

The Kite

Tygerberg Bird Club
Tygerberg Voëlklub

Number 140 (November 2023 - January 2024)

Photo credit: Daryl de Beer

In this issue:

Wild Birds gain immunity to avian flu – encouraging signs	Pg 2
Member Observations	Pg 4
International News	Pg 9
Club Outings and Activities	Pg 10
Brainteaser	Pg 14
General Club Information	Pg 15
Upcoming Club Activities	Pg 16

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Chirp from the Chair

The year has flown by, with some really good birding along the way.

We urge Members to try and get to Strandfontein WWW during the next few weeks – there is an incredible amount of beautiful flamingo present at the moment. What is astounding – is the amount of Lesser Flamingo present. They have really descended in large numbers to Strandfontein.

The TBC Calendar for Conservation is now available from all the Committee members. Well done to Les Teare for another great compilation. We must also thank the donors who sponsored a page and therefore making a valuable contribution to avian conservation. Without them this project would not be as successful or profitable. Thank you, Brian, for all your hard work and continued motivation towards this project.

A BIG thank you to the 2023 TBC Committee. The club remains successful and relevant with the help of you ALL.

Then also a special mention and thanks to Rodney Gray, who, silently and efficiently, sees to all the logistics of our meetings so well.

We look forward to seeing many of you at our upcoming meetings and outings. Especially don't miss our last meeting of the year with member pictures on view. If you haven't forwarded your favourite five pics to Dalene yet – please do so. We would love to see what you were up to during the year. And of course, not to be missed, is our year-end outing on Saturday 9 December at Table Bay Nature Reserve.

A blessed festive season to all our members and happy birding!

Brigid Crewe

Wild birds gain immunity to avian flu – “encouraging signs”



Egyptian Goose chick – Dave Gordon

Some birds have developed immunity to avian flu, according to scientists who say there are “encouraging signs” that the deadly virus could kill fewer birds this winter.

The current H5N1 bird flu outbreak, which started in 2021, has been the worst recorded, and is thought to have killed millions of wild birds. Mortality rates appeared to be very high among wild birds, but it was not known how many survived and gained immunity.

Preliminary research by a consortium of scientists has confirmed that two populations of seabirds now have immunity. They took blood samples of northern gannets on Scotland’s Bass Rock – which were hit hard by avian flu in 2022 – and found that 30% of them had antibodies. Britain is home to two-thirds of the world’s northern gannets, and ornithologists are particularly concerned about the species – Bass Rock is the world’s largest colony. The researchers also tested shags and found that about half had immunity.

“This is the first evidence of immunity in seabirds,” said Prof Ian Brown, head of virology at the Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA). “It is giving us insights into populations that we have never seen exposed to this virus before.” The research was done by the FluMap consortium, which is led by the APHA, and their key findings have been published in *Ibis*, the *International Journal of Avian Science*.

Last year, amid the UK’s largest outbreak of bird flu, poultry farms had to keep livestock inside but this year there have been far fewer cases. The sample size was small: about 30 birds for each population. Brown said it was extremely challenging catching wild birds and taking blood samples (which is partly why it has not been done before). But the findings support observations from conservationists that some birds appear to have acquired immunity – notably gannets, whose typically blue irises turned black after surviving infection.

It is not known how long immunity will last, as avian flu changes quickly, or what percentage of birds survived getting the disease initially.

Seabird populations are slow to recover because they typically only have one or two offspring a year, so there are still concerns about long-term impacts.

Researchers now want to test other wild birds, especially those living on farms, to find out more about how the virus is getting into poultry sheds. The virus can travel only short distances – less than 10 metres, researchers say – so is unlikely to be spread through airborne transmission between farms. This suggests transmission is mostly via wild birds.

Researchers are now watching anxiously to see what happens this winter. October is a month of uncertainty due to the influx of migratory birds and the possible new variants they might bring with them.

Between 1 October and 28 October 2022, there were 58 confirmed cases in poultry in Britain. This year, there have so far been none in October. Globally, there are very few poultry cases in northern Europe, and a handful in wild birds. “If you compare that to the same period last year, it is quite different,” said Brown. He added: “We’re in a very uncertain window at the moment, and we won’t be advocating any dropping of biosecurity standards. Far from it, because this is a very unpredictable virus and an unpredictable disease. But at the moment, they’re encouraging signs.”

