

**CONSTITUTION OF THE
HERPETOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION OF AFRICA
(EST. 1965)**

1 NAME

The name of the Association shall be -

HERPETOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION OF AFRICA

hereinafter referred to as the Association or the H.A.A.

2 OFFICIAL MOUTHPIECES

The mouthpieces of the Association are the **JOURNAL** (*African Journal of Herpetology*: Print ISSN: 2156-4574 Online ISSN: 2153-3660) and **NEWSLETTER** (*African Herp News*: ISSN 1017-6187).

3 TERMINOLOGY

The term **HERPETOLOGICAL**, **HERPETOFAUNA** and **HERPETOLOGY** shall cover reptiles and amphibians from mainland Africa and associated islands.

4 AIMS, OBJECTIVES AND POLICY

4.1 GENERAL

- 4.1.1** The Association is a totally non-profit organisation dedicated to the study of reptiles and amphibians, and in particular those of Africa.
- 4.1.2** To encourage the study of all aspects of herpetology both in nature and in captivity.
- 4.1.3** To foster a responsible and enlightened attitude towards all reptiles and amphibians amongst the public and Members of the Association.
- 4.1.4** To collect and exchange, inter alia, through the medium of the Association Journal and Newsletter, information on all aspects of

the herpetofauna of Africa. To encourage the publication of this information in both scientific journals and popular literature.

- 4.1.5** To collate, publish and make available information of educational value to Association Members and the public at large.
- 4.1.6** The keeping of venomous and/or dangerous snakes by persons younger than 18 years of age and/or novices shall not be condoned or encouraged by the Association.
- 4.1.7** To raise money by means of membership fees, lectures, exhibitions, donations and publication of the Association's mouthpiece or in such a manner as the Association shall think fit for the purpose of furthering the aims and objectives of the Association.
- 4.1.8** To enter into formal or informal relationships with any other body with related aims, should such relationships further the aims of the Association.
- 4.1.9** To do all things which are incidental or conducive to the attainment of the above aims and objectives.

4.2 CONSERVATION POLICY

- 4.2.1** To encourage the protection and conservation of all species of herpetofauna and nature in general.
- 4.2.2** The Association shall co-operate and assist Public and Private Nature Conservation bodies wherever possible and the duly elected Committee shall at all times strive to maintain open channels of communication between the Association and these bodies.
- 4.2.3** Members issued with permits by the Public (Official) Nature Conservation bodies shall be responsible to both the Nature Conservation body and the Association for their actions and shall not bring the Association into disrepute with such bodies.
- 4.2.4** The Association will encourage its members to donate private collections, preserved or other, to a legally recognised natural science or natural history institute which actively curates and maintains such collections.

5 MEMBERSHIP

The Association shall consist of the following classes of membership:

Honorary Life Membership
Ordinary Membership
Scholar Membership (Africa only)
Institutional Membership
Exchange Membership

5.1 Honorary Life Membership

It shall be competent for the General Meeting, or by postal vote, provided written nomination and motivation are received by the Committee at least 60 days in advance, to elect any person whose services to the Association and/or the field of Herpetology have been such as to merit this distinction. Such membership shall carry full privileges and shall be awarded only in exceptional circumstances.

5.2 Ordinary Membership

Ordinary Membership of the Association is open to any person who supports the aims and objectives of the Association and is open to all persons worldwide. Privileges associated to this class of membership shall be divided into two classes.

5.2.1 African Membership:

Members shall have full voting rights, full privileges and shall be entitled to one copy of each issue of the Journal and Newsletter. This includes student members, defined as those registered at a tertiary institution.

5.2.2 Non-African Membership:

Members shall have full voting rights, full privileges and shall be entitled to one copy of each issue of the Journal and Newsletter. Membership fees may be determined independently of other categories and/or classes.

5.3 Scholar Membership

Any person under the age of 18 years who is a recognised scholar (proof is required) and supports the aims and objectives of the Association may become a Scholar Member.

Scholar Members will be allowed all privileges of the Association except that they shall not hold office and shall not have voting rights. Scholar Members shall be entitled to one copy of each issue of the Journal and Newsletter. This category shall only apply to applicants from Africa.

5.4 Institutional Membership

Any Institution or body which can be defined as a multi-user body, e.g. museum, library, zoological garden, reptile park, university, conservation

body, subscription agent, book agent, combinations of the above etc., or where a membership is applied for in a name other than that of a person, shall be classed as an Institutional Member and may apply for Institutional Membership.

Institutional Members will be allowed full privileges of the Association except that they shall not hold office and shall not have voting rights as defined under Para. 11.1. Institutional Members shall be entitled to one copy of each issue of the Journal and Newsletter. Membership fees will be determined separately from those of other categories.

