

The Kite

Tygerberg Bird Club
Tygerberg Voëlklub



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Chirp from the Chair

The nicest present for us all, was to go back to a 'LIVE' Club meeting at the Tygerberg Nature Reserve in July. The hall was filled and great excitement, was seeing old friends face-to-face once more! Gosh – how we and the world has suffered with the Covid pandemic!

We want to give a huge thank you to Dalene Vanderwalt, for managing the Club's ZOOM meetings this past two and a half years! At times it even meant driving elsewhere to get to an area where there was no loadshedding! All our speakers during this time were really accommodating, and we must thank all of them as well.

We kicked off our first live meeting with a great talk by David Hall, who gave us a lovely rendition of birding highlights of 2021!

We encourage our members to come and attend our Monthly Meetings and Outings. These get-togethers are a source of so much birding enjoyment for all who attend.

A BIG CONGRATULATIONS – to the three newly qualified TBC Bird Ringers i.e., John Maberly, Ettienne Kotze and Rocco Nel. You may read more about this topic in the article on page 3. We are very proud of the TBC Ringing Unit that has been running for 30 years, and we congratulate them for their dedication, and the significant contribution they've made to avian research over all these years. Thank you, Gerald Wingate, for submitting the nice article.

We look forward to the planned TBC Birding Camp in October this year at Honeywood Farm, Grootvadersbos.

Happy birding!

Brigid Crew

The Berg River Estuary officially launched as a Ramsar site



The Western Cape Government and CapeNature celebrated the launch of the Berg River Estuary as a Ramsar site last week – ahead of World Environment Day on Sunday, June 5 – with the unveiling of an official Ramsar signboard at the start of the estuary.

Hosted by the United Nations Environment Programme, World Environment Day provides the largest platform for environmental outreach and awareness worldwide. This year's theme, **OnlyOneEarth**, champions global transformative environmental change and the Berg River Estuary's Ramsar status means that the sensitive and dynamic ecosystem will be protected and conserved for generations to come.

CEO of CapeNature, Dr Razeena Omar, said: “The Berg Estuary, which was declared under the Convention on Wetlands of International Importance earlier this year, forms one of only four estuaries on the West Coast of Southern Africa. It spans across 1 162ha and contributes to approximately 60% of the estuarine habitat on the West Coast. It is truly one of a kind and an incredible biological and economical asset to the Western Cape.”

About 127 species of waterbird have been recorded at the estuary since 1975, some of which are globally threatened, such as the Cape cormorant, or regionally threatened such as the Caspian tern. The site is also important for fisheries, with communities of fish, such as white steenbras and white stumpnose, partially or fully dependent on it for breeding.

“Estuaries like the Berg provide a number of goods and services such as tourism, salt production and fishing, to name a few. These alone are worth over R380m to the local economy per year and so its conservation is paramount not only to the local ‘Weskus’ community but also the Province’s economy,” said Premier of the Western Cape, Alan Winde.

Ringling in the changes

The Tygerberg Ringing Unit was established 30 years ago.

Most of the original Ringers have either relocated or hung up their Ringing Pliers. Over the past 15 years the only two members, namely Margaret McCall and Lee Silks, have been active on a regular basis. In October 2009 they gained the assistance of Gerald Wingate to help with carrying the equipment, setting up the nets and extracting the netted birds.



The need for succession was recognised about four years ago and three of the four recently recruited assistants commenced with their training, namely John Maberly, Ettienne Kotze and Rocco Nel, while Gail Maberly continued to provide valuable assistance with erecting nets and extricating netted birds.

The training process includes the erecting of nets by oneself, extracting netted birds, identifying, and sexing the birds, determining the state of moult of the primary feathers, weighing the bird, and measuring the length of the tail and the folded wing after placing the ring on the tarsus. Thereafter, entering of the data onto a spreadsheet and the submission of the file to SAFRING (SA Ringing Database) at UCT needs careful attention.

During the early stages of training, we had the privilege of being visited by Dieter O, the former head of the SAFRING unit, and Prof Les Underhill, former head of the Animal Demography Unit (ADU) at UCT. Useful tips and techniques were gleaned from these vastly experienced professionals, while the regular nods of approval were appreciated.

The training procedure was progressing admirably until the restrictions resulting from the Covid-19 pandemic hampered the freedom of movement, and social distancing restricted activities at the ringing table. Once ringing sessions could be resumed, we encountered periods when neither Margaret nor Lee could supervise the “trainees”. Fortunately, we were able to obtain the services of Felicity Elmore, an experienced Ringer and accomplished birder, and long-standing member of the Cape Bird Club. Her expertise and enthusiasm were very welcome, and she added momentum to the training process.



In addition to being able to process the birds regarding age, sex, moult and measurements, the trainees can qualify for a Ringer’s Permit once they have each ringed 500 birds and processed at least 50 different species.

After a lengthy but thorough process, all the qualifying requirements have now been met by the three “trainees” and the motivation for their “graduation” has received favourable consideration from the head of SAFRING. It

is now fitting to congratulate John, Ettienne and Rocco on a well-deserved qualification and to formally welcome them as fully-fledged members of the TBC Ringing Unit.

