and human activities degrade habitats and reduce biological resilience. Practical skills in biostatistics and GIS followed, expanding my knowledge further in the life sciences.

After my master's, I sought hands-on conservation work, which led me to begin contributing to the Nigerian Bird Atlas Project (NiBAP) in late 2017. NiBAP became the practical expression of my conviction: by documenting birds and their distributions, I contributed to build the baseline data needed to understand avian distribution across the Nigerian landscape and advocate for habitat protection. My experiences in NiBAP, which include participation in Important Bird & Biodiversity Area monitoring and a National Geographic–funded introductory ornithology field course organized by NiBAP in 2019, both expanded my fieldcraft and ecological understanding.

My citizen science efforts showcase breadth and consistent coverage. Since 2018, I have completed more than 1,000 full-protocol pentads, including over 850 virgin pentads, across six south-western states and parts of south-south and north-central Nigeria. I have submitted over 490 bird species records to NiBAP, contributing materially to the nation's biodiversity database. Based on experiences gained through NiBAP, I served as a research assistant and field ornithologist for a national Wildlife Hazard Assessment at Murtala Muhammed International Airport, identifying attractants and recommending risk-reduction measures for air carriers. The Atlas team I belonged to, has previously documented and published an important range extension for the Swallow-tailed Bee-eater Merops hirundineus.

My NiBAP contributions also include serving for over two years as Coordinator of the Ondo State Bird Club for APLORI, creating regular birdwatching opportunities and community conservation education engagements. In 2023, I took part in the NiBAP Virgin Pentad Challenge and covered 71 virgin pentads in a month, an effort that earned me the grand prize.

Since 2024, I have coordinated the Nigerian Southwest Atlas Team (NSWAT), and under my leadership, NSWAT set records for participant numbers and full-protocol pentad coverage. Between August 2024 and September 2025, we completed 13 atlas expeditions and covered 487 full-protocol pentads, 181 of them virgin, while welcoming more than 35 new nature enthusiasts to the team.

In recognition of my conservation work, I was appointed Assistant Manager — Biodiversity at Lagos Free Zone in June 2025. I lead biodiversity conservation projects, provide technical expertise, and manage biodiversity activities within the Zone, as well as in biodiversity offset projects beyond it. My work now links restoration, compliance, and community engagement to ensure that development and nature conservation proceed together rather than in opposition.

Protecting wildlife and wild places is inextricably linked to protecting human survival. I remain committed to using species as indicators of ecosystem health, to documenting field discoveries, and to publishing findings that strengthen Nigeria's biodiversity knowledge. My strengths lie in field-survey design and implementation, team leadership and mobilization, biodiversity monitoring, and species documentation. I will continue to dedicate my career to safeguarding nature and to growing the community of people who understand that conserving life on Earth is a moral, practical, and necessary task. In all these, I am greatly indebted to NiBAP under APLORI for the capacity built in me and the field exposure I have gained.

14 The 2030 Agenda: An African Scientist's Perspective on the Sustainable Development Goals

The **Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)** are a universal call to action to end poverty, protect the planet, and ensure that all people enjoy peace and prosperity by 2030. Following a week of rigorous study in Conservation Biology, we reviewed the 17 goals, focusing on their complexity and urgency, particularly from an African perspective. The consensus is clear: while the 2030 deadline is fast approaching, progress is attainable through collective, context-specific action.

The Urgency 0f Now: Health, Hunger, and Equity.

The goals focused on human well-being reveal a crisis point demanding immediate attention:

SDG 1 & 2 (No Poverty & Zero Hunger): The fight against poverty has suffered severe setbacks, notably due to the COVID-19 pandemic, leaving over 106 million people in extreme poverty in Nigeria alone. Hunger persists because of overt conflict and climate change. As one student noted, "Ending hunger is not just about food; it is about justice, equity, and sustainability." Global partnerships and enhanced social protection are vital to reversing these negative trends.

SDG 3 (Good Health and Well-being): Major setbacks mean universal health targets are at risk. In 2023, an estimated 260,000 women died during pregnancy and childbirth, and non-communicable diseases accounted for over half of all premature deaths globally in 2021. We must urgently strengthen primary healthcare and address inequalities, especially in developing Countries, to ensure universal access to quality care.

SDG 5 & 10 (Gender Equality & Reduced Inequalities): Gender-based violence (GBV) remains disturbingly high across sub-Saharan Africa. The student review emphasised that achieving SDG 5 requires deep societal, legal, and economic reforms to empower women and girls. Similarly, reducing inequalities (SDG 10) globally is stalled by persistent racism, weak policy enforcement, and financial instability. Equity is non-negotiable for sustainability.