The H5N1 virus has multiple genes that can switch and evolve together to spread the virus quickly into a wide range of species. When the latest outbreak started, it was because changes to the virus made it much deadlier and more transmissible. Recent changes in the dominant strain of H5N1 in the UK suggest it could now be changing to become less virulent.

This new finding follows research published in *Nature* that shows the centre of bird flu outbreaks has shifted from Asia to Europe and Africa. There are still concerns about it reaching new parts of the world, particularly Antarctica, as wild populations migrate from South America.

Supertrooper News, Wildlife. First published by The Guardian

Wild aquatic birds including gulls, terns, shorebirds, and wild waterfowl such as ducks, geese and swans are considered reservoirs (natural hosts) for bird flu viruses.



Crowned Cormorants on the West Coast – Photo credit: Ronald Roefs

Member Observations

Random or Reason? Thoughts on the behaviour of terns in Mauritzbaai

Living close to the sea has immense advantages, especially relating to the diversity of seabirds to be seen.

One specific inspiration for me is the soaring of terns sweeping up into a sparkling cloud, flipping about, looking just like 'sterretjies'. In summer it's the Common Terns and in winter Antarctic Terns. All these cloud-forming birds do the same thing, "pick, pick, pick" in their feathers, then a message seemingly goes out and the whole group lifts off silently and gracefully into the sky - never colliding and flying in perfect patterns. In unison they descend at speed, turning back to land where they started.

I have gathered, with my non-scientific background, that animal activity has a purpose, and will seldom be random. So, I searched through sea bird research to get some ideas on what this soaring behaviour by the terns may mean. I could not find specific research, so I picked around myself. Supported by writings from Kevin Lafferty, a marine biologist at the University of California at Santa Barbara, I came up with parasites as a first theory.

A curlew grabs a clam from its hole. "Just got infected," Lafferty says. He looks at the bank of snails. "More than 40% of these snails are infected," he pronounces. "They're really just parasites in disguise." He points to the snowy constellation of bird droppings along the bank. "There are boxcars of parasite biomass here; those are just packages of fluke eggs. By one estimate, parasites may outnumber free-living species four to one. Indeed, the study of life is, for the most part, parasitology.."

I thought of the constant preening of the terns during their time on the rocks here. If parasites are such a major part of their lives, maybe they need to fly high now and again to shake off their preened parasites? Research indicates that feather mites are common and may damage the feathers and bacteria on the wings need to be discarded by preening.

Fun fact: research shows that feather mites are actually not parasites after all, but that they clean oil and bacteria off the wings, thus being in a symbiotic relationship with the bird.

So that brings me to my next theory, the state of the feathers.



Being migratory birds, flying over huge distances the terns need to keep their feathers in pristine condition. Obviously, the preening plays a great part in cleaning and straightening feathers. Then maybe they need to fly up periodically to get those preened feathers in perfect order?

Another puzzle is the frantic group swimming that happens when it is warm. I could not believe that this is for fun, although that is what it looks like! This fits into my preening theory - birds preen then jump into water to loosen parasites, or to clean up feathers. This requires turbulence, so the birds swirl about and jump on each other, then fly around and do it again. Very entertaining!

Or maybe all this is *Joie de Vivre!* Joy of Living

References: www.discovermagazine.com/planet-earth/do-parasites-rule-the-world
www.sciencedirect.com/science/pii/S006528811930001X

Text and pictures by Viv Ward: West Coast Bird Club

Retirement village for birds?

The Tygerberg Nature Reserve seems to be a haven for the elderly amongst our Feathered Friends. Especially the smaller variety.

A while ago the TBC Ringing Unit trapped a Long-billed Crombec at the reserve, which was a record for longevity of the species at 9,25 years (see Kite No 136 page 8).

On Wednesday 6 September 2023, we were fortunate enough to retrap a Cape White-eye with Ring Number AP93268 which was originally trapped on 25 September 2013 a mere 19 days short of 10 years!