Well done, chaps! We look forward to seeing you in the field every Wednesday morning!

Gerald Wingate

Counting birds with lasers

What's the point of counting birds? The straight answer to this is that we need to know how many of a species there are for conservation and population management. The Science and Innovation Programme are calling on birders to become involved in doing point counts during 2023.

Population size of a species is a critical piece of information required for the IUCN Red Listing process: a species can almost be classified as Endangered based on population size alone. Technically, you need a population size plus a few other criteria: ongoing decline, often coupled with a disjunct population. But figuring out 'how many' there are, is notoriously difficult for various reasons. It may be due to the nature of the beasts: they don't want to be counted; or they may be spread over huge areas where numbers fluctuate dramatically depending on the habitat; or numbers fluctuate dramatically over time.

There are many Ways and Means for counting birds. For some birds you may need to stick your hand down a burrow, while others are best counted at their colonies or aggregation sites. Tree nesting vultures are counted using helicopters, while rare and elusive species are best counted using camera traps or acoustic surveys. Fynbos buttonquail was surveyed using flush survey techniques, a kind of line transect. Those who have been involved in the long running CAR programme were conducting a kind of transect survey: a route defined by a start and end point with associated distance travelled. Transects surveys are useful for large and distinctive species, or rare species where count effort needs to be maximised given time available.

Point counts are a popular survey method useful for answering a variety of ecological and other research questions. A point count is usually conducted from a set location for a set period, i.e., you don't move. They are the preferred count method for quantifying bird communities, in other words where all birds need to be counted. This can be useful for comparing species richness, i.e., the number of different kinds of birds detected, and abundance, i.e., how many birds were counted at different locations. For example, comparing bird communities in farmlands compared to protected areas. In this situation, we are interested in finding out if a species is using one kind of land more compared to another in a landscape that changes too rapidly to use transects. In this situation it may be a good idea to repeat counts over a set of locations to account for confounding variables, like time of day and weather. If repeated over a wide enough area, with a wide range of environmental variables that can be measured, point counts can also be used to predict where a species may be found.

A fundamental piece of information that is required in order to determine the conservation status of the species, is how big is the population? In other words, how many birds are there in a defined area? In their simplest form, a point count can be used to answer this if the radius of the count is truncated at some known distance, for example 50 metres from the observer.

Then the density of birds is calculated from the number of birds detected divided by the area of the circle that the point count contains.

A limitation here is that for all species the probability of detection decreases with increasing distance. An extreme example would be Fynbos Buttonquail, which is only detected at your feet, so you could be missing many in a stationary point count. In addition, if we artificially truncate the radius of counts, then we may have

to exclude rare species which can be detected at greater distances: we can detect Blue Cranes from kilometers away.

The solution is to add the distance at which a species was detected to the information being recorded while conducting the count. Using special software, each species can be assigned a unique detection function that considers not only how detectable the species is, but can also include other detection confounders, such as temperature or time of day. The science behind all this is called 'Distance Sampling'. At its heart, Distance Sampling is a method which allows separation of the observer effect from the count process. And as the name suggests, that distance measure is critical to its use.

Measuring distance to a bird or flock is such a valuable additional piece of information. Combined with the bearing between you and the bird, one can also more accurately determine where the bird is spatially. Distance is critical for determining the detection function of a species (buttonquail vs crane). But measuring distance is difficult: humans are notoriously terrible at estimating distances, especially in open landscapes over large distances with few reference points. Thus, a critical piece of equipment in the Distance Sampler's toolkit is something that measures distances.

When I started out doing Distance Sampling, it was with the good old long tape-measure on a reel. These days, we have 'rangefinders', and at the press of a button you can get down to the meter accuracy for things hundreds of meters away, or for the top end products, even a kilometer or two. A rangefinder essentially measures the time for laser to travel to a set object and back, and most are accurate to a meter or two. Those who play golf may already have a rangefinder in their golf club bag. If not, add one to your Christmas list (but Santa will complain at that price tag). <https://vortexoptics.com/catalogsearch/result/?q=rangefinder>

And recording data in a point count? In my 2012 surveys across the Fynbos Biome, it was all done with paper and pencil. During my 2017/18 surveys of the Karoo, I used a bespoke mobile phone app. And now BirdLife South Africa has commissioned BirdLasser to add a point count and transect protocol to the app better associated with SABAP2: so, you probably already have that on your phone! Using that protocol simplifies many aspects of doing a point count, by automatically recording date, time and GPS position. The data fields will be familiar to anyone who has entered supplementary information through the Threatened Species Cause, including group sizes, behaviour etc. The only 'new' fields are distance, which can either be entered to the nearest meter (if you have a rangefinder) or estimated in bands.

The Science and Innovation Programme wants as many people as possible doing point counts during 2023, and this article is priming you to get ready to make your birding efforts count. We hope we can count on you to count our birds!

