

The Kite

Tygerberg Bird Club
Tygerberg Voëlklub



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Chirp from the Chair

With summer just around the corner, the waders are fast descending on our shore-lines once again. Brian and I have been to the bird hides in the West Coast National Park a few times already, because he is adamant, he wants to see the waders in their partial breeding colours. He is specifically trying to find the very first Red Knot whose toes touch our waters, but alas, we haven't seen it yet!

I for one, am not that sure that I even like the waders that much. They all look the same to me. They seem to me to all be some shade of grey, they stand with their beaks in the water most of the time and I just cannot seem to appreciate that one's bill is: "evenly curved, fine-tipped" and the next one is "blunter, less smoothly curved". Or that one has "an obvious wing-bar" or "a narrow wing-bar." Really??

Do you also feel like you must learn this group of birds from scratch every year? Well, good luck with your identification skills this year – hope you do better than I do! (At least I get to pack a picnic basket every time we trod off to a bird hide)

Our 2023 Calendar for Conservation is once again beautiful! Thanks, Les Teare for your dedication in getting it printed in time every year. And thanks to our sponsors for their continual support. But it is the sales of calendars that ensure we have the funds to donate to worthy bird-related projects each year. So, make sure to buy yours from one of the committee members and while you're at it – get a few as gifts for the family.

Happy birding in 2023 all TBC members – I'm sure we'll see many of you around in the WCNP, trying to identify those waders!

Dalene Vanderwalt
Vice-Chair

Seeberg hide boasts great new views



Rocco Nel and Andre Kruger from the honorary rangers accepts a sizable cheque from Brian Vanderwalt, Gerald Wingate and Deona Andrag on behalf of the Tygerberg Bird Club.

Seeberg bird hide in West Coast National Park is known to birders as the place to visit at high tide when the waders are ushered onto the sandbanks and the terns congregate to roost on the sandy shore.

The hide was built many years ago and, over the years, the adjacent sandbanks and dunes have shown a change in position and shape, thereby obscuring the view from the hide.

This situation was recognized quite some time ago and various solutions were suggested. Ideas to extend / rebuild the hide goes back many years, but the project never got off the ground. That is despite some good ideas and extensive fund raising by the late Anne Gray. The trials and tribulations regarding design and placement and heated debates around the “footprint” of a possible new hide continued. The park management policy requires that an environmental impact assessment (EIA) be submitted for any new development.

The South African National Parks (SANParks) indicated that they do not have funds for this type of project, so any solution would have to be funded through sponsorships.

The Western Cape Birding Forum is a coordinating body that has a wide reach beyond the local bird clubs. This forum's current Chairman, Brian Vanderwalt, was one of the key drivers of this project. He is also Honorary President of the TBC, where he has been solely responsible for obtaining sponsorships for the bird calendars that have been designed and produced by Les Teare. These popular calendars have been sold over the past 10 years to generate funds that could be used to sponsor research and conservation regarding endangered endemic species. Over the past decade, the proceeds have totaled the impressive amount of R350, 000. The TBC steering committee has consequently approved sponsorship of the project to the value of R42, 000.

The Honorary Rangers of the West Coast region have for years been active with developments and maintenance within the park, so they were the obvious body to oversee the project. Their keen Vice Chairman, Rocco Nel, was appointed to the onerous position of project manager. He was tasked with obtaining approval from SANParks, obtaining additional funds from WWF, obtaining architectural plans, assuring compliance with Birdlife's guidelines, and appointing a suitable local contractor.



The need for an entire new EIA was negated with a second floor being built on the existing hide. The resultant upper deck now offers superior views of the sandbanks, shoreline and slacks between the dunes. Birders, both local and international, will now, and for many decades to come, be able to enjoy the fruits of the labour of a handful of stalwarts. We owe a sincere debt of gratitude to three key role players, especially to Les Teare, Rocco Nel, and veteran Brian Vanderwalt.

Gerald Wingate

Members of the West Coast Bird Club enjoying the views on offer to all sides of the new Seeberg hide.

Feeling chirpy? Maybe you have listened to birdsong!

If you're feeling chirpy today, it could be thanks to our feathered friends. Seeing or hearing birds has been linked to an improvement in mental wellbeing lasting up to eight hours, a study found.