5.5 Exchange Membership

Any association, club, society or institution, as defined in Para. 5.4, which feels that there would be a mutual benefit in the exchange of publications and/or literature between them and this Association may apply for exchange membership.

Exchange Membership carries no privileges whatsoever, with the exception that Exchange Members shall be entitled to one copy each of the Journal and Newsletter. No membership fees are payable for this category of membership.

Exchange Membership must be beneficial to the H.A.A. and must be approved by the H.A.A. Committee.

5.6 Application for Membership

Application for membership of the Association must be made on the prescribed application form and must bear the signature of the applicant. A copy of the Constitution shall be given to each new Member and the signed application form shall be taken as proof that the applicant has read, understood and accepted the conditions and implications applicable to membership.

6 MEMBERSHIP FEES

Membership fees will be due and payable on the 1st January and fees shall be determined from time to time by the Committee as set out under Para. 13.7.

7 TERMINATION OF MEMBERSHIP

7.1 Any Member who has failed to pay their subscription by the 31st March in any year will immediately cease to be a Member of the Association and must re-apply for membership.

- 7.2 Any Member who attempts to use the Association for personal financial gain, or who attempts to misappropriate the funds or assets of the Association shall have his/her membership terminated.
- 7.3 Any Member shall for gross misconduct have his/her membership terminated. The power of expulsion shall be vested in the Committee. Gross misconduct is defined in the Code of Conduct (Annexure A).
- 7.4 On termination of membership, no pro-rata refund of subscriptions shall be paid to any Member.

8 COMMITTEE

The Committee shall be composed of the following elected Members: -

Chairperson

Secretary

Treasurer

Journal Editor

Newsletter Editor

A maximum of four Additional Members with portfolios to be decided by the Committee

- 8.1 The position and composition of Committee Members may be combined in any way in which the elected Committee may feel to be beneficial to the Association, but may not exceed nine (9) permanent members excluding Branch (see 9.1) appointed representatives.
- 8.2 The Chairperson shall be elected every two years and shall hold office for two years. She/he shall be elected at a General Meeting or by electronic vote if no meeting is to be held at the time of the intended election. The Chairperson may not hold office for more than six consecutive years. In their absence, any other Member of the Committee may be elected Chairperson for the duration of the Chairperson's absence.
- 8.3 The Secretary, Treasurer and Additional Members as required, shall be elected every two years to hold office for a period of two years and shall be eligible for re-election for a maximum of six consecutive years.
- 8.4 The Journal Editor and Newsletter Editor shall be elected to hold office for a period of two years and shall be eligible for re-election for a maximum of eight consecutive years.
- 8.5 In the event of any committee member serving on the committee for the maximum term, such a committee member should take a two-year hiatus before standing for re-election. The two-year hiatus may be waived, on a

term by term basis, in the event that no other nominees are put forth for a particular position on the Committee.

- 8.6** The Committee will have the right to allocate specific portfolios to Additional Members.
- 8.7** The Committee shall have the power to co-opt as Members of the Committee any person or persons deemed to have a special knowledge of any subject as and when required. Such co-opted Members shall not have a vote.
- 8.8** The Committee may appoint Sub-committees.
- 8.9** The Chairperson shall have a deliberative as well as a casting vote.
- 8.10** If any Member of the Committee does not or is unable to complete his/her term of office, the Committee shall have the power to fill the vacancy by co-option for the remaining term of office.
- 8.11** Committee Members not complying with duties and/or responsibilities contained herein or in any other minuted Association By-Laws may be asked by the Committee (under Para. 13.2) to resign, or may have their status terminated, and may be replaced by a co-opted member, usually based on the highest number of votes obtained at the last election.
- 8.12** A record of Committee and other meetings shall be kept by the Secretary in the form of minutes. These shall be presented by the Secretary to the Committee or Members at the following Committee or other meeting and a Proposer, Seconder and approval by show of hands called for.
- 8.13** The Committee, in addition to the powers and authority bestowed upon it by this Constitution or otherwise expressly conferred on it, may exercise all such powers and do all such acts as may be of benefit for the proper running, management and existence of the Association and its Members.

9 ASSOCIATION BRANCHES

- 9.1** Branches may be formed within the Association in order to co-ordinate the activities of members within their own district or area.
- 9.2** All Members of an Association Branch must be fully paid up Members of the Association and shall have full rights under this Constitution.
- 9.3** Branches shall be liable for the collecting and forwarding of all monies due to the Association as well as updated membership lists of Branch Members.