Alan Lee: Science and
Innovation
Programme Manager,
BirdLife South Africa





St Croix Island penguin colony decline

St Croix Island, off the coast of the Eastern Cape, is home to the largest

African penguin colony in the world. St Croix, along with Bird, Robben and Dassen islands, is part of a research study to establish the effects of fishing on penguins.

“I counted a population count on St Croix Island a few months ago on behalf of the Department of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment, with the help of South African National Parks. We counted over 1 000 breeding pairs, which makes for approximately 2 500 penguins, accounting for those that do not breed,” says Professor Lorien Pichegru from Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University, Coastal and Marine Research Institute. This is a 90% decrease from a decade ago, while the Bird Island penguin colony halved during the same time. The professor added that penguins do not move once they have started breeding in a colony, thus penguins have died and not simply moved away as implied by reports.

African penguins from all over South Africa are decreasing at an alarming rate, and so are Cape gannets and Cape cormorants, all three being endangered, all three depending on small pelagic fish, sardines and anchovies, as prey. The small pelagic fish stocks have dwindled recently due to, among others, climate change. We cannot change the climate to improve conditions for fish, to increase food availability for the seabirds. Pichegru said that fishing exclusion zones need to be established and monitored around penguin and sea bird colonies.

“My research has proved repeatedly over the years the benefits of sardine fishing exclusion zones around penguin colonies for the breeding birds. It was confirmed on the West Coast colonies by colleagues of mine. However, no effective closures have been set in place to date for the past two years, despite the promises by the minister. These are urgently needed,” she said.

St Croix Island is particularly vulnerable due to its location in the lea of the bay, which limits the size of the foraging habitat of penguins. Changes in prey availability are felt much more rapidly by penguins breeding there. In addition, the proximity of two industrial harbours increases noise pollution levels in the penguin’s foraging habitat, and bunkering activities significantly increase the risks of oil spills, as shown by the four oil spills that occurred in the bay since 2016, the initiation of the ship-to-ship bunkering in the bay.

“Noise pollution is something we only recently start acknowledging globally, and my latest research shows that noise levels in the bay have doubled since 2016, likely affecting many levels of the ecosystems. Fish, invertebrates, birds and marine mammals use sound to communicate, find food, find mates, locate predators etc. Penguins are canaries in the coal mine, revealing the troubles underwater we cannot see. Noise mitigation measures will need to be set in place and discussions with SAMSA are ongoing”, concluded Pichegru.

Extracted from IOL Environment News

For the love of Owls ...

Owl Rescue Centre is a registered Non-profit company and permitted rehabilitation facility concerned with the well-being of all owl species and wildlife in Southern Africa.

Realising that there was a rapid decline in owl numbers and that owls had become one of the most common wildlife casualties brought into veterinary practices, Brendan Murray and his wife, Danelle, decided ten years ago to focus all their efforts on conserving them.

The organisation they founded, Owl Rescue Centre, is based at Hartbeespoort in the Northwest Province, and now takes in more than a thousand owls every year through their rescue efforts. The owls are rehabilitated and when they can survive on their own in the wild, are released in the sanctuary – a farm which is located within a 12,000-hectare conservancy.

When Brendan and Danelle acquired the farm now known as the Owl Sanctuary, their dream was to secure a place for the owls where they would be protected and looked after, a piece of habitat that would always belong to them.

The Sanctuary is the only one of its kind in the world. Owls can be observed visiting the various feeding platforms around the Sanctuary every single night. Many have taken up residency in the Owl Houses erected on the farm, where they breed year after year.



Owl Rescue Centre is dedicated to protecting owls, rescue owls that are in danger and rehabilitate and care for owls that have been injured, are sick, poisoned or orphaned and then release them back into their natural environment using specifically researched release methods. We are also involved in several conservation projects to decrease the high mortality rate of owl species.

Every season they install a whole bunch of owl houses on the sanctuary.

Since they started making them out of old washing machines which were stripped down to the basics, the occupancy rate has almost tripled. One would say they are owl approved!

<http://www.owlrescuecentre.org.za/>

International news

US wind farm company has admitted to killing at least 150 bald or golden eagles since 2012

A US renewable energy company was given five-year probation and ordered to pay more than \$8 million in fines after the deaths of 150 bald and golden eagles on their wind turbines.

NextEra Energy subsidiary ESI Energy pleaded guilty to violating the Migratory Bird Treaty Act, as per a press release from the Department of Justice.

As part of the case, it also acknowledged the deaths of a more than 150 eagles at the company's wind farms in Wyoming, New Mexico, Arizona, California, Colorado, Illinois, North Dakota, and Michigan, and other states.

Prosecutors said the eagles died over a period beginning in 2012, and that 136 of them were killed being struck by a turbine blade.

As per the DOJ, ESI failed to apply for the necessary permits after the death of the birds. "For more than a decade, ESI has violated (wildlife) laws, taking eagles without obtaining or even seeking the necessary permit," assistant attorney general Todd Kim of the Justice Department's Environment and Natural Resources Division said in the statement. In its plea agreement, ESI agreed to spend up to \$27 million during its probationary period on an "eagle management plan" to minimise future eagle deaths and injuries.