Researchers used a smartphone app to collect reports of mental wellbeing alongside reports of seeing or hearing birdsong. The Urban Mind app asked participants three times a day if they could see or hear birds. With questions on wellbeing to test if there was an association between the two and how long it lasted. The study of 1292 people revealed hearing or seeing birds was associated with improved wellbeing for healthy people and those with depression.

Lead author Ryan Hammoud, from King's College London, said: "We hope this evidence can demonstrate the importance of protecting and providing environments to encourage birds, not only for biodiversity but for our mental health." The study was published in the journal Scientific Reports.



Jackal Buzzards - Keeping “Common Birds” common

Rosalie Edge (1877-1962), renowned American conservationist said: *“The time to protect a species is while it is still common”*.

This famous quote is partly what inspired Merlyn Nkomo, a PhD student at the Fitzpatrick Institute of African Ornithology at the University of Cape Town, to study Jackal Buzzards. Hailing from Bulawayo, she did her undergraduate studies in Zimbabwe where she was introduced to and got interested in ornithology. A year spent as an intern at a vulture rehabilitation centre, made her fall in love with birds of prey.

Merlyn’s research is titled: **The Movement Ecology of Jackal Buzzards in Relation to Wind Farms**. Movement Ecology is the study of how an animal moves, chooses, and utilises a landscape. The information gained is not only vitally important for conservation and management planning, but necessary for understanding the behaviours of a species in the face of environmental change. Movement ecology can also help us understand the differences between sexes and age classes across time and seasons. The Population Viability Analysis that Merlyn will be doing as part of her research, will be used by scientist to assess the response of Jackal Buzzards to different impacts and model their extinction.

While Jackal Buzzards are common and classified as Least Concern, they are endemic long-lived apex predators and currently the most affected species of bird of prey by turbine collisions in SA.

What can you do to help?

You can help Merlyn with this important study by sharing your sightings and knowledge of resident birds with her. Any information like location, time of sighting, nests, behaviour, etc. will be valuable for her research. Very little is known about the colour morph variations of this raptor, therefore pictures of your sightings will also add great value.

If you want to get more involved with this research, you can also volunteer to do a drive transect for Jackal Buzzards whenever you are atlassing or birding. Contact Merlyn to arrange this or to share your accidental sightings with her.

Merynomsa@gmail.com

+27 655 904 754



Dalene
Vanderwalt

Merlyn is an enterprising young lady! When people in her home town questioned what “ornithology” is and why she’s chosen to study that, Merlyn formed a bird club for youngsters. The “Mat’land Chirpers” now have more than 200 enthusiastic members!

Reducing the impact of domestic cats on native wildlife

Cats are often in the news for all the wrong reasons. Across every continent bar Antarctica, the estimated 600 million cats - both feral and domestic - have been shown to take vast numbers of native prey. Cape Town's approximately 300 000 domestic cats, for example, are calculated to take 27.5 million prey items per year, mainly reptiles but also about 450 000 birds. Across the United States this rises to 1.3 - 4.0 billion birds and 6.3-22.3 billion mammals taken annually. In China it is estimated to be even greater, with 27 - 55 billion birds and 36 - 98 billion mammals falling prey to cats each year. Over the years, this has led to the extinction of 63 bird, mammal, and reptile species worldwide.

Many solutions to this unsustainable slaughter have been proposed, ranging from keeping domestic cats indoors to constructing an enclosed patio to allow them partial access to the outside. For feral cats, the Trap/Neuter/Release programme aims to increase the number of sterilised cats so that the population cannot breed and gradually decreases until it disappears. Unfortunately, this takes time to come into effect and is rarely successful, as for it to be viable more than 50% of the population needs to be sterilised and this is seldom achieved.

So, what are the solutions? A study in Switzerland by Geiger et al looked at the effectiveness of making a cat more visible to potential prey by fixing a bright 'ruff' to its existing collar. Their research on 31 cats with and without the colourful collar found that the number of bird prey items returned to the home declined by about 37% when the cats were wearing the bright collars. There was no difference to the number of mammals captured, but the addition of a bell to the ruffed cat collar did reduce that number by 54%. This latter result with mammals was also found in New Zealand; Gordon et al found that with the addition of just a bell to a collar, there was a 50% reduction in mammals caught, suggesting that bells are effective in reducing predation on mammals (but not birds).