Progress on societal pillars.
Economic stability, infrastructure, and governance are paramount for sustained development:

SDG 8 & 9 (Decent Work & Innovation): Despite Nigeria's potential, the unemployment rate exceeds 50%. Poor governance, corruption, and poor infrastructure deter investment and job creation. Achieving SDG 8 demands strategic investment in vocational training and transparent leadership. For SDG 9 (Industry, Innovation, and Infrastructure), while

internet coverage has improved, a lack of funding for industrial modernisation and innovation hinders resilient infrastructure development.

SDG 16 (Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions): This goal is the foundation for all others. The failure to adhere to SDG 16 leads to conflict, erosion of civic trust, and impunity. The student review underscored that peace and justice are not abstract ideals but essential everyday needs that require effective, accountable institutions to flourish.

Two goals highlight the transformative power of human action and responsibility:

SDG 4 (Quality Education): Education is the foundation for achieving all other SDGs, from ending poverty to achieving gender equality. While access to education has improved in places like Ghana, the key challenge is quality, fairness, and relevance. We must focus on providing greater financial support and culturally sensitive methods that ensure students learn effectively.

SDG 12 (Responsible Consumption and Production): This goal is crucial because our current linear production methods drive ecological overshoot and resource depletion. Global success depends on moving towards circular economies and sustainable supply chains. Valuable lessons can be drawn from Japan's Mottainai culture (a concept of not wasting) and companies championing "Profit with Purpose." This is a universal call for individual and institutional stewardship.

A Call to Action for Environmental Stewardship
The challenges are formidable, but they are not insurmountable. The paradigm shift from large-scale monocultures to Agroecology and Regenerative Agriculture, coupled with a dedication to evidence-based conservation, shows us the way forward.

Achieving the 2030 Agenda is a shared global responsibility. It requires every individual—policymakers, scientists, mothers, youth, and citizens—to move beyond being passive observers. Whether by advocating for good governance (SDG 16), reducing waste (SDG 12), or championing girl-child education in STEM (SDG 4$ 5), your role is critical.

By Nanchin Winifred Kazeh and the 2025 MSc Cohort, APLORI

Director APLORI delivered a talk on Sustainable Development Goals at the 2025 Annual Roundtable on the Right to Development

On the same SDG theme, the APLORI Director, Prof. Adams Chaskda was recently invited to deliver a talk on the topic “Education as a vehicle for sustainable development: charting a new course” at the 2025 Annual Roundtable on the Right to Development organised by Mission 21 and the Plateau State Sustainable Development Support Unit. The APLORI Director, empahsized on the need for quality education as a major vehicle to attaining some of the SDG's. He used APLORI's capacity building efforts to showcase how quality education offered by the Centre is contributing positively to Nigeria's SDG outcomes particularly on SDG's 4, 8, 9, 13, 15 and 17. He highlighted that quality education and descent jobs earned by APLORI Alumni within and outside of the country are the kind of outcomes expected for SDG's 4 and 8 while research publications, research partnerships and conservation efforts championed by the Centre and its alumni are helping to achieve SDG's (9, 13, 15 and 17). The Director's presentation made a great impact on the participants, leading to further discussion after the programme.

15

Capacity Building for Rangers: Towards Enhancing Biodiversity Conservation in Weppa Woodland, Weppa Farm, Agenebode, Edo

(Mr. Imoisime Igbode and Dr. Samson Da'an)

As part of our ongoing commitment to strengthen the capacity of our dedicated and resilient rangers at the Weppa Farms, Aghenebode, Edo State, Nigeria. The resident research team at the APLORI Field Station based on the farm, organized a one-day training workshop on 14th November 2025 at the APLORI Mini Multipurpose Hall, Weppa Farm.

The session commenced with a warm welcome address from Dr. Samson Da'an, the Field Station Coordinator. Dr. Da'an commended the rangers for their unwavering dedication to safeguarding the Weppa Woodland despite limited resources and numerous challenges. He acknowledged their courage and sacrifices in the face of persistent threats such as illegal grazing, hunting, and wood harvesting activities that continually pressure the delicate woodland ecosystem.

During the training, the rangers were introduced to key ecological concepts, including biodiversity and conservation, explained in simple terms to foster deeper understanding. Using familiar examples such as the endangered Hooded Vulture (Necrosyrtes monachus) and African rosewood (Pterocarpus erinaceous) locally known as “Madrid”, the facilitators emphasized the critical importance of conserving species that are increasingly rare in the environment. The session also highlighted the role of species monitoring in sustaining ecosystem health, particularly as Weppa Farm is recognized as one of Nigeria's 27 Important Bird and Biodiversity Areas (IBAs).

In his closing remarks, Mr. Imoisime Igbode extended an open invitation to the rangers to participate in upcoming field training sessions on biodiversity monitoring within Weppa Woodlands. These practical sessions aimed to equip them with foundational skills in species tracking and ecological data collection.

An interactive session followed, during which Mr. Williams Oboh, the head of the ranger team, outlined some of the challenges they face when engaging with local communities and requested additional resources to enhance patrol operations. The rangers expressed heartfelt appreciation for APLORI's continued presence and support, noting that it has given them renewed motivation and a stronger sense of belonging in their conservation work.