It also committed to paying \$29,623 per future injury or death of a bald or golden eagle. In a statement ESI said that collisions with the wind turbines were unavoidable and should not be criminalised.

"In fact, our company makes significant efforts to avoid accidental collisions with bird populations, including eagles," said NextEra President Rebecca Kujawa.

The ruling came amid a push from the Biden administration for more renewable energy, including a large expansion of offshore wind farms.

The impact of wind turbines on bird populations has caused controversy, and was a favoured subject of former US President Donald Trump, a well-known opponent of wind turbines. During a presidential debate in 2020, then President Donald Trump said that wind turbines kill "all the birds" after saying he knows "more about wind" than then candidate Joe Biden.

Trump has personally opposed wind turbines being installed near his properties, suing the Scottish Government over plans for an offshore windfarm that Trump said would ruin the view from his course in Aberdeenshire. Trump lost the case and had to pay the legal costs of the Scottish government.

Land wind turbines in the US kill some 234,000 birds a year through collision, according to data collected by the US Fish and Wildlife Service.

By comparison, buildings cause about almost a billion deaths by collision with glass and cats kill about 2.4 billion birds a year.

Turbines ultimately favour birds indirectly, according to the American bird conservancy, because they slow down climate change and help preserve endangered habitats.



<https://www.dailymaverick.co.za>

Club Activities



Worcester Botanical Garden outing – Saturday 25 June

44 Members arrived at the Worcester Karoo Desert Botanical Gardens, and this time the weather was lovely!! It was nice to see the vast improvement of the plants after the severe drought of a few years back.

Many aloes as well as tree aloes were in flower. Southern Double-Collared and Malachite Sunbirds were plentiful.



Streaky-headed Seedeater by Kevin Drummond-Hay

Everybody had good views of Streaky-headed Seed eaters. The

Crombec by Gill Ainslie



surrounding mountains were clear, and one could see far into the distance. The cherry on top was to see QUIVER TREES in full flower!! Out timing was spot-on!

Next most of the group started hiking the Shale Trail. It climbs up and around a koppie. Karoo Scrub-Robin, Familiar Chat and Layard's Warbler were seen well. The second half of the trail is steep downhill. We

suggested some members might want to turn back. Starting down the steep hill with the kind help of Rodney, Keith and Gert, a large group of members hiked the full trail. It was exciting, and fun – but eyes had to be kept on the rocks and trail to not tumble!

The morning was ended with great views of a Fairy Flycatcher in a tree at the parking area. It was photographed by many from all angles!! Tea and a picnic brought an end to a very nice winter's outing in this semi-desert landscape.

Brigid Crewe

Strandfontein Outing – Saturday 23 July

27 Members and visitors gathered at Strandfontein Sewerage Works on a cold, rainy morning to view, by the end, 69 bird species. Luckily the weather cleared, and we were able to enjoy sunny weather for most of the morning.



Notably we saw both Fulvous Whistling Duck and White-faced Whistling Duck, (the only two species in Southern Africa), Bev Patterson viewed the Pink-backed Pelican and several over-wintering Common Terns were seen on Pan T1, where we hoped to see an African Jacana, but no such luck.

White-faced Whistling Duck by Darryl de Beer



Female Southern Pochard by
Darryl de Beer

Strandfontein is renowned for water birds. The only wader we saw was the Three-banded Plover, but we were spoiled for choice by the splendid ducks and teals on offer, especially Red Billed Teals, Cape Teals and Southern Pochard and Maccoa Ducks, plus all the usual suspects.

Raptors were well represented with Peregrine Falcon, Rock Kestrel, Black-winged Kite, Marsh Harrier and Jackal Buzzard on view.

Brown-throated Martin, Rock Martin and Little Swift represented the SMS's (Swallows, Martins and Swifts) and the Grebe family representatives were Little and Black-necked.

We gathered at the "Hub" to relax and enjoy coffee in the glorious sunshine and on the way out stopped in the forest adjacent to Seekoeivlei searching, unsuccessfully, for the Pink-backed Pelican but we were lucky to observe a Pied Kingfisher, African Spoonbills feeding and a fly-by of a Caspian Tern. A thoroughly enjoyable outing and, if repeated in summer, we should easily top the species number seen on Saturday.

Daryl and Lynette de Beer



Eastern Cape Birding Trip, 14-29 May

The excited party (Helene Thompson, Jacky van Tonder, Peter and Nikki Nupen, Angus and Frances Hemp) assembled at Kevin's house by 6am and arrived in Graaff Reinet some eight hours and 20 minutes later. Sightings along the way included Blue Crane, Rock Kestrel and Greater Kestrel, Black- and White-throated Canary and Pale Chanting Goshawk.

We went for a late afternoon drive in the Camdeboo National Park, with guide Leonie Fouche and visited various viewpoints in the Valley of Desolation. Sightings included Pale- and Red-winged Starlings, Streaky-headed Seedeater, White-backed Mousebird and Lanner Falcon.