The Swiss study was not the first to test the bright collars idea. In the USA, Wilson et al studied 54 cats in autumn and 19 cats in spring wearing these collars. They found a dramatic 19-fold decrease in bird prey returned to the home in autumn and a 3.4-fold decrease in spring. Like the Swiss study, the effect on predation on mammals was less pronounced; collared cats caught half as many mammals in one season as did the uncollared cats, but equal numbers in the other season. Reptile and amphibian prey were not studied in the Americas, but the Swiss study showed that the number of reptiles caught was reduced by 55% for cats wearing the bright ruffs.



To buy a Birdy Bib from BirdLife South Africa, visit their online shop.

Given the effectiveness of the colourful collar, at least for birds, how likely are cat owners to use it? In the Swiss study, 72% of participating owners said that they would continue to make use of it, while 22% said they would not because their cats did not accept the collar. This makes the colourful collar (with a bell) a viable and cheap way of reducing predation on birds and mammals for responsible cat owners. While not discussed in the published papers, one way in which cat owners could ensure their cats accept the collar would be to introduce it at a very young age, first with an normal break-away collar and then the coloured collar.

Despite the success of the coloured collars, cat owners should always bear in mind that it is better to keep their cats in, especially in an African setting. Why? Because domestic cats are very susceptible to the three Cs: cars, caracals and contagions. Cats are often hit and killed by cars as they cross roads; the Urban Caracal Project at the University of Cape Town shows that cats regularly feature in the diet of caracals; and, lastly, cats are known to carry toxoplasmosis, a parasite-borne disease that can have adverse effects on humans. These are three good reasons to limit cat wanderings, over and above the ecological ones. But if you do decide to let your cat out, pop a colourful collar (with a bell) on it to limit the damage it wreaks on wildlife.

Rob Simmons

Fitzpatrick Institute, University of Cape Town

Black Harriers in trouble



Black Harrier fitted with satellite tag

Fewer than 1300 adult Black Harrier birds now remain and models suggest the population is declining by 2.3 per cent annually. They are now one of Southern Africa's most endangered raptors. After working on the species for several years, in 2012 Odette Curtis-Scott founded the Overberg Renosterveld Conservation Trust (www.overbergrenosterveld.org.za). Their work centers on securing remnants of the Critically Endangered renosterveld in the Overberg wheat-belt, thus protecting habitats for harriers and a myriad other species.

Sadly, harriers in this landscape now face a new threat – the entire Overberg wheat-belt has been identified as a Renewable Energy Development Zone, meaning that it is a hotspot for future wind farm developments. To date, existing wind farms in South Africa have killed at least eight Black Harriers. If this trend continues, we could see the collapse of this species within our children's lifetimes.

We need to study Black Harriers' foraging habits and patterns closely in order to improve our ability to provide guidance on future wind farm applications, as well as identify critical areas for the species' conservation. The team have satellite-tagged six

renosterveld harriers and are now raising funds to buy additional satellite tags. Please visit www.backabuddy.co.za/champion/project/saving-black-harriers to contribute to this important research.

Odette Curtis-Scott

International news

Hope for White-naped Cranes of Mongolia

Ulan Bator, Mongolia – Following the designation of the Khurkh-Khuiten River



Valleys in Northeast Mongolia as a National Nature Reserve by the Mongolian Government in May 2021, this week the Department of the Protected Areas Management at the Ministry of Environment and Tourism, the Governor of Khentii Province, together with leaders of the four counties surrounding the Nature Reserve signed an agreement with the Wildlife Science and Conservation Center, a Mongolian non-government organization to coordinate management of the landmark reserve.

The Khurkh-Khuiten Nature Reserve is a rich ecosystem supporting a mix of grasslands and wetlands that provide a haven for the world's most important breeding concentration of Vulnerable White-naped Cranes. Up to 70 pairs nest in the area, which also supports important breeding populations of Demoiselle and Eurasian Cranes, a regular group of summering Siberian Cranes, and other threatened species such as the Swan Goose and Great Bustard.