- 9.4** Branches shall be totally self-supporting and shall elect their own Committees
- 9.5** One Member from each Branch, normally the Branch Chairperson, who must comply with Para. 9.2, may be elected by the Branch Members, who must comply with Para. 9.2, to stand on the H.A.A. Committee in order to represent the Branch's interests, views and opinions.
- 9.6** A Branch shall have no separate voting powers except that the duly elected representative to the Association Committee shall have one vote on that Committee.
- 9.7** This constitution shall be totally binding in all ways on any Branch and its Members formed under section 9.

10 MEETINGS

10.1 General Meetings

Annual General Meetings and/or other General Meetings may be held at the discretion of the Committee or when the situation allows, this owing to the wide distribution of members.

10.2 Special Meetings

Special and/or Extraordinary Meetings may not be called for by members, owing to the wide distribution of members.

10.3 Committee Meetings

Committee Meetings will be held only when the opportunity presents itself or at the discretion of the Committee, this owing to the wide distribution of Committee Members. Notwithstanding the above, all matters affecting the Association shall have the majority approval of the Committee via electronic platforms. Committee Meetings may be conducted on telecommunication platforms.

- 10.4** Owing to the circumstances presented above, members shall have the right to communicate any dissatisfaction, proposed changes to the constitution etc. directly to the Chairperson who will take it upon themselves to ensure that the matter is communicated to all the other Committee Members and/or Members and that the matter is resolved by a majority decision.

11 FRANCHISE

Only African Honorary Life Members, African Life Members, African Ordinary Members and Overseas Members over the age of 18 years and in good standing have voting rights.

- 11.1** Notwithstanding Para. 11; Where a membership is registered in a name other than that of a person, e.g. any Institution such as a museum, zoological garden, reptile park, conservation body, library etc., such an Institution shall not have a voting right and neither shall any individuals who are not fully paid up Ordinary Members.

12 QUORUM

- 12.1** At any General Meeting a quorum shall be one-third of the total number of Members registered as delegates.
- 12.2** At a Committee Meeting a quorum shall be half the full Committee plus one and will be based on the number of H.A.A. Committee votes present.

13 FINANCES

- 13.1** The financial year of the Association shall be from the 1st March up to and including the 28th February of the following year.
- 13.2** A copy of the audited yearly balance sheet will be sent to all Members for inspection by Members.
- 13.3** Upon recommendation by the Committee, Membership fees and any other charges shall be determined by the Committee as in Para. 13.7.
- 13.4** Honorary Life Members are excluded from paying subscriptions.
- 13.5** Subscriptions shall be due on the 1st of January of each and every year. Paragraph 7.1 shall be evoked if subscriptions are not paid by the end of the three month period of grace.
- 13.6** All monies paid by any Member of the Association and donations to the Association shall be kept in a savings account, current account or any other investment that the Committee deems appropriate for the benefit of the Association and its Members.
- 13.7** Any single expenditure over the amount calculated by the formula - Ordinary Membership Rate X 25 (e.g. R200 X 25 = R5000) must have Committee approval and shall be based on a binding quotation signed by either the supplier or the initiator and which must be submitted to the Treasurer for clearance before any such transaction is finalised. Paragraph 14.8 will be enforced for failure to comply with the above.
- 13.8** The Herpetological Association of Africa shall not be liable for any payments which do not comply with Para 13.7. Any Member not

complying with Para. 13.7 shall be personally liable for any such expense and neither the Member nor the supplier shall have any claim whatsoever against the Association, its acting or past Committee or Members.

- 13.9 No profits or gains accrued by the Association in whatever manner will be distributed to any person/persons and the funds of the Association will be utilised solely for investment or for the objectives for which the Association was established.

14 AMENDMENT OF THE CONSTITUTION

- 14.1 Any proposed amendments to the Constitution may only be considered at a General Meeting, or under 10.4 above.
- 14.2 Notice of any such amendments to the Constitution must reach the Committee at least 60 days prior to such a meeting, or such a proposal being put forward to African Members by electronic or other written correspondence.
- 14.3 Any amendments to this constitution will be submitted to the Commissioner of Inland Revenue, Department of Finance, Pretoria, by the Committee.

16 DISSOLUTION OF THE ASSOCIATION

Upon dissolution of the Association, the Committee shall distribute all assets of the Association to a Nature Conservation Organisation, Museum or any other applicable natural science or research institution/s directly involved with the herpetofauna of the African continent. The Committee may stipulate or suggest how the donated money should be spent.

Original Constitution ¹ :	1965 (D.G. Broadley).
Revised and amended ² :	1988 (R.M. Douglas).
Revised and amended ² :	1991 (R.M. Douglas).
Amended ² :	1996 (St. Lucia H.A.A. conference)
Corrected version (spelling)	2002 (R.M. Douglas)
Corrected and amended:	2019 (H.A.A. Committee)

Details of revisions and amendments are to be found in the H.A.A. Journal and *African Herp News*.