We were out early next morning (3-7°) in Camdeboo with Leonie. A Yellow-throated Petronia put on a display in the campsite. A highlight was finding a Namaqua Warbler and the development of a bird party with Common Waxbill, Acacia Pied Barbet, Cape White-eye, Karoo Scrub Robin, Red-billed Firefinch, Red-headed Finch, Acacia Pied Barbet, African Stonechat and Red-billed Quelea, among others. Some of the group also spotted a Gabar Goshawk and juvenile Martial Eagle, while a Spotted Eagle-Owl was seen by all. A drive in the veld produced a Karoo Korhaan and a small party of Double-banded Coursers bobbing in and out of view. There were Ant-eating, Familiar and Stone Chats on display, also Cinnamon-breasted Bunting, Sabota Lark, Wattled and Pied Starling, African Pipit, Neddicky, Southern Grey-headed Sparrow, Brown-hooded Kingfisher, Chestnut-vented Tit-Warbler and African Hoopoe. There were waterbirds on a dam, including Black-necked Grebe, and African Palm Swifts and Rock Martin overhead. Two Pale Chanting Goshawks sat on a flat-topped aloe on the way to the old Winterhoek Homestead. Larger game included black-backed jackal, black wildebeest and red hartebeest.

Some spotted Village Indigobird and Amethyst Sunbird before we left for Craddock the next morning. At Nieu Bethesda we had a fascinating tour of the Kitching Fossil Exploration Centre, including the fossils still buried in the river. We proceeded to Mountain National Zebra Park via back roads looking for Rockjumpers and Mountain Wheatear, but with no luck. In the gardens outside our chalets there were



Cardinal Woodpecker, Rufous-eared Warbler, White-browed Sparrow-Weaver, Scaly-feathered Finch, Cape Glossy Starling, Speckled Mousebird, Golden-breasted Bunting and Fairy Flycatcher flitting around.

A morning drive along the Kranskop Loop produced Eastern Long-billed and Spike-heeled Lark, African, Nicholson's and Plain-backed Pipit and, more excitingly, male and female Buff-streaked Chat, Sickle-winged Chat, and also the longed-for Ground Woodpecker. (Someone saw pink and yelled, "Parrot!"). The picnic site was awash with Finch, Firefinch, Robin, Quelea, Bunting, Wagtail, Pipit, Canary and Bokmakerie.

The dam on the Ubejane Loop had a clump of Spotted Thick-knee and waterbirds including Common Shelduck. Chat-corner was populated by

Ant-eating Chats, ground squirrel and mongoose. We also saw Eastern Clapper Lark, Secretarybird, Blue Crane, Double-banded Coursers, Cape Longclaw and Ludwig's Bustard among the zebras, black wildebees and blesbok up on the plateau. A night drive, warmly wrapped in blankets, yielded two Spotted Eagle-Owls, grey duiker, kudu, gemsbok, bat-eared foxes, porcupine, striped genet and scrubhares.

The following day we drove the routes in the Mountain Zebra Park again, first encountering a buffalo and then adding Black-faced Waxbill, Jackal Buzzard, Sentinel Rock Thrush and Large-billed Lark to the list. Watching a black-backed Jackal, we suddenly realised that the rounded ears sticking up at slight distance were attached to two lionesses, invisible when they flopped their heads back down again. There is only a very small pride of lions in the park, and we had not expected to see them, as the photograph shows!

In the picnic ground, the monkeys were on the alert to secure lunch and snatched a sandwich out of an unwary hand. Meanwhile, back at the chalets, there was an invasion going on with monkeys eating the food on one of the kitchen counters.

The following day, Thursday 19th May, we left for Hogsback, with rain threatening. We did a U-turn for a tree full of hunched grey birds, "Vultures!", which turned out to be Hadedas. The Hogsback Arboretum, where Knysna Turaco chased each other through the trees, also yielded Yellow-bellied Eremomela, Black-chested Snake Eagle, Black-headed Oriole, Dark-backed Weaver, Olive Woodpecker and Dark-capped Bulbul. Rain set in for the next couple of days, but we heard the Cape Parrots fly over and saw some outliers.

On the Saturday, in East London, Gerard Morgan opened up the Nahoon River Reserve for us and we saw flocks of Bronze Mannikin at the hide, along with Eastern Golden Weaver. On the walk along the Nahoon River we saw a Great Egret, a Crowned Eagle, Terrestrial Brownbul and Grey Cuckooshrike. On the racecourse, we saw small groups of Black-winged Lapwing, Common Myna, several Red-necked Spurfowl and Hamerkop, with Long-crested Eagle on every other post. The feast at Woodleigh Lodge provided padkos for the next few days.

In Grahamstown we stayed at Stone's Throw Cottages for two nights. The highlight of this stay was finding the Cape Eagle Owl in an old quarry, guided by Lynette Knott-Rudman. We drove around the top of the quarry on what had been the old wagon trail from PE to Grahamstown, hoping for Mocking Cliff Chat, but found Long-billed Crombec and African Firefinch instead.