Local herding communities also graze their livestock herds here with the wetlands providing a critical source of water for both herders and their animals. Yet trampling of waterside vegetation by livestock, and disturbance and predation by herders' dogs, pose significant threats to the breeding success of cranes nesting around the wetlands. One of the challenges for the new nature reserve will be to develop a participatory management plan that collaborates with local herders to better manage these habitats and protect cranes and other wildlife.

The Wildlife Science and Conservation Center is a non-government organization dedicated to preserving Mongolia's wildlife and its habitat through research, conservation and public education. The center was registered officially in 2004 and is one of Mongolia's premier wildlife conservation organizations. Since 2013 the Wildlife Science and Conservation Center has regularly engaged with communities through outreach and education. Socio-economic surveys are helping managers to understand and respond to the priorities and perceptions of herding families. The center has helped improve the livelihoods of women by developing markets for handicrafts sold to tourists. The organization plans to recruit local guides and guards for the new reserve and develop a research center with a place for communities to meet.

Source: International Crane Foundation

Club and member activities



Owl Award for Otto Schmidt

BirdLife South Africa recognizes the valuable contributions that people and organisations make to the conservation of South Africa's birds and their habitats. This recognition is in the form of the presentation of Owl Awards to deserving recipients.

We are very proud that Otto Schmidt, a longstanding member of the Tygerberg Bird Club and the Cape Bird Club has been the recipient of such an Owl Award in September 2022.

Otto has been rewarded for years of enthusiasm and commitment to birding in general and specifically for his leadership of the Cape Bird Club that spanned over more than a decade.

As a talented writer, speaker and photographer, he has communicated his birding experiences, which span seventy years, to a wide audience and positively influenced many a young birder.

TBC Ringers' record

One could readily expect a bird that is a record holder to be imposing, conspicuous or colourful. The bird in question is none of the above. In fact, the Long-billed Crombec is a rather bland bird with a low-key profile, especially when one looks to see if it actually has a tail.

The individual ringing longevity record in the SAFRing database for this tiny species, 11 cm and 15 grams, was an impressive 8.5 years. The new-look TBC Ringing Team started off well with a retrap on 24 August 2022 in the Tygerberg Nature Reserve. It was immediately noticed that the ring looked ancient. Further interest was raised when the ring number was determined to be of the series used before the current ringing log book was initiated. The celebrity bird in question sported a bling-ring with the number AP 93246.

Once back home, Lee consulted her previous Ringing Book and established that the bird was ringed on 5 June 2013, which is an astonishing 9.25 years ago. This is a national record for this diminutive species, and also demonstrates prolonged site-fidelity of this species. This valuable information clearly demonstrates the value of Citizen Science.



Lee Silks & Gerald Wingate

29 years of Co-Ordinated Waterbird Counts “CWAC”

Five teams counting birds at the Botrivierlei Lagoon, encountered very high water this November during the CWAC counts. This made accessing the shoreline very difficult for the various teams. Rooisand Hide was not accessible at all owing to the high water and the beach area at Meerensee was closed off as the Boardwalk is in serious need of repair.



At the Bridge to Benguela, the team had to split resources as Benguela Cove could not be reached from the shoreline unless swimming was the next option.

What was encouraging was 100+ Red-knobbed Coots encountered in the upper regions of the Lagoon. We haven't seen these numbers for some time now. Kleinmond and Rooisand never recorded any on this count before.

However, Grebe numbers have declined drastically. Waders were few also due to the lack of shoreline for them to forage.

It is very concerning that the bird numbers continue to decline each count we do although the species numbers remain reasonably consistent. There is something going on in the Lagoon causing this and we are hoping the Scientists who work with our data can find an answer.



We have almost 30 years of data submitted to the ADU and at no time have the bird numbers been as low as they are at present.

On a positive note, the Wild Horses of Meerensee/Rooisand are thriving and are in great condition.

Text: Kevin Drummond-Hay, Photos: Gill Ainslie, Ettienne Kotze



All got together for a quick boerewors braai afterwards at Kleinmond

All our TBC members are encouraged to join in the fun and take part in this event. It really is a great morning of interesting birding, lovely scenery and a wonderful way to see and learn about birds and their behaviour.

Read more on the project:

<http://cwac.birdmap.africa>

Strandfontein WWW outing 8 November



Outings to the Waste Water Works are always rewarded with good birds and this mid-week outing was no exception. A pleasant outing got really good when a number of our members managed to see the Baillon's Crake and added this shy bird as a LIFER to their lists!