According to SAFRING records this bird has now flown into our mist nets on 3 occasions namely 25 September 2013, on 26 August 2020 and then recently on 6 September 2023. All these trapping records were submitted to SAFRING by the Ringing Unit's most longstanding member Lee Silks (no reflection on her age!).

The long-life records meticulously kept by Dr Dieter Oschadleus in Birds4Africa reflects the record age for a Cape White-eye to be 10 years 10 months and 9 days.



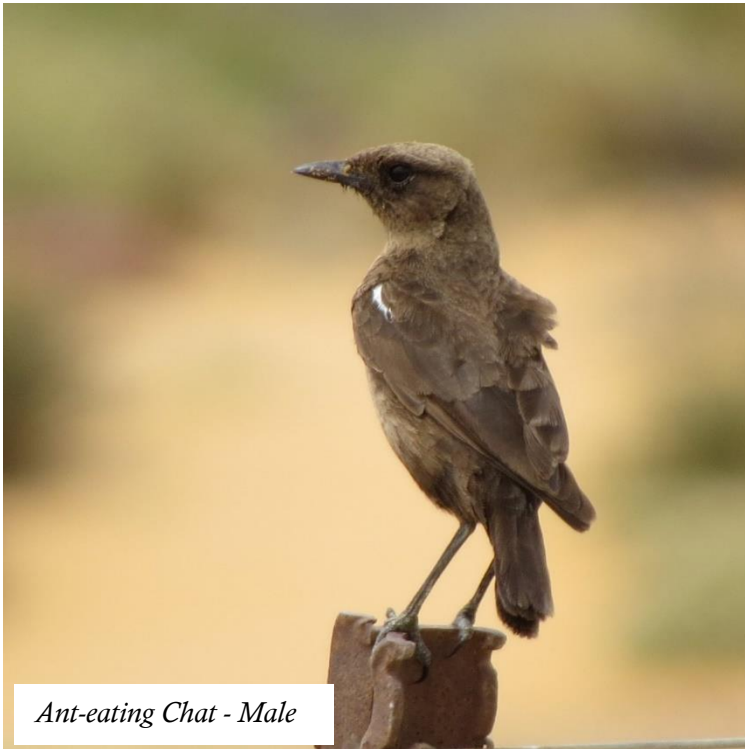
This longevity is amazing for such a small creature weighing a mere 11.9 grams, with a wing length of 61 millimetres and a tail length of 50 millimetres.

Another interesting feature of the Cape White-eye is that there is no clearly distinguishable differences between the male and female nor between adult and juvenile birds. Furthermore, since both parents incubate the eggs, they both develop brood patches where the feathers on the belly are lost in the breeding season to ensure the embryo develops at the ideal minimum temperature. More reason why sexes are not easily distinguished.

Text and picture by Rocco Nel: Tygerberg Bird Club Ringing Unit

The Tankwa always delivers!

A regular client needed two birds for his list - Black-headed Canary and Cinnamon-breasted Warbler, but he's a busy man and could only spare half a day's birding! We agreed to meet in Ceres one late afternoon in October and set-off for Karoo Poort at 5:30am the next morning.



Ant-eating Chat - Male

A short detour on the way there gave us Cape Clapper, Red-capped and Large-billed Lark as well as a nice surprise lifer for the client - a Nicholson's Pipit (previously Long-billed Pipit), quietly sitting on a fence pole.

On to Karoo Poort where the storm damage in the riverbed was very obvious with many estuarine trees, which had been there for years, now missing. Nonetheless, the Poort did not disappoint as a birding venue with a pair of Black-headed Canary nesting in plain sight and making regular appearances. Lark-like Bunting were numerous, but the regular Namaqua Warbler wasn't there, with the reed beds being washed away. Mountain Wheatear were also nesting and very tame. Layard's Tit-babbler called from up the mountain slopes and so did Grey-backed Cisticola.

Further into the Poort, White-throated Canary and White-backed Mousebird were feeding in the scrub.