The Belmont Golf Course Road next day had a small group of Crowned Hornbill, being chased by a cheeky Drongo. We also saw Emerald-spotted Wood Dove, Tawny-flanked Prinia, Black-collared Barbet, while the highlight was a pair of Mountain Wagtail.

At the estuary mouth at Kenton-on-Sea, there was a Goliath Heron, a small flock of Sanderling, plus Oystercatchers, Greater Crested Tern and White-fronted Plover. We drove down some country roads (skilled driving by Kevin prevented us sticking in the mud) and had a wonderful sighting of a Grey Sunbird, feeding on an aloe and also of Eastern Golden Weaver.

On the drive to Port Elizabeth on Tuesday 24 May, we dropped in at Blue Water Bay to photograph a Grey-headed Gull sitting on a beach alcohol “Zero Tolerance” signboard, and then visited the Cape Recife lighthouse, where we found Cape Gannet, Cape Cormorant, Caspian, Swift and Common Tern, but no Damara Tern. In PE, we stayed at Deer Park and visited the Island Reserve. The hoped-for forest birds were absent, but there were horse riders with a black Friesian and a white Percheron. We read in the Eastern Cape Provincial Nature Reserves Visitor Guide, that some resorts are offering exotics such as Rock-spotted Eagle owl, Spotted Wagtail, Darter Barbet and Crested Weaver!

The next day, we drove into St Francis Bay, where the port was full of calamari-fishing boats, docked for the off-season. On the way, we saw Black-cheeked and Rosy-faced Lovebirds. In the estuary we saw Whimbrel and other water birds. We could not find Denham’s Bustard on the roads around Humansdorp.

Next stop was the De Vasselot Rest Camp in Nature’s Valley, where we had cabins overlooking the river. The campground yielded African Fish Eagle, African Goshawk, Pied and Half-collared Kingfisher, Knysna Turaco, Sombre Greenbul, Olive Woodpecker and Grey Cuckooshrike, while spilling crumbs lured out Yellow-throated Woodland Warbler, Lemon Dove and Chorister Robin-Chat. On the Forest Trail Board Walk some saw Terrestrial Bulbul and Green Wood Hoopoe and heard Scaly-throated Honeyguide.

A large male baboon marched into our cabin and exited with a box of rusks, while other members of the troop invaded the other cabins, broke eggs, put their fingers in the salad trays and left with yet more rusks. We wondered why the rangers had not warned us about what must be pretty routine afternoon raiding.

At the Global Village in Plettenberg Bay the next day, we all saw the Green Wood Hoopoe, Forest Canary, Black-headed Oriole and Black Sparrowhawk. There were waterbirds at Leisure Isle, adding a Glossy Ibis, but the breeding Peregrine above Coney Glen at the Knysna Heads were elusive.

The best was saved for last, and we all enjoyed our two-night stay at Elephant Rest with Adela and Brett Steageman as their garden was full of birds gathering nectar and displaying in the sunlight. There were Forest and Brimstone Canary and Streaky-headed Seedeater; flocks of Black-bellied Starling; Amethyst, Greater and Southern Double-Collared Sunbird; Bar-throated Apalis, Cape White-eye, Cape Batis and the promise of a Blue-mantled Crested Flycatcher, heard but not seen. Spurwing Goose and Knysna Woodpecker and Black-wing Lapwing were nearby. We enjoyed forest walks from Dalene Matthee’s Big Tree and to the Big tree at Woodville, but birds were difficult to see in the canopy (just Cape Siskin).

A drive along the Lakes produced Great-crested, Black-necked and Little Grebe; Red-billed and Cape Teal; Little Rush and Lesser Swamp Warbler; a single Maccoa; Black Crake and three cavorting African Swamphen; Cape Sugarbird, Cape Grassbird and African Olive Pigeon. One person had a fleeting glimpse of an African Rail. We tried for Oxpecker riding on zebra but were not allowed into the private reserve opposite Swartvlei.



Black-winged Lapwing by Helene Thompson

On Sunday 29 May we headed home over Outeniqua Pass, to Calitzdorp on Route 62, stopping for port at Boplaas and lunch at the Bakhuis, and on through light rain to Cape Town. We were all very grateful to Kevin for organising such a great trip, taking us to beautiful and varied places, with accommodation well-chosen in terms of settings and length of stay, and a chance to see some amazing birds and meet interesting people, while being carefully driven, with no responsibility for anything!

Total birds seen – 212, total km travelled - 3378.

Frances Hemp

Know your birds

What is a bird “Glottis”?

See the hole in the back of the bird’s tongue? It is called a Glottis. It is the opening of their airway (trachea). All birds have this, you just can’t see it so easily in most birds. The Glottis is the opening of the pathway directly to their lungs. This is why you should never drip water into a bird’s open mouth. The water flows over the tongue and goes right into the Glottis, through the trachea and sits in the bird’s lungs.