Photos: Michael Mason

Spier outing 22 October 2022

On a warm sunny Saturday, 23 TBC members set out to do some birdwatching at Spier Wine Estate.

The large dam at the start of the walk gave us a good view of the African Spoonbill hiding amongst the Sacred Ibises in the tree. The *Watsonia*'s were in full bloom and gave the photographers many opportunities to get shots of the Malachite Sunbirds. The Levillant's Cisticolas were very active as were a number of Swifts.

After walking over the cricket pitch the Booted Eagle gave a wonderful display to the delight of the photographers. A single Sweet Waxbill gave everybody a good viewing.



On the return walk along the river, the African Paradise Flycatchers gave us a good display in an oak tree. The Klaas's Cuckoo was heard a few times and eventually, the female showed herself with a good viewing for the majority of the group. A good morning out and the bird tally was 53. Bird of the

day was shared by the Klaas's Cuckoo and Booted Eagle. Some good coffee and outstanding ice cream were enjoyed by a small group after the walk.

Keith Roxburgh

Birds, critters, rain and more rain at Grootvadersbos

Honeywood farm, next to Grootvadersbos is always popular for a weekend away and 20 TBC members joined in anticipation of a good weekend's birding on 14 October. We knew that rain was forecasted for Sunday – we just didn't know how much!

On Saturday morning at 08:00 (the agreed rendezvous time), the rain and mist were so heavy that there was no way we could venture out for birding. We all congregated at the large house with our coffee and packed picnic baskets. When it seemed like the weather was clearing a bit, it was agreed to attempt a walk in the forest and we set-off. It started to pour with rain again before we even got into the forest, but we pushed on – seeing that we were wet anyway! And then we got really wet. But nobody wanted to turn around and miss out on seeing something good. With the rain, of course the birds weren't that active, but we still managed to see amongst others: Bar-throated Apalis, Greater Double-collared Sunbird, Sombre Greenbul, Cape Robin-chat, Southern Boubou, Neddicky, Olive Thrush, etc. After an hour or so, most of us were drenched and we turned around for home, dry clothes and warm drinks!

Later in the afternoon it cleared-up a bit again and Brian with a few “die-hards” attempted a forest walk again. The rest of us wandered around the Honeywood farm homestead and enjoyed the plants, scenery, and the odd bird here and there.

A communal braai was planned for the evening and luckily, Kevin and Co managed to keep the fire going for all to get their meat done. As always, lots of “gesellige kuier” ensued and the dreary weather was long forgotten.



Sunday morning saw a break in the weather and we set-off for a forest walk again. This time, without getting drenched! We managed to get a few hours birding, with the highlight for everybody, a good sighting of the Olive Bush-shrike – for most a “lifer” (me included). Feeling a bit better - now that we had some birding under the belt, we returned to the chalets for breakfast and booking out.

We all dispersed home, feeling rejuvenated after a great weekend. Kevin headed home to Durbanville with his “magnificent seven” girls in the minibus and they managed to have a distanced sightings of Denham’s Bustard along the road. On the way home, the girls in Karen Small’s car were enthralled with a great sighting of an African Harrier-Hawk devouring it’s kill in a tree next to the road. There were feathers flying in all directions while a crow was also harassing the hawk.