The farmhouse area, supposedly a national monument, and a favourite old picnic site - is a sight for sore eyes... gone are the Poplar trees where breakfast could be had... gone is one of the old Oak trees in the backyard under which TBC members braai'd snoek about 20yrs ago.

This house used to be the Toll House for entry to the Karoo... my founding father used to travel through there to get to his farm near Sutherland... wonder what he'll be thinking about the current mess!

Anyway, back to birds... Pied Starlings were breeding in the derelict building walls as was Mountain Wheatear and House Sparrow, but no sign of Red-winged or Pale-winged Starling as the figs weren't ripe yet.

Further along, we searched for Cinnamon-breasted Warbler on the cliff face and amongst boulders, but everything was very quiet with only Layard's Tit-babbler, Long-billed Crombec and Fairy Flycatcher making their presence known.



Mountain Wheatear - Male

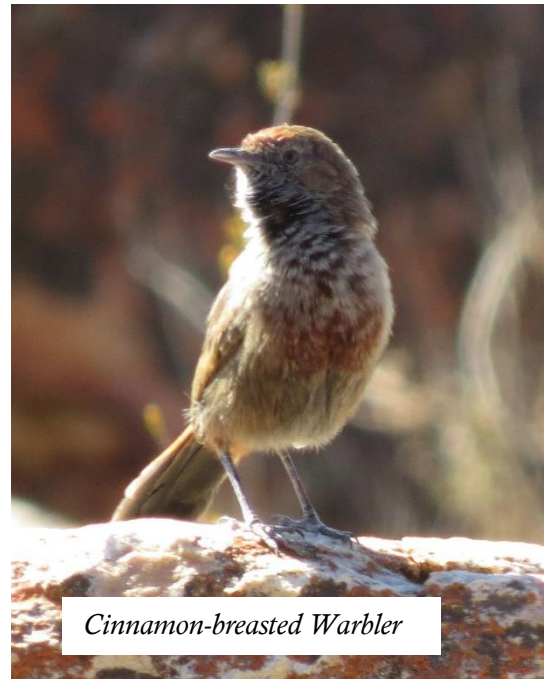
I whistled for Cinnamon-breasted Warbler a few times with no response. But then, I saw some movement on a cliff face and suddenly a small dark bird flew towards us and fed quietly 3m away, in and around and under shrubs, disappearing into crevices around boulders like a mouse. Target bird found with saturating sighting... many pics were taken, some even too close!

Now that the pressure was off, slow-paced birding could be had with Karoo Lark, Pale-chanting Goshawk, Booted Eagle and even Black Harrier making their appearance.

Rufous-eared Warbler (logo for Brian's Birding tours) was feeding quietly around us and wasn't bothered by our presence... always a great bird to see!

My atlassing total for Karoo Poort showed 32 species and the next pentad another 7 - not bad for a short few hours' birding.

Text and pictures by Brian Vanderwalt



Cinnamon-breasted Warbler

“Duck” here I come!



Dave Gordon from West Coast Bird Club captured this fascinating chase between a South African Shelduck and a Cape Teal on Rocherpan. The shelduck was not happy with the teal sharing her space!



What happened to bird population in the Sandveld region over the last 50 years?

I was born and grew up on a farm approximately 10km from the mouth of the Berg River.

From a young age, I was interested in the local birds, purely on an observation basis. These notes are therefore not based on any scientific research and may easily be proven wrong by more knowledgeable people. As a Forester, I spend my working years in Natal and Eastern Mpumalanga and was amazed on my return to Velddrif to observe the change in bird distribution and populations. The period I am comparing is from 1950/60 to 2000/2010. Therefore, a period of approximately 50 years.

Although I am not aware of any species which has actually disappeared, there was a huge reduction in numbers of the following: Cape Sparrow, Red Bishop, Cape Turtle Dove, Yellow-billed Duck, African Shelduck, Southern Black Korhaan, Grey-winged Francolin, Namaqua Dove, Greater Striped Swallow, Karoo Scrub Robin, Wattled Starling, Pied Starling, Common Waxbill, Pin-tailed Whydah, Cape Bunting and Crowned Lapwing.