Unlike humans, birds cannot cough water out of their lungs, so the water just sits in their lungs and they slowly suffocate with each breath. The water can also cause a bacterial infection like pneumonia. It takes a trained avian rehabilitator to properly hydrate a bird without causing more damage.

When you find a bird that seems dehydrated, keep it contained in a dark and quiet place, keep it very warm and get it to a licensed professional immediately. This way, you’ll be giving it the best chances of survival.



<http://www.SkywatchBirdRescue.org>



Pygmy Falcon: Brian Vanderwalt



Forest Canary: Brian Vanderwalt

Quick quiz ...

Question 1: Which six adjectives other than great(er), less(er) and little are used in bird names to describe size?

Question 2: Which five habitat types are used in bird names, e.g., Marsh Sandpiper?

Compiler: Gerald Wingate

Answer no 1:

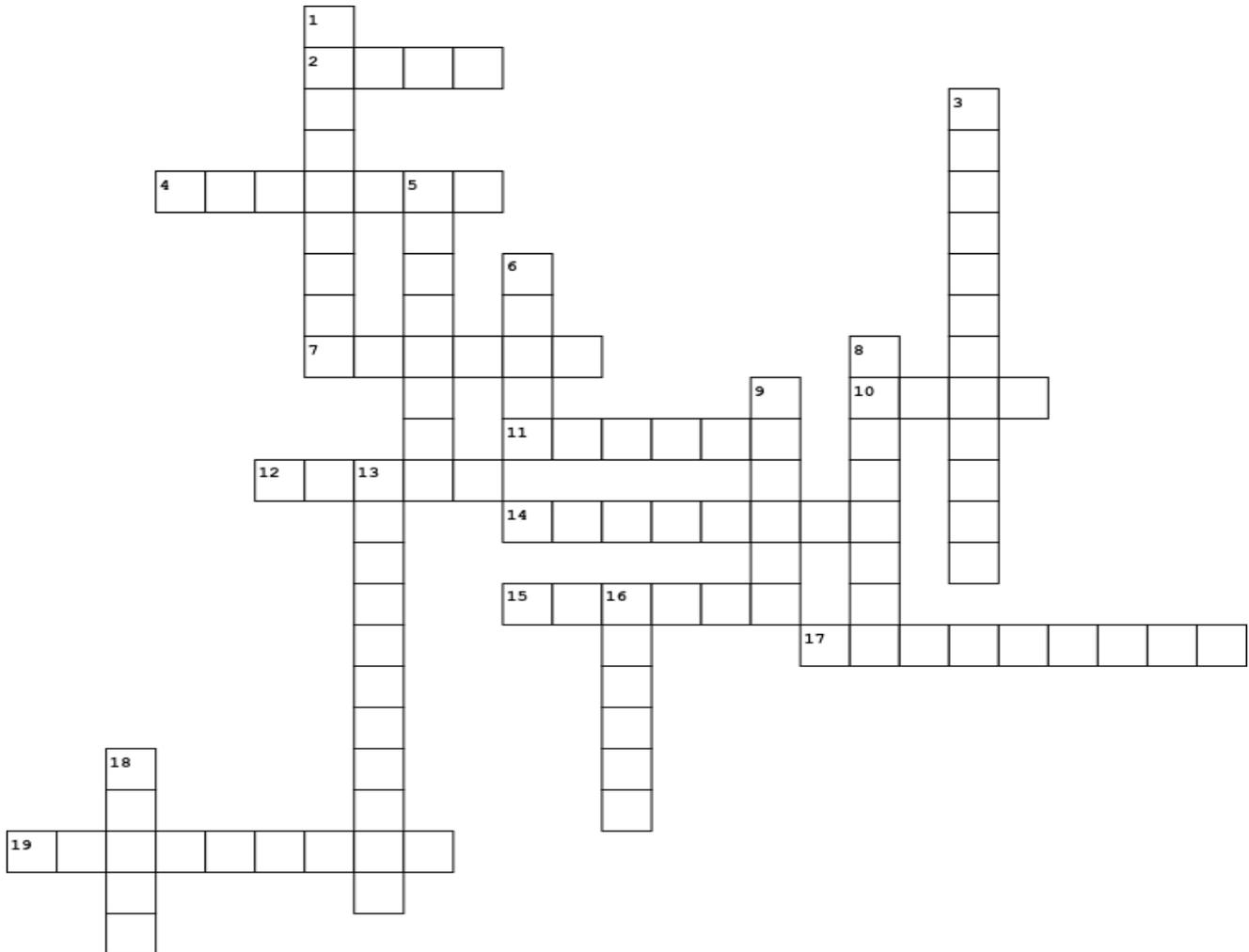
1. Dwarf Bittern
2. Pygmy Falcon
3. Tiny Greenbul
4. Intermediate Egret
5. Giant Kingfisher
6. Goliath Heron

Answer no 2:

1. Bushveld Pipit
2. Forest Canary
3. Swamp Boubou
4. Mangrove Kingfisher
5. Woodland Kingfisher

Brain teasers

CROSS WORD PUZZLE NO. 13



Compiler: Pieter Diederichs

Clues Across

2. Cryptic group all over our sub-region
4. Scavenging species, endangered nowadays
7. Avian double larynx
10. Latin word for birds
11. A swift named after a European mountain range
12. Biblical character implicated in the naming of the petrel group
14. Spends time in trees
15. Two members of this specie derive their names from their tails
17. Ready to leave nest after hatching
19. Hatched or born in an undeveloped state

Clues Down

1. This bird can end up around your neck!
3. The most localized of all the orioles
5. Vegetation type that follows waterways from the sea to the inland
6. This whole group is in Madagascar now. We had a Flycatcher named like it before
8. French tightrope walker bird
9. A lark of the arid Namib
13. Earthbound birds
16. Rare visitor wader, without a belly-patch in winter
18. Rare, colourful denizen of the African forests

General Club information

Subscribe to the TBC Birdnet

Make sure you get all the communication from the club. Send an e-mail to:

tygerbergbc+subscribe@groups.io

In case your e-mail address changes, unsubscribe your old address and send a subscribe request from your new e-mail address.

You may share information / important sightings with other club members by sending an e-mail to:

tygerbergbc@groups.io

NB: note new information

Join our Facebook page

Members are welcome to share information regarding their travels and interesting sightings on this page.

www.facebook.com/groups/tygerbergbirdclub/

Change of contact details

Please notify the TBC Membership Secretary, Judy Kotze, should your e-mail address or other contact details change. Gert.k@absamail.co.za

TBC contact details

Website: www.tygerbergbirdclub.org

PO Box 1321, Durbanville, 7551

Chairperson's e-mail: B.crewe@wo.co.za

Vice Chairperson's e-mail: dalene@brians-birding.co.za

Contributions to The Kite

Please mail any contributions to the newsletter (include pictures where possible) to:

dalene@brians-birding.co.za

TBC Steering committee 2021

Honorary President	Brian Vanderwalt	Cell: 082 999 9333
Chairperson	Brigid Crewe	Cell: 082 570 0808
Vice Chairperson	Dalene Vanderwalt	Cell: 084 702 4201
Treasurer	Lionel Crewe	
Secretary	Margaret Oosthuizen	Cell: 073 210 9397
Membership Secretary	Judy Kotze	Cell: 083 254 0919
Communication & Public Relations Officer	Dalene Vanderwalt	Cell: 084 702 4201
TBC Ringing Unit	Lee Silks	Cell: 083 208 8766
Conservation Officer	Kevin Drummond-Hay	Cell: 074 587 3792



Tygerberg Bird Club's Mission / Missie van die Tygerberg Voëlklub

To enhance our knowledge of all birds, their behaviour, and their habitats and to introduce the public to the conservation and science of our avian heritage through enjoyable participation by club members.

Om as klub ons kennis van alle voëls, hul gedrag en hul habitat te verbeter en deur genotvolle deelname van klublede, die publiek bewus te maak van die bewaring en wetenskap van ons plaaslike voel erfenis.

Celebrating 35 years of bringing birders together

Upcoming club activities



August 2022

WEDNESDAY – 10 AUGUST @ 08:30

Midweek Outing: Majik Forest, Welgemoed

Contact: Kevin Drummond-Hay (074 587 3792)

At the moment, this Forest is coming up trumps with lots of lovely birds.

ONLY park in parking area opposite the security gate of Protea Hotel. Traffic fines are being given to anybody parking right outside the bottom entrance to Majik Forest. Bring your drinks along.

THURSDAY – 18 AUGUST @ 19:30

TYGERBERG NATURE RESERVE - Welgemoed

Speaker: Kevin Drummond-Hay

Topic: Highlights of a recent Eastern Cape holiday.

Kevin and a group of TBC members travelled 3400km, in 16 days at the end of May this year. Nice places were visited, and good birds & animals were seen. Even though it was Winter, 213 species were seen – despite 2 days of being rained out!! Always a lovely part of our country to visit.

SATURDAY – 20 AUGUST @ 08:45

Outing: Keith Roxburgh (082 901 2611)

Outing: Babylonstoren Gardens, Simondium.

Take the N1 towards Paarl. Take Exit 47 (Klapmuts) offramp. Turn Right onto the R44 towards Klapmuts and Stellenbosch. At the 2nd traffic light turn LEFT (R45) Franschoek (Simondium Road).

After 5.8km along this road, turn RIGHT to Babylonstoren.

Drive along the concrete road to parking area. The main parking area will be seen on the left as you drive along the concrete road.

We plan to park in the overflow parking area, which is on the right, opposite the main parking area. Entrance fee is R20 per person. The garden only opens at 09h00 – we meet at 08h45. The walk is about 5km. Wear good walking shoes. The gardens are wonderful!! Food and drinks must be limited (small), as they encourage visitors to buy coffee etc. in the gardens. Not to be missed!

September 2022

(Diarise the following dates – watch Facebook and TBC website for details)

Wednesday 7 September – Midweek Outing

Thursday 15 September – Monthly Meeting

Saturday 17 September – Monthly Outing