Dalene Vanderwalt



Critters by Andrew and Heather Hodgson





Greater Double-collared Sunbird



Olive Bush-shrike



Bar-throated Apalis



Birds by Gill Ainslie

Raindrops on spider's web by
Frank Sokolic

Tankwa Karoo National Park Birding Weekend

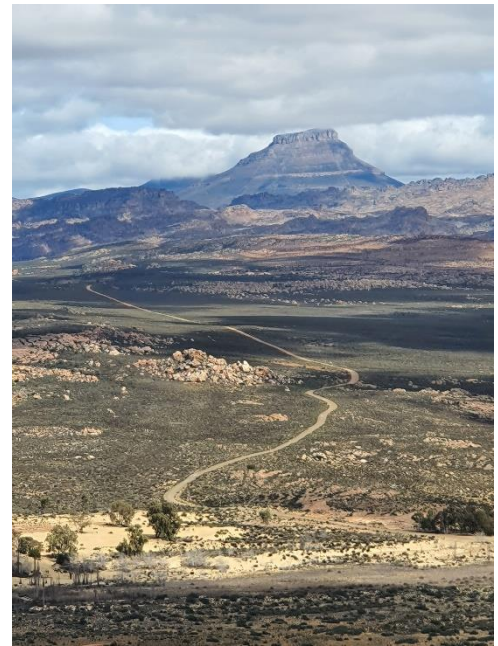
Hosted by the Boland Region of the SANParks Honorary Rangers, this weekend had been on my bucket list for a while, so when Renè Patterson sent me the details – we decided to take part. Our team consisted of Ettienne Kotze (Birding guide), Marrianna Vallely, Renè and myself. At Ceres, after filling up the cars with petrol, the Park is 140km away – approximately 3 hours' drive. Once through Karoopoort, the terrain gets drier. Karoo Chat and a Booted Eagle flying low over us - a nice welcome to the weekend. Driving slowly to the Tankwa Padstal, there were drainage lines with beautiful flowers and bushes to be seen along the road. The veld got steadily drier. After floods earlier in the year, some sections near our destination were badly washed away.

Teams taking part in the competition, stayed in the Tanqua Guest house complex. At 17:00 it all started. First special of the evening was a pair of Double-banded Coursers and Tractrac Chat showing nicely. A revelation was the Oudebaaskraal Dam. This huge dam, in the middle of such a dry area is phenomenal. Water birds were plentiful. Of the many birds seen were: Greater Flamingo, Glossy Ibis, Whiskered Tern, Avocet, Stilts, Kittlitz's Plover, Black-necked Grebe and SA Shelduck. One team even got Sanderling, Marsh and Terek Sandpiper!!

The next morning most teams headed back to the dam. Whilst having our tea break it was nice to see Karoo Lark, Namaqua Sandgrouse, Karoo Eremomela, Black-headed Canary, Pririt Batis, Fairy Flycatcher, Common Quail and Namaqua Warbler. Other roadside birds were Spike-heeled Lark, Layard's Warbler, Greater Kestrel and many Capped Wheatears. We headed out over the plains to the office complex and on to the Gannaga Pass. The areas around the Pass had had good rains, and the plants and flowers in this area was beautiful. We were glad we were driving in Ettienne's 4x4, as sections of the pass was badly damaged from earlier floods. The views were spectacular and it was nice seeing a Black Harrier on top of the mountain.

Heading back to the finish line nice birds seen were Secretarybird, Common Quail, Mountain Wheatear, Karoo Lark, Ludwig's Bustard and a Black-chested Snake Eagle. A strange sighting of a lone adult albino Ostrich was a bit weird. The Honorary Rangers put on a superb three course supper to end the final evening. We were really well fed, and the accommodation was great. The winning team got 118 different bird species, and in total 137 species was seen by all the different teams. The next day we headed home via Skittery Kloof and the Katbakkies Pass. What a lovely weekend in such a dry part of our Country. The Tankwa Karoo National Park sure lived up to our expectations.

Brigid Crewe



Know your birds

Blue Crane breeding pairs stay together year-round

Many birds are described as monogamous breeders, however there is much variation in how strict this monogamy is, and how long it lasts. Genetic studies show that extra pair mating occurs in 76% of socially monogamous species i.e., species that pair up monogamously to breed.

There are a few species that are thought to be mostly life-long monogamous, including Atlantic Puffins, Whooping Cranes and Black Vultures. In fact, Black Vultures stay together outside of the breeding season, as well as during. We know that Blue Cranes are monogamous breeders, often returning to the same site to breed each year. However, we aren't sure whether breeding pairs spend the winter apart, or like Black Vultures are together year-round. It is sometimes possible to identify family groups of Blue Cranes in flocks at the beginning of winter, but unless both adults are ringed, it is difficult to know for sure whether you are looking at a breeding pair.