Building on the momentum of this workshop, the field training took place on November 17. The five participating rangers received hands-on instruction in using GPS devices to mark survey points within the woodland and were trained on applying point and line transect methods, making use of existing trails for effective biodiversity assessments.

The research team remains optimistic that the series of conservation education programs planned for next year will help mitigate some of the anthropogenic pressures on the Weppa Woodland and further empower rangers as frontline stewards of biodiversity.

Gallery

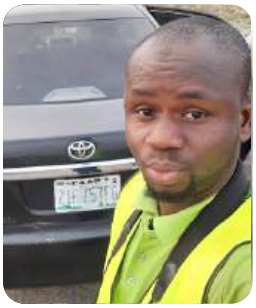
Lekki Bird Club



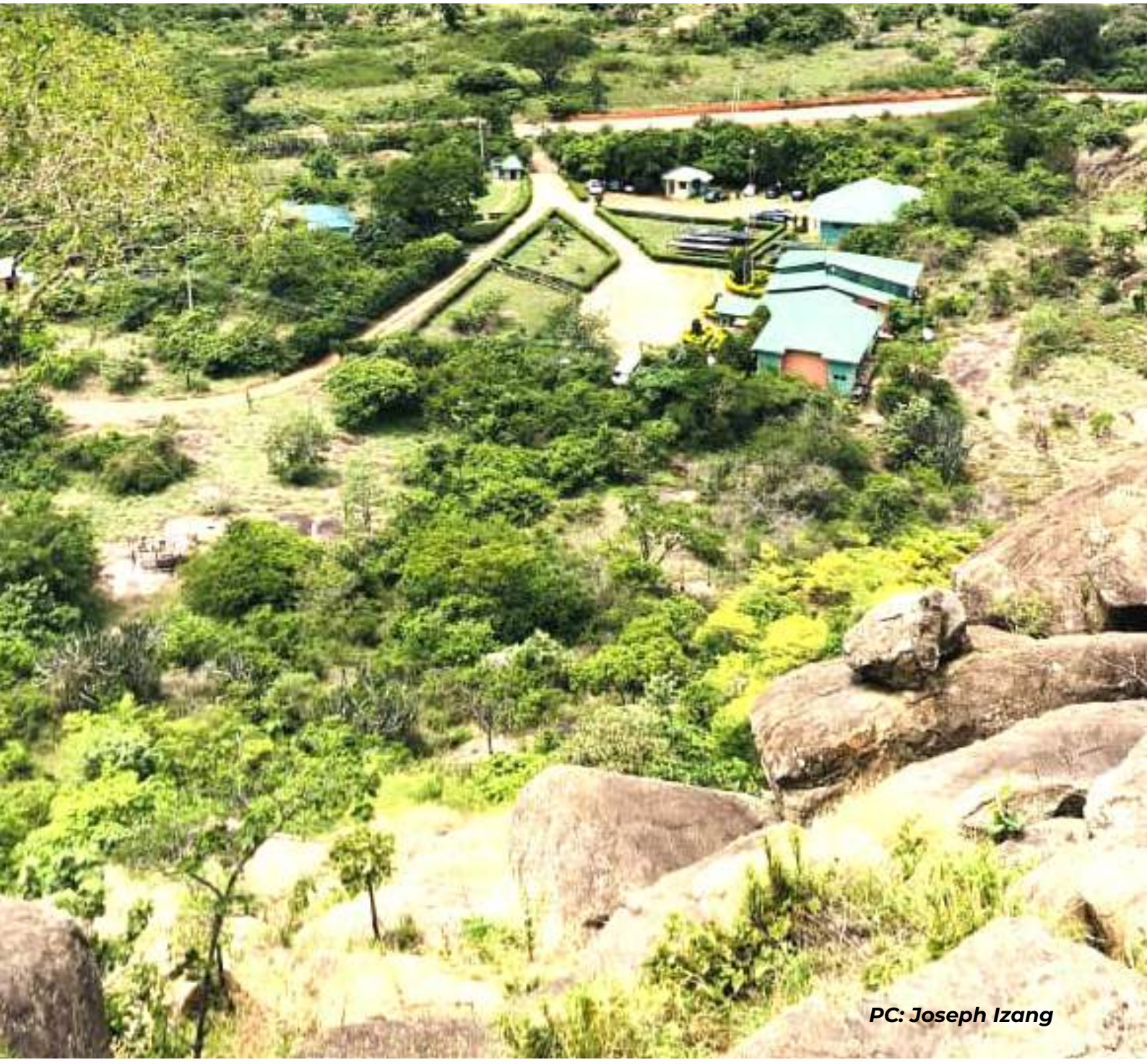






Led by Dr. Jacinta Abalaka, Research Associates in APLORI equipped IT Students research presentation skills

PC: Joseph Izang