

## REPORT OF THE MEDIA WORKING GROUP

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THE MEDIA WORKING GROUP was formed based on the identified needs to raise the profile of the Society for the Conservation and Study of Caribbean Birds (SCSCB) and provide a mechanism by which the Executive might be provided with a public voice via the media. Furthermore, there was a desire to train interested members as well as local partners and collaborating organizations in media skills.

At the meeting, participants were provided with a review of recent media activities from their organizations and shared experiences, and were also provided with copies of two published resources, namely "How to Write a Press Release" (from United States Fish and Wildlife Service) and a handout from the BirdLife Caribbean Program Media Training Workshop. The participants drafted a first paragraph of a possible post-conference media release by way of a practice exercise in press release writing. They reviewed one option to deal with negative media attention by discussing, "How to Write a Letter to the Editor," based on a handout. Participants were encouraged to contact the Chair of the Working Group for support should assistance be needed for media activities about birds and the Society. Participants also discussed two BirdLife Jamaica releases from the 2007 Caribbean Endemic Bird Festival.

### SIGNIFICANT POINTS

1. Herbert Raffaele offered the use of his illustrations to those conducting media activities on behalf of the Society.

2. It was suggested that the group submit examples of three effective conference-related media releases to be added to the conference planning folder to better inform conference coordinators on what the Society expects.

3. Festival coordinators were advised to make more effective use of photos to capture the attention of the reading public.

4. With the publication of the SCSCB's new strategic plan, the group would be expected to reassess how best it might support the society's objectives as

articulated therein.

### CHALLENGES IDENTIFIED

1. The need to capture the "unconverted" by identifying those partner individuals and organizations who were in need of either media capacity development, or encouragement to conduct media related activities in support of the society's mission.

2. The need to create an effective mechanism to archive media resources from members appearing in the print media, radio, and television, and also to share these with the society as a whole in a timely manner.

3. Encourage partner organizations regularly doing media work to assist in raising the profile of the society by endeavoring to include the society's name in their media activities, in particular their writing. The concern here was that the society's name was not adequately represented at the local level by partner organizations, which were understandably prioritizing their own issues.

### APPOINTMENT OF CO-CHAIRS

Two co-chairs have agreed to assist with the leadership of the group, namely: Alleyne Regis, the Technical Director of RARE Radio in Castries, St. Lucia (e-mail: [aregis@rareconservation.org](mailto:aregis@rareconservation.org)); and Simon Guerrero, the Deputy Director of the National Zoological Park in Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic (e-mail: [guerrero.simon@gmail.com](mailto:guerrero.simon@gmail.com)). Both individuals bring extensive professional experience, in addition to language skills that will broaden the group's effectiveness.

### RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FOLLOW-UP ACTIONS AND PROJECTS

It was proposed that "How to build a relationship with media" and "Dealing with problem/difficult situations with the media" be used as a title for a workshop for the next SCSCB meeting. At this meeting, representatives of the media would be invited to provide comment on pitfalls in working with the media and field questions from participants.