As part of the Endangered Wildlife Trust/International Crane Foundation Blue Crane project, we have been putting satellite trackers and rings on Swartland and Overberg cranes- 15 in total. In August last year we spent a few days catching and fitting cranes near Darling. We were trapping cranes in flocks that were coming into a feed trough. In September/October we noticed that two of the cranes that we had fitted with trackers were still moving together. It seems that we managed to catch and fit both individuals of a breeding pair! The pair went on to produce one chick and have remained together throughout this winter. We have only observed this in one pair so far, but it does make us wonder if this is common Blue Crane behavior or if this pair is just particularly committed to one another!

This work is supported by the Leiden Conservation Fellowship.

Christie Craig

Endangered Wildlife Trust/International Crane Foundation/Overberg Crane Group



The Blue Crane pair with their chick in March this year

Questions re Chat Flycatcher axillaries

Chat Flycatcher is one of my favourite LBJ/Flycatchers from Northern Cape area and the ID confusion they cause to some birders. I am always trying to obtain a decent pic of it - normally they are on a telephone wire but never close enough!

I did a Northern Cape and Kalahari trip with a client in August this year and watched a few fly down from the farm fences. Pics not to bad but the best view we had was on the dune road in Kgalagadi NP. As there were not many tall trees, the birds used the shrubs to hawk from and luckily a few of these were next to the road. They also cleverly used the car's vibration to disturb insects in the road to their advantage.

One opportunity gave me a flight shot which on downloading, I noticed white under the wing in the armpit area! Grabbed my books and there does not seem to be any mention of this. Was this not noticed because it is an LBJ? Was this perhaps a breeding bird?

I made a few enquiries at museums and none of the skins showed anything close. Maybe my best bet is to ask ringers to check when and if they catch a Chat Flycatcher to take some pics to help clarify this. Another challenge is there does not seem to be a sexual difference according to the books - maybe this is it??

Brian Vanderwalt



Lesser Honey-guide aggressive behaviour?

Whilst in Scottburgh, KZN last year, I was watching birds from our balcony. Black-bellied and Red-winged Starlings were plentiful in the garden. A disturbance caught my eye, and it was a Lesser Honeyguide, not being chased by a Barbet BUT the Honeyguide was chasing a Red-winged Starling! This went on for about 10min with a few short intervals in-between sorties!

Whether the same starling was involved I don't know but the Honeyguide was very determined whoever it was chasing - wonder what would have happened if the Starling was "caught"?

The Honeyguide is much smaller than the Starling and also, it's bill does not look very strong - one wonders could it have caused any damage?

I had seen this behaviour before in the garden but thought it was a once off and was it the same Honeyguide being aggressive?

Dead birds do tell tales

Whilst birding at Strandfontein Sewerage Works with a USA client in August this year, I found a dead Tern on the road. As I still am a ringer by heart, all dead birds found are checked for rings!

Well, I was in luck as this bird was in fact ringed. A Common Tern and as far as I know we do not actively ring terns here so I checked the ring and found that it was ringed in Finland of all places! I took picture of the bird to confirm it was a Common Tern. It looked to be a young bird and possibly could only have arrived in August 2022 or was this perhaps a Tern that had hatched out in Europe in 2021 and had flown to SA and stayed here for a year, as most juvenile waders do?

I removed the ring and later recorded it on the Finnish Museum of Natural History's website: ring@luomus.fi Had an immediate acknowledgement of submission and 2 weeks later received this report: *"Time from ringing to recovery is 405 days (1 year 1 month 9 days) The place of recovery is 10553 km from the place of ringing in direction S"*.

The km is obviously in a straight line, but actual flight distance would be much more.



Just goes to show - check those dead birds for rings...and these days also for satellite trackers or loggers!

Brian
Vanderwalt

Brain teasers

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Compiler: Gerald Wingate

Clues Across

- 1. Resort on Berg River
- 5. Largest bird
- 8. Abrev. Orange-breasted Sunbird
- 9. Wetland near Dubanville
- 10. Fowl with decorative tail
- 12. Red Lark's dunes near Aggenys
- 13. Jewell of a sunbird
- 17. Bird hide in West Coast N Park
- 19. Breeding colony of penguins
- 22. Abrev. for an Avocet
- 23. A little duck
- 25. Raptor with white eyelids
- 27. Town for viewing Sabine's Gulls
- 30. Alternate name for throat patch
- 31. National Park near Beaufort West
- 32. A bird hide in West Coast N Park
- 33. Abrev. for this duck