On the other hand, a number of birds not known to be present in the Sandveld area north of the Berg River during the 1950's was now seen. Such as Helmeted Guineafowl (the local birds are possibly descendants of tame birds kept by farmers.) Wild birds from the Boland area may have mixed with these. They became common during 1970/80. Also, Blacksmith Plover – first seen here during 1960's, Cape Robin-Chat, Spurwing Goose, Red-eyed Dove, Blue Crane, Fish Eagle (first appeared early 1960), Klaas's Cuckoo, Hadeda Ibis, Glossy Ibis, Goliath Heron (still scarce), Lesser Honeyguide, Southern Boubou, Palm-nut Vulture (still scarce), Steppe Buzzard, Black-headed Heron and Open-billed Stork (still scarce).

As a youngster growing up on the farm, the Red Bishop, Cape Weaver, and Cape Sparrow were considered as



Goliath Heron – Brian Vanderwalt



Grey-winged Francolin – Brian Vanderwalt

pests, and it was part of our duties to destroy as many of these birds as was possible. The Red Bishop bred in the reeds along the Berg River and occurred in huge flocks doing extensive damage to ripening wheat and oats crops. Wheat fields had to be guarded from early morning till late by cracking whips and firing shot guns. We raided the birds' nests, caught them in traps and even caught them by smearing homemade glue on fence wires.

We gave little attention to waders and other water birds and therefore I cannot comment on any changes in the number of these birds.

I wonder what could have brought along these changes in bird populations – is it global warming or simply natural cyclical changes?

Nic Mostert: Velddrif resident

International News

How do 60-day old Icelandic Whimbrels reach their wintering sites?

Bird migration is a truly captivating natural wonder, especially the mystery surrounding how young, inexperienced birds, often just a few weeks old, manage to embark on and navigate long-distance flights.

What do we know about Icelandic whimbrel migration?

A large proportion of world's whimbrel breed in Iceland (last estimate: 256,000 pairs), and over the past 11 years, we have dedicated efforts in learning more about them. As for their migration, a crucial part of their annual cycle, it is now clear that nearly always individuals embark on a non-stop flight after leaving Iceland, covering an impressive distance of 5000-6000 km in one go to reach their wintering grounds in West Africa. The timing of their departure from Iceland exhibits some variability, as it can depend on the preceding breeding success.

When it comes to spring migration, the story is different. Whimbrels depart from their wintering sites on nearly the same date each year, but with a different plan. They either make a non-stop flight back to the breeding grounds (i.e., similar to autumn migration), or, more commonly, they fly to a stopover area where they stay for 1-2 weeks before making the final leg of the journey to Iceland. All of this is what adults do. But what about juveniles? When do they depart Iceland?

Do they fly straight to West Africa too? How do they know the way? We know that juveniles do not migrate with their parents, but do they join other adults?

Juvenile whimbrel migration

While adults may constitute the core of the population, it is the juveniles that may hold the key to the population's ability to adapt to environmental changes. To learn about the migration of juvenile whimbrel, we deployed GPS trackers on 13 birds, just when they started to learn how to fly, during the breeding seasons of 2021 and 2022.



These GPS trackers recorded the geographical locations of the birds each 6 hours and transmitted them to us via the GSM network. Some weeks later, we could see the pattern of their migrations.

The main findings

- Like adults, juvenile whimbrels make a long-distance flight to West Africa.
- Juveniles depart later than adults and make fewer straight flights.
- Juveniles stop more often than adults before reaching the wintering site, which results in a slower travel speed.

The comparison of adult and juvenile migrations, particularly the departure dates, suggests that at least late juveniles are unlikely to migrate in flocks containing experienced adult birds. Hence, it is improbable that these individuals learn the way to Africa first hand, but we cannot exclude the possibility of other social cues gathered prior departure. We finish the paper reasoning why the Icelandic whimbrel is an exceptional 'developmental system' to investigate the roles of various developmental factors on the ontogeny of migration.

Camilo Carneiro as published in British Ornithologists' Union

Club Outings and Activities



“CWAC’ing” at Bot River - 4 November

On behalf of the Tygerberg Bird Club we would like to extend our sincere thanks and appreciation for the support and time all Cwac’ers have given over the past years to eventually bring 30 years of data collection to fruition.

The last count of 2023 has just been concluded with only the data still to be collated and submitted. May you all give yourselves a mighty pat on the back for contributing to this worthy conservation cause.

Hope to see you all raring to go in the New Year, CWAC’ing, loudly at the Bot and other venues.

Kevin Drummond-Hay

Camp at Good Hope Farm, Robertson - 20 – 22 October

Good Hope Farm, 37km from Robertson, is a new venue for TBC and 19 club members eagerly made their way to the farm on Friday.

On arriving on the farm, I was shocked by the state of the farm road. We weren’t warned about this! I hate “off-roading” and kept my eyes shut while Brian and the Toyota slipped and slid through the mud up to the cottages. We made it, but Noelene’s small car, loaded with three passengers and their luggage, wasn’t so lucky! An hour later, they were finally free of the dongas and mud, luckily with their spirits unbroken.

Saturday morning dawned with a chill in the air and sporadic downpours, but in true TBC style, we set off exploring regardless. Raincoats and umbrellas seem to be the new, necessary paraphernalia for birding!



The veld was simply beautiful. The farm has vast areas of unspoilt fynbos, set against a mystical mountain backdrop. Most of us weren’t that interested in finding birds – we were simply spellbound by the fresh, soft leaves and flowers that glittered everywhere with the shiny raindrops.

As the wind blew over the bushes, everything moved and swayed, and the veld appeared to be a soft bed that you could just sink into.

With so many protea species around, we saw plenty Cape Sugarbirds – most of them close-up. The Malachite Sunbird high up in the plantation of Blue Gums were not bothered by our presence and presented many photo opportunities.

There were also Southern Double-collared Sunbird, Fork-tailed Drongo, Grey-backed Cisticola, Orange-breasted Sunbird, Karoo Scrub Robin, Cape Batis and Bar-throated Apalis around amongst others. We found the Cape Robin-chat's nest with two eggs in an open dirt bin. A walk around the farmhouse and dam area produced Amethyst Sunbird, Cape Roch Thrush, Cape White-eye, Little Swift, Yellow Canary, White-throated Swallow and others. With the sun shining on Sunday, we went out walking again and heard the Cape Grassbird singing his heart out, but we struggled to find it. Brian eventually did – right in front of us in the fynbos!

Maybe the weekend didn't produce loads of birds (Brian's atlas card tallied 89 for the weekend), but boy – we socialized plenty and ate a lot! The common Lapa area at the cottages gave us a lovely, sheltered space where all could meet and eat. Brian orchestrated a mountain of chicken stir-fry on the skottel-braai on Friday evening. On Saturday, a communal brunch on the skottels went down like a feast in the chilly weather and a huge fire on Saturday evening kept us warm, and everybody's meat was well cooked. Thanks to the industrious ladies - we were spoilt with sweets! Fruit salad, chocolate cake, lemon squares, milk tart and brownies ... (my sort of weekend).



Cape Grassbird – Karen Small

Dalene Vanderwalt

Altydgedacht Farm Outing - 21 October



A group of us met at Altydgedacht Farm for a birding walk around this lovely farm. The weather was nice, and first raptors seen were Jackal Buzzard and Yellow-billed Kite. African Paradise Flycatcher and Greater-striped Swallows were seen near the buildings.

African Dusky Flycatcher was seen well on a walk past a nearby dam.

Other nice surprises were sightings of Southern Grey-headed Sparrow and Fork-tailed Drongo. Both becoming more common in our area. There were beautiful stands of Watsonia seen along a bridle path leading towards d'Aria. Sighting of the day was a Black Sparrowhawk floating past above our heads – not in a hurry, and seemingly looking for breakfast. Was wonderful to see its underwing really well.

Levaillant's Cisticola and African Stonechat were seen along the fences. A Klaas's Cuckoo was heard calling – but we could not find it. A tally of 46 bird species were seen on the day. Our brunch was cut short by some tree felling in the forested area. A most enjoyable morning out birding!

