



## PRESS RELEASE

No: 460/2016

Date: 7th September 2016

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### **GTB promotes nature tourism at top birdwatchers' event in UK**

The Gibraltar Tourist Board has taken part in the annual international British Birdwatching Fair that is held every August 19-21 at Rutland Water, England.

The GTB marketed the Rock as an attractive destination for bird watching and nature tourism which has become a fashionable trend in the global travel trade in recent years.

Also exhibiting at the popular event was the local company Avian Tours promoting their bird-watching holidays in Gibraltar, and represented by Andrew Fortuna.

Jill Yeoman, a representative of the Gibraltar Ornithological and Natural History Society (GONHS) also participated.

First held in 1989 and described by the UK press as “a bird-watchers’ Glastonbury”, thousands of keen enthusiasts from all over the world ‘flocked’ to the fair located at one of England’s most prominent rural nature reserves, to see rare and exotic species.

All the organisers' profits are donated to a charity, Birdlife International, in support of bird conservation strategies and in saving critically endangered species around the world.

A large number of suppliers of binoculars, cameras, books, clothing and other birdwatching equipment, plus artists and tour companies, displayed and sold their wares, and there were lectures and other attractions.

An unexpected visitor to the Gibraltar stand was former Governor, Field Marshal Sir John Chapple, a keen birdwatcher himself and Life President of GONHS.

Minister for Tourism, the Hon Samantha Sacramento MP, said the GTB’s participation at the event was a positive move: “We are interested in developing new tourist products and niche markets, and ornithology and bird watching in general are themes of great interest to nature lovers. I think that we have a lot to offer in Gibraltar in this respect as our natural history tourist sites are truly outstanding and there are exciting business opportunities that can be pursued.

“The Gibraltar Tourist Board works tirelessly in conjunction with other stakeholders, constantly

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seeking new ways to promote Gibraltar and to attract new types of tourism to the Rock. Participating at this Bird-Watchers' Fair has been an excellent initiative which we are confident will produce the desired results."

Gibraltar has so much to offer and we want to ensure that we explore every single opportunity and expand such markets so that they translate into visitors to the Rock.

Minister for the Environment, the Hon Dr John Cortes, added: "Being able to call on local experts as well as on the expertise of the GTB is the ideal combination to work towards increasing the attraction of Gibraltar to a considerable number of potential tourists with an interest in birds and other wildlife. The Rutland Bird Fair is the most highly regarded event of this nature anywhere, and Gibraltar's presence there is hugely significant".