Clues Down

- 1. A world renown national park
- 2. Wetland at Century City
- 3. National Park for Gemsbok
- 4. Falls on Okavango River
- 5. Fishing raptors
- 6. Affectionate name for Rock Kestrel
- 7. Abrev. for this Kingfisher
- 11. A feline
- 14. Place for a lark's spike
- 15. A diminutive waxbill
- 16. A type of plover
- 18. Fynbos bird with raggedy tail
- 19. Bay within Walker Bay
- 20. Describes head of seedeater
- 21. This raptor could be wood, grass or marsh
- 24. White-chested bird of forests
- 26. Un-identified flying object
- 28. Wry _ _ _ _
- 29. A boringly studious birder
- 30. Region above the eyes

General Club Information

How do we communicate with members?

Notices on outings, etc. are sent to members via a “groups” e-mail address. **Members only MUST SUBSCRIBE themselves** – we cannot do it. It is quick and easy to do. Send an e-mail to: tygerbergbc+subscribe@groups.io and you will be included.

You may share information / important sightings with other club members by sending an e-mail to: tygerbergbc@groups.io

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

Join our Facebook page

Members are welcome to share information regarding their travels and interesting sightings on this page.
www.facebook.com/groups/tygerbergbirdclub/

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 Celebrating 35 years of bringing birders together

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.

Upcoming club activities



November 2022

TUESDAY – 08 NOVEMBER @ 09:30

Midweek Outing: Strandfontein WWW
Contact: Brigid Crewe: 082 5700 808

Please sign in and go through security. We meet where there are pans on both sides of the road at the start of the first large water treatment pans. Recently Baillon's crakes have been seen. We are going to spend some time to find these difficult small crakes.

THURSDAY – 17 NOVEMBER @ 19:30

Final club meeting for the year
Dalene Vanderwalt will be facilitating members' favourite pictures of the past year.

Meeting starts with a short Special General Meeting, to approve increased subscriptions for 2023. Nominations for Committee Members for 2023, will be welcomed. This is followed by a fun evening, where good birding experiences and holidays are shared. After the meeting, a year-end party will be held. Drinks will be supplied. **ALL MEMBER'S ARE ASKED TO PLEASE BRING A SMALL PLATE OF EATS** to be shared by all at the party.

SATURDAY – 19 NOVEMBER @ 08:00

Outing: Table Bay Nature Reserve, Table View – (Rietvlei)

Contact: Keith Roxburgh: 082 901 2611

Travel to Table View along Blaauwberg Road, and turn into Grey Ave. Then into Sandpiper Crescent. The Rietvlei wetlands have nice walks. Entrance fee R10 - Pensioners, R17 - Adults, plus R25 per vehicle. Try and share lifts to limit congestion. We park at the education building, where we will be walking from.

December 2022

SATURDAY - 3 DECEMBER

Birdlife SA 24 Hour Birding Big Day / Atlassing a Pentad
 We hope some of the TBC Members will be taking part in this Annual event. There are different categories. Please go onto their website to see the options.

TUESDAY – 6 DECEMBER @ 08:00

Outing: Majik Forest, Welgemoed

Contact: Keith Roxburgh (082 901 2611)

ONLY park in AREA OPPOSITE the Protea Hotel. Traffic fines are given outside the gate. We meet at the lower gate at 08:00. Please share lifts as parking is limited. Conservation TBC Calendars for sale at R100.

SATURDAY – 10 DECEMBER @ 07:30

Outing: Rooi Els and Betty's Bay

Contact: Brian Vanderwalt: 082 9999 333

Travel along the N2, turning off towards Gordon's Bay (R44). Continue to the T-junction at the edge of Gordon's Bay, turn Left onto scenic coastal road to Rooi Els. Meet in the car park at 07:30 outside the shop. After looking for the Rockjumper along the Mountain, we go to Harold Porter Botanical Gardens for the year-end outing and picnic. Entrance fee payable. Remember snacks, drinks, hats & chairs. Calendars for sale at R100. Always a lovely outing. Stony Point is also worth a visit to see the penguins.

JANUARY 2023

Diarise:

Wednesday 11 January - Strandfontein WWW outing.

Thursday 19 January - Monthly meeting

Saturday 23 January - Monthly Outing