Brigid Crewe



Majic Forest Outing - 13 September

This early calendar spring outing was one of firsts: Two new members joined us; Roland from Germany and Anika from Welgemoed; a new parking area and route; lovely weather; and the first sightings of swallows and swifts for the season. Our group of 13 birders had lovely views of the weavers and bishops building nests and making a lot of noise at the top dam, so much so that it drowned out the beautiful call of the Lesser Swamp Warbler who gave all a good sighting. On our return past the top dam, all was quiet and the warbler could be heard clearly. A Black Harrier gave us a quick fly-by to the south, but the African Harrier Hawk was the star. She was seen perched close to her nest and soon after, on the nest. All the normal Majic forest birds were seen, 40 in all including Rosy-faced Lovebirds feeding on a bird feeder. The kurpers in the dam lazily swam around and some were quite large.

The walk took us across the lower dam wall and then through the forest area into the shade, where a female Cape Batis was very obliging and showed herself to us all. What was amazing was the three wild beehives we passed along this section of the walk. After a walk back up the hill and another view of the African Harrier Hawk, we had tea and a chat under the trees close to the car park. A great outing and good fun.

Keith Roxburgh

Paarl Mountain Nature Reserve Outing - 19 August

On a gloriously warm, sunny Saturday, about 20 TBC members and some guests met at the Paarl Mountain Nature Reserve. A very happy crowd, led by the evergreen Kevin Drummond-Hay and graced with the presence of our President Brian and Vice-Chair Dalene, we gingerly stepped around some very slippery spots in the pathway up and down the mountain.

A great sighting to start the morning with, was the African Goshawk perched in a tree next to the dam at the picnic area. It posed long enough for all the photographers in the group to take decent photos. Not to be outdone, was the Black Saw-wing some way up the mountain, posing for a change and not flying over and above our heads as usual. He looked this way and that, as if to say: "you may take my picture from all angles." As luck would have it, an African Olive-Pigeon did the same, while a birder or two exclaimed that it was a lifer for them.

Birdwise, the area was rather quiet. We dipped on some usuals but managed to record about 26 different species. As we were about to leave, Christopher, an operator at the Reserve, called us over to a tree on the other side of the dam. Pointing into the branches, he showed us a boomslang, and calmly said that there were actually three of them in the trees. For my nerves, the sighting of one of them was really enough!



African Goshawk – Kevin Drummond-Hay

On a personal note, and very special to me on this trip, was meeting two friends from years gone by. Tilly Burger and I were colleagues at Hoërskool Menlopark 54 years ago and Pieter Roux, Kevin's neighbour, used to drive 20kms to bring his animals to our veterinary practice in Pretoria. Hopefully, I will see both Tilly and Pieter more often at our club outings.

Liz van Wyk

Tygerberg Nature Reserve Outing - 8 August

The outing was full of surprises: the chili start to the morning, the elusive bird we saw, and the lovely company. Seven members joined for a walk along the Duiker trail to the bottom dam. Several of the usual Tygerberg birds were seen and heard while we waited for everybody to arrive. The Jackal Buzzard amused us with its practice of landing and taking off from the pine trees on the adjacent property. The Bar-throated Apalis was heard to the left of the road at the entrance office and soon made a quick dash across the road and into the bush at the start of the trail for us to all see him easily.

The paths were a bit muddy in places but plenty of bird calls were heard on our way down to the calling tree passing the first culvert. Alas, no Brown-backed Honeybird or Cape Sugarbird. Passed the second culvert, the Acacia Pied Barbet was seen and then the elusive Brown-backed Honeybird was spotted on one of the dead trees – yippee! The dam was quiet apart from nesting Cape Weavers and Red-knobbed Coots, as well as two Little Grebes. The Southern Boubou was heard a few times and another sighting of Brown-backed Honeybird below the dam wall.

On the climb up from the dam wall, the Common Waxbills amused us as did a flitting Levaillant's Cisticola.



Then the Brown-backed Honeybird came and perched on the big dead tree and not only gave us a good viewing but sang as well – sighting no. three! The male Southern Boubou was then sighted further up the trail. The Long-billed Crombec was on the “I want to see it” list and not only was it heard but it popped out of the bushes after plenty of calling and gave all a good sighting. A lifer for some and a tick on the Cape Town challenge for others.

After a good cuppa tea and some refreshment, half the group headed up the road to the top of the hill to look for further raptors and were rewarded with a sighting of two Peregrine Falcons and their spectacular ariel antics. A great morning out in the fresh air, with 34 bird species seen in total.



Brown-backed Honeybird: Photo credit: Robb Cliff (Firefinch app)

Keith Roxburgh

Brain teasers

CROSS WORD PUZZLE NO. 17

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				22						
	23									

Compiler: Gerald Wingate

Clues Down

- 1. A great white bird
- 2. Numerically nothing
- 3. A very rare vagrant warbler
- 4. An albatross may have yellow on this
- 5. A babbler's cheeks
- 6. Cousins of robin-chats
- 10. Abr. for Purple-banded Sunbird
- 11. An ibis
- 13. Abr. for Pomarine Jaeger
- 15. A bird described as little, intermediate or great
- 16. This could be grey, black or penduline
- 18. A synonym for beak
- 19. This could be bald, glossy or sacred
- 20. Lumps of soil
- 22. Abr. for Bee-eater

Clues Across

- 1. A flightless bird
- 5. Mark on the throat of an apalis
- 7. A colour on a roller
- 8. Vegetation or robin
- 9. A wheatear
- 12. Someone's Tit
- 14. Structures for clutches
- 17. A stork with a blue face
- 21. Ostriches swallow this roughage
- 22. A yellow- _____ Greenbul
- 23. A tall plant or a pipit

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 2023

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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 37 years of bringing birders together

Upcoming Club Outings and Activities



NOVEMBER 2023

Thursday 23 November @ 19:30 – **Date Changed** Members' Pictures and year-end Celebration

We start with approval of subs for 2024. After this we'll have a compilation of members' favourite pics of the year. (Send your 5 to Dalene asap.) Then it's party time! Drinks will be provided. Please bring along a small plate of eats if possible. We missed out on the TBC Birthday celebration earlier this year and this meeting seems a perfect opportunity to celebrate! If there is load shedding, please bring along a torch.

Saturday 25 November @ 08:00 – **Date Changed** Outing: Spier Wine Farm, Stellenbosch

Contact: Keith Roxburgh 082 901 2611.
Directions: Follow N1, take R300 towards Strand. Turn left onto Stellenbosch Arterial Road (M12) – follow for 8km or more. As you go down a steep hill, turn right onto M12 (Lynedoch/ Vlaeberg Road) – follow until Robot. Turn left onto R310 Baden Powell Road, for a few km's until you reach SPIER WINE ESTATE, on Right. Turn left after the security - Park in the Main parking area. We do the river walk from here at 08:15.

DECEMBER 2023

Saturday 2 December - 24 hours

Birdlife South Africa – Birding Big Day

This annual competition takes place countrywide. Register for the 6km or 50km radius area as chosen by your group (of up to 4 people). This is a really fun day – please take part. Birds are logged on Birdlasser. Ask Brigid or Kevin if you need help with this. See more details @ www.birdlife.org.za

Saturday 9 December @ 08:00

Outing: Table Bay Nature Reserve (Rietvlei)

Contact: Kevin Drummond-Hay 074 587 3792

Travel to Table View – avoid Platteklouf Road bridge over the N7 (major road building and stop-goes in place).

Alternate roads are past De Noon to get to Blaauberg Road via West Coast or Sandown Roads, or via Marine Drive, Milnerton. From Blaauberg Road, turn into Grey Avenue, and then into Sandpiper Crescent. The Rietvlei wetlands have lovely birds in summer. Entrance fee R10 for Pensioners, and R17 – Adults plus R25 per vehicle. Try to share lifts please.

** We park at the education building, near the ablution block – from where we walk. Please bring a lunch basket.

JANUARY 2024

Diarize:

- 10 January – Midweek Outing – Strandfontein WWW.
- 18 January – Monthly Meeting
- 20 January – Saturday Outing
- 27 January – Saturday - CAR Roadside Bird